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Roger Kay

THEOLOGIA REFORMATA:

OR, THE

BODY and SUBSTANCE

OF THE

Christian Religion,

Comprised in distinct

DISCOURSES or TREATISES

UPON

The *Apostles Creed*,
The *Lord's Prayer*, and
The *Ten Commandments*.

In Two VOLUMES. VOL. I.

The Whole adjusted to the *Sacred Scriptures*, and the Judgment of the *Protestant Reformed Churches*, *Our own* more especially; and design'd as an Antidote in this Corrupted Age against the dangerous Opinions of *Papists*, *Arians* and *Socinians*, *Pelagians* and *Remonstrants*, *Anabaptists*, *Antinomians*, *Deists*, *Atheists*, *Scepticks*, *Enthusiasts*, *Libertines*.

All endeavoured to be so Fram'd as to be useful not only to *Profess'd Students* in *Divinity*, but to all that are *Lovers* of *Divine Knowledge*, and desire to make farther *Proficiency* in it.

With proper *Indexes* and *Tables*.

By JOHN EDWARDS, D. D.

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THE PREFACE.

I Having heretofore Publish'd a *General Preface* to my whole Intended Work, which I prefix'd to the Discourse Entituled, *Veritas Redux*, wherein I gave the Reader an Account of the Design and Model of this Undertaking, I have now not much to trouble the Reader with in a Preliminary way. But there are some Things which it will be requisite to Advertise him of. He may wonder perhaps to see this Book begin with Discourses on the *Being and Providence of God*, seeing I had before treated on these very Subjects: But his Wonder will cease, when he shall be pleased to take notice that in the former Treatises, I wholly insisted on the Make and Fabrick of the *World*, and the exquisite Structure of *Man*'s *Body*, and thence demonstrated the Being of God, and his Providence; but at present I wave these particular Considerations, and prove the Existence of a Deity from Topics of quite another Nature, and dwell upon the Providence of God, as it hath reference to his manifold Wisdom and Prudence in the Managing and Governing of the World, and all Creatures in it; and disposing all Affairs and Occurrences appertaining to them. For which reason my Discourse on the Divine Providence is more prolix than any of the Rest, because of its vast and universal Influence on all other Subjects in Divinity. And for the same reason the Treatise on the *Divine Attributes* is of greater length than the others.

I am here to let the Reader know beforehand, that I deliver the Substance of the Articles of the *Apostles Creed*, in Discourses on certain Texts of Scripture; for those Articles being not Inspired Writings, I thought it therefore proper to prefix the Words of the Canonical Scriptures, to every Discourse on those Articles. And I consider'd that this way would be serviceable towards the explaining several Texts, together with their Contexts, and towards clearing some passages that belong to the Coherence of the Words; wherefore I resolv'd to Publish the Discourses as they are founded on distinct Texts of Scripture, and as some of them had appeared in the Pulpit; as was the

Practice of that Excellent Writer, Bishop *Pearson*, in his *Discourses* on the *Creed*, which at first had been *Sermons* in his Parish-Church.

Next, I am to caution the Reader not to be offended at my frequent making use, in some of my Discourses, of *Quotations* out of the Writings of some Ancient Authors that were Strangers to the Christian Religion, but were Men of great Sense and Sagacity, and therefore they were good Judges in such Cases as are discernible by Reason: Accordingly I have produced the Natural Notions which these Persons had of those Matters. Besides, I think it is well calculated for *this Age*, wherein there are so many that will not listen to *Scripture* and *Revelation*; but perhaps they may be prevail'd with to give Ear to those that knew nothing of Reveal'd Truth, but freely utter'd those Sentiments which the Light of Nature had dictated to them: Wherefore they can't be prejudiced against *these Writers*. Moreover, this will serve to *upbraid* those, who, though they have arrived to the Knowledge of the Christian Doctrines and Principles, yet neglect to Live up to the very Maxims and Rules of Natural Light, such as even the Heathens had attained to. For these Reasons I look upon this way of Discoursing to be *sometimes* Seasonable, indeed too Seasonable, in this degenerate Age, wherein the substantial Notions of Virtue, and the Moral and Practical Part of Religion, are so disregarded. On which account I have sometimes taken occasion (when it was fairly offered me) to shew what was the Sense and Apprehension of those Men, concerning the Matters I treat of. An Example of this we have in the most celebrated Writers of the Christian Church. Particularly St. *Augustine* declares, that * what is well said by the *Gentiles*, is not to be slighted by *Christians*, but is to be converted to their use. And this was ever the Practice of the Learnedest and most Judicious Writers and Preachers, tho' now it is grown out of fashion among the most. But any one may see that this savours of *Opiniatry* and *Self-Admiration*, these Persons scorning to be beholden to others for Words or Matter: But chiefly and most commonly it proceeds of *Ignorance* and *want of Reading*; for how can they make use of those Authors whom they never were acquainted with?

* Prophani si quid bene dixerunt, non aspernandum. De doctrina Christiana. l. 2. c. 18. Ab Ethnicis si quid bene dictum, in nostrum usum est convertendum. c. 40.

I have also made use of the Testimonies of other Writers, namely, the Ancient Fathers of the Christian Church, to confirm the Doctrines I treat of; for several of them were Disinterested Persons, and most sincerely imparted the Truth which they knew; they had a great Zeal for the Christian Religion and the

the Cause of Christ, and some of them were blessed Martyrs and Confessors. We cannot therefore but bear a profound Respect to such noble Witnesses; for next to the Inspired Books of Holy Scripture we are to value the Writings and Judgment of such Wise and Good Men.

But they must all give way to the *Inspired Writers*, to the Records of the Old and New Testament: For these alone are the Infallible Standard of Divine Truths. Here, and here only is sure Footing, and therefore I lay *all the Stress* on these Writings. Wherever I have presented the Reader with the Sense of the Ancient Authors, I have always taken care in the First place, to acquaint the Reader with the Mind of the Holy Ghost in *Scripture*, *that* being the sole unerring Basis to rely upon: But the other is only a Collateral Help. This I must add, that I *have not inserted* the *Greek* or *Latin*, in which those Authors Writ, into the Body of my Discourse, but have placed them in the *Margin*, that so they may be no Impediment to the mere *English* Reader, nor disturb and interrupt him in the course of his Reading, nor hinder his Understanding of what is before him.

The main thing which will render me obnoxious to the Censure of some Persons is, my espousing the *Calvinian* Doctrines, which in the following Papers (as well as at other times) I have Asserted and Vindicated. For I profess to all the World, my Firm and Stedfast Belief of those Principles, in Opposition to those of the *Remonstrants* and *Arminians*, and I wonder that any Persons who have a Relation to the *Church* of *England*, can presume to defend these latter. I have a long time seen that those *Calvinian* Doctrines, are grown out of Fashion, yea, are quite exploded by the generality of our Ecclesiasticks, and therefore I thought it would be some Service to the Cause of Truth and Religion, to appear in Defence of them: For truly 'tis my Perswasion that these Articles, and particularly that of *Predestination*, are the brightest Demonstrations of the Truth of the *Divine Attributes*, and more especially of those two Grand Properties of the Divine Being, his *Mercy* and his *Justice*. The great St. *Augustine*, who was the Flower of all the Fathers, and had diligently Read all the Ancients that had gone before him, took notice of the Mistakes and Errors of some of them, about these Important Points, and with great Care and Judgment he stated and settled them; and from this Scheme, the *Church* of *England* at the *Reformation* drew up and Fram'd her *Articles*,

* Bishop Burnet's Exposition of the 39 Articles.

as is ingenuously and freely confess'd, by one * of our Learned Prelates, tho' he himself follows the *Greek* Church.

These Articles speak the Mind of those blessed Martyrs, *Tyndal*, *Barnes*, *Frith*, *Cranmer*, *Latimer*, *Ridley*, *Hooper*, *Bradford*, as their Writings which are extant testify. They speak the Sense of the *Convocations*, of the *Universities*, and of the *main Body* of the *English* Clergy, at, and after the Reformation for above Eighty Years. Yea, I challenge any Man, to shew me one Book of all the Eminent Writers and Preachers of our Church, till that Time, wherein any of the *Arminian* Doctrines are asserted and defended, and wherein *Calvinism* is disapprov'd of. What a strange and prodigious Thing then, is it, that such Multitudes at this Day, should maintain the former Sentiments, and explode the latter? † One who hath made himself Scandalous by his late Writing against the *Divinity of the Second Person* in the Holy Trinity, is yet so far Ingenuous as to own, that the *Articles of the Church of England* directly and expressly assert the *Calvinian* Doctrines, and therefore he is so daring and bold, as to advise the present *Convocation* to alter them, or lay them quite aside.

† Mr. *Whiston* in his Preface to Dr. *Mather*.

Perhaps, because *Calvinism*, in the *Extent* of it, signifies *Presbyterian Government* (in Opposition to *Episcopacy*) as well as the *Doctrines* that go under that Name, thence the Whole is disliked for the Sake of the former. I am enclin'd to believe that this is one great Reason why the *Calvinian* Doctrines are so despised and vilified, and why *Calvin*'s Name is so odious. But wise Men should not be thus byass'd in their Judgments; and we know that our Bishops, and other Divines, who disallow'd of *Calvin*'s *Church-Government* and *Discipline*, were stiff Advocates for his *Doctrines*. To speak then plainly, it is from my great Deference and Respect to the Church of *England*, and its most Eminent Defenders and Patrons, that I so often urge and inculcate these *Doctrines*.

I am not a Stranger to the Rencounters of the Learned, as to some *Disputable* Matters about these Points, and no sober Man condemns them, but allows the Freedom that is used; but then it must be within Bounds: A Writer may sometimes offer his *Conjectures* and *Suppositions*, to call forth the Ingenuity and Candour of the Reader, or to make Tryal of his Judgment, and so to make way for peremptory Truth afterwards. Thus I once propounded a *Limitation* about the *Decrees*, wherein if I was by some thought (tho' but in an *Hypothesis*, and

and offer'd as *such*) to lean to the adverse Side, it is to be attributed to my great Propensity to the Study of Peace and Moderation: But I would not have any Thing fall *positively* from my Pen to the Disparagement of the Doctrine of *Predestination*, and of those *other Articles* which flow from it, and necessarily go along with it.

I cannot but here take Notice of a late * Ingenious Writer, who is mightily displeased with me *for reviving the Calvinistick Doctrines, after they had* (as he is pleased to say) *been ordered by Authority to die.* I suppose he means the *Declarations* in King *James* the First, and King *Charles* the Second's Reigns, whereby all Controversies in Divinity, relating both to *Arminianism* and *Calvinism*, were suppress'd, (with a real Design to silence the latter only): Wherefore those that *revive* the *Arminian* Doctrines, *as well as those who* bring to Life those of *Calvin*, are to be censured by this Writer, as offending against *Authority.* Thus this Gentleman condemns himself and his Party, whilst he finds Fault with me. He would have *Arminianism live*, tho' it was ordered to *die* by the same Authority that ordered the Death of *Calvinism.* You see what wonderful Respect and Deference some Men pay to *Authority*, and how they make it a mere Nose of Wax when they please. Tho' this Author talks against *reviving*, who is there that does not take Notice that he and his Friends are of the Number of the *Revivers*; that is, the Revivers of old Errors, and those Pernicious ones too? For rank *Remonstranism* is but *Pelagianism* new vamp'd.

* Mr. *Reeve*, in his Preface concerning the right Use of the Fathers.

But what if it be? *Calvinism*, he saith, is much worse; for he tells us, that *if the Doctrine of Predestination should take Effect, we should not have one Criminal that goes to be hang'd, but would be laying all the Fault upon Destiny*, and very Justly too, he thinks; and consequently 'tis Pity to hang any Criminal or Malefactor. Where it is to be observed, that this Writer miserably betrays his Ignorance of the *Predestinarian* Doctrine, for none that espouse it hold that the Decrees lay any Force or Necessity on any Man; but they all consent in this, that the Actions of Vicious Persons are Free and Voluntary, and therefore none, tho' never so Vicious, can possibly lay their Fault on Destiny and the Decrees. Men's *Damnation* is entirely owing to themselves, as their *Salvation* is to God: For no Persons are damned but for their own wilful Faults, and none are saved but by the Grace of God. This is the unanimous

mous Assertion of all *Calvinists*; and therefore it must be *Ignorance* (as was before said) or (which is worse) *Spight* and *Perversenes*, that makes this Writer talk as he doth. But I must tell him, he would change his Tone, if he were one of *those Criminals* he speaks of, (and who can tell what his dear *Free-Will* may in Time bring a Man to?) If he should come to deserve (which Heaven avert) that *particular Punishment* which he mentions, and which it seems runs in his Head, his Conscience would tell him, that he can't *lay his Fault on Fate*, but on his own profligate Will, that *Will*, which he and his Partisans have in their Writings advanced above God himself, and to which they have ascribed more Efficacy and Power than to the Arm of the Almighty.

Thus we see what it is to be enslav'd to *Prejudice*, and to be over-run with that *Zeal*, which is *not according to Knowledge*. This it is for a Writer to delight in the Bubbles of an *empty Eloquence*, and to please himself more with *Words* than *Sense*. This it is to endanger our *Faith*, by pretending to *Reason*; this it is to disparage the *Truths* of the Gospel, by a Shew of *Fallacious Arguments*. Wherefore some Part of my Performance in the ensuing Volumes will be more *Seasonable* and *Necessary* than I could wish, because of that perverse Spirit which hath set itself against some of the Evangelical Doctrines at this Day. I am throughly perswaded and satisfied that the Cause which I defend is that of *Truth* and *Religion*; and I question not but our fiercest Adversaries in their sober Moods will confess as much. Yea, this very present Stickler against *Calvinism* is come on so far as to own expressly, that *John Calvin* (plain *John*) *was a Wise and Learned Man*. Surely then 'tis a Sign of no great *Wisdom* and *Learning* in this Writer to rail at him and his Writings.

And as for the *Ancient Writers* and *Fathers*, tho' Mr. *Reeve* represents them all as *Arminians*, and Exploders of *Predestination*, yet I have prov'd in another Place (*Veritas Redux*) that many of those Writers speak favourably on the other Side: And at present I can prove from one of the *Fathers*, whom Mr. *Reeve* hath translated into *English*, that it is evident that the Primitive Christians were taught the Doctrine of *Predestination*; which is thus represented in *Minutius Fœlix* by him that manages the Part of the *Heathen* in that Dispute. * [*It is*

* Culpam vel innocentiam *Fato* tribui sententiis plurimorum, & hæc vestra consensio est, nam quicquid agimus, ut alii *Fato*, ita vos *Deo* dicitis: Sic Sectæ vestræ non Spontaneos cupere, sed *Electos*. Igitur *iniquum* Judicem fingitis, qui Sortem in hominibus puniat, non Voluntatem.

the

the Opinion of many, ſaith he, *that Vice and Virtue are to be attributed to Fate, and you Chriſtians conſent to this Opinion; for as the others hold that all comes to paſs by Fate, ſo you hold that all comes to paſs by God, which is the ſame Thing. So it appears hence that you took up your Sect, and embraced Chriſtianity, not by the Virtue and Power of your own Free-Will, but by the Election and Decree of God: And hereby you make your God an unjuſt Judge, who puniſhes Men, not for their Fault, but becauſe of their Deſtiny.*] Theſe Words plainly ſhew, that the Doctrine of *Predeſtination* was received by the *Chriſtians* in thoſe early Times. We find here that the Chriſtians talk'd *of Election*, as the Ground of all good Actions and Events: And it is not to be doubted that thoſe Words, *Non Spontaneos, ſed Electos*, refer to Rom. ix. 16. *It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that ſheweth Mercy.* We find here *that the* Chriſtians held that all Things, whether Good or Bad, came to paſs by the *Divine Decrees*, which the Heathens call'd *Fate*. And here we learn what was objected againſt this by the Adverſaries of Chriſtianity; namely, that this Doctrine charges God with *Injuſtice*; for if he decreed all the Actions of Men, then he *unjuſtly inflicts Puniſhment* on them for their Faults, becauſe theſe Faults are the Reſult of the Decrees, and not of their Free-Will and Conſent, and conſequently are not their own Acts.

Theſe are the very ſame Cavils and Objections that the *Arminians* raiſe againſt the *Calviniſts* Doctrine of Predeſtination at this Day: But we ſee this did not deter the *Ancient Chriſtians* from embracing and profeſſing that Doctrine. We ſee what was the Perſwaſion of thoſe Primitive Saints almoſt Fifteen Hundred Years ago; the very ſame with that which is now profeſs'd by the *Church of England* in her *Articles*. So that Mr. *Reeves*, if it were only on the Point of Good Manners, ſhould not have roar'd ſo fiercely againſt this Article, which his Mother the *Church* hath taught him: He ſhould not have laugh'd ſo indecently at the Venerable Teſtimonies of our *Engliſh* Prelates and Synods, and the general Body of the Reform'd Churches, which not only he, but all thoſe do who reject the Predeſtinarian Doctrines.

I know it is generally believed and aſſerted, that the *Arminian* Points have *Antiquity* on their Side, that they were received by the *First* Chriſtians, and that the Contrary to them are but of Yeſterday; whereas nothing is more evident than that

that these latter were the *Ancient* Doctrines of the Christian Churches, but were afterwards alter'd and corrupted by some Preachers and Writers. Which appears from this, that when St. *Augustine* openly profess'd and maintain'd these Doctrines, which are now call'd *Calvinian*, there was no Commotion or Disturbance in the Church about them, none of the Orthodox objected against them, none complain'd of them as *New* and *Strange*: There were only a few *French Pelagians* and *Semi-pelagians* that opposed them: And St. *Jerom*, who was contemporary with St. *Augustine*, Asserted and Vindicated these Doctrines very strenuously. But this is certain, that if they had been contrary to the *Form of Sound Words*, and to the Ancient Doctrine of the Church, there would have been a great Outcry against these Fathers Writings: But there was no such Thing, and therefore it is an Argument that these Doctrines were received long before St. *Augustine*'s Time. Nor can we think that that Pious Father would oppose the *Ancient* and *Orthodox* Doctrines of the Church, but rather that he made it his Business to revive the *Old* Articles of the *Divine Decrees*, of *Original Sin*, of *Special Grace*, &c. and to confute the Errors which had crept into the Church about those Matters. Which is a farther Proof of what I say, that these Doctrines have *Antiquity* to vouch them, notwithstanding the universal Cry of Persons among us to the contrary. And doth it not appear that they are very *Ancient*, from their being expressly approv'd of by the *Milevitan* and *Diospolitan* Councils, the one in the Year 402, and the other in 415; by the Fourteenth Council of *Carthage*, in 418; by *Celestine* the First's Epistle to the *French* Bishops, and by the Second Council of *Orange*, in the Middle of the Fifth Century?

Before I pass to any other Particular, I will only observe one Thing, which is worthy of every Reader's Thoughts. It seems to me to be a Sign of the *Intrinsick Goodness* and *Excellency* of these Doctrines, which go under the Name of *Calvinism*, that in this debauch'd Age, where Error and Vice are so generally countenanced, and the Contrary every where discouraged, there is yet a considerable Number of Persons who remain Uncorrupted and Untainted, and notwithstanding all Opposition and Discouragements, adhere to these Doctrines, and openly profess them. This is to be imputed, next to the Divine Assistance, to the *Real Virtue* and *Power* of

of these Principles. Were they not Real and Solid Truths, they would not be able to bear up against the contrary Torrent, which is so Strong and Impetuous. Had they not an Inward Worth of themselves, they would have been quite extinguish'd in these Times, wherein there hath been so great a Licence given to all manner of Errors, and wherein Truth hath been so brow-beaten. If they were not *Substantial Truths*, they could not have subsisted to this Day, but the great Numbers which are against them would have born down and over-run them. But we have Experience of the contrary, we see that these Doctrines have been able to support themselves by their own Innate Force and Virtue: Which may convince every Man of the *Truth* and *Certainty* of them, and prevail with us to assert and maintain these *Articles of* our Religion, maugre all the Objections and Cavils that are flung at them. For my Part, I look upon them as the Basis of Christianity, which if we undermine, we shall soon see Christianity itself laid level with the Ground. Wherefore I am resolved by the Divine Aid and Assistance, never to abandon the Defence of these Doctrines.

I have with some Freedom deliver'd my Thoughts concerning the Matters wherein the *Non-Conformists*, as such, differ from *our Church*, and I have labour'd to be a Moderator and Reconciler. I have always told the World what I think in this Controversy; but whether it be construed as *Imprudence*, or *Sincerity*, let the impartial Reader judge. I can't see how it is an Unpardonable Fault to speak in Favour of Sober and Learned Dissenters, seeing Her *Majesty* hath resolved to put all Her Subjects into a peaceable and amicable Posture, by Her often declaring from the Throne, Her firm Purpose and Resolution, never to abridge the Dissenters of their Liberty. Tho' then there are some that will not pardon *me*, I hope they will forgive Her *Majesty*.

Some may take it ill that I do not reckon our Dissenters in the Number of *Schismaticks*; but, as the Case now stands, I do not see any Reason for pronouncing them such; for the Rulers and Governors of our Church, as well as of the State, have by a deliberate and solemn Act, given them Leave to use their Liberty, which I ought not to believe they would have done, if they had look'd upon them as *formally guilty of Schism*. This agrees with what I have been

told, that Dr. *Gouge*, Dr. *Bates*, and Mr. *Baxter*, were often admitted to the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, by some of the most Eminent Divines (since in a Higher Station) in their Parish-Churches in *London*. Which shews that they did not reckon those Persons as *Schismaticks*; for according to all the Ancient Fathers, and according to our own Church, a *Schismatick* is to be barr'd from the Sacrament. It is plain then that I am not singular in this Matter.

I may take Notice to the Reader, that I am not Positive and Decretory in merely *Probable* and *Dubious* Matters: I freely offer my Thoughts, but I am not so Conclusive as to reject the Judgment of others. This I have shew'd when I treat of *Things Indifferent*, and of *Scandals*, and of *Christian Liberty*. So when I speak of the Laws of *Affinity* and *Consanguinity*, with Relation to Marriage, and particularly concerning *Cousin-Germans*, I would not be so understood, as to be absolutely Definitive in those Matters, but (to use the Apostle's Words) I only *herein give my Advice*, and propound that which according to my private Judgment, is truest and best; but I leave others to their own Sentiments, which perhaps are more agreeable than mine.

Some of our Church may be displeased at my free censuring of *Musick* in Churches, and the whole *Choir* of *Singing*-Men will rise up against me. But I request them to believe me when I say that I am no Enemy to Musick, yea, I esteem it as an Excellent Gift of Heaven, as other Arts and Sciences are: But I can't be reconciled to it as 'tis used in Churches, and made Part of the Worship of the Most High. I have offer'd some *Reasons* for my Opinion, and have produced some *Excellent Persons* who concur with me: But I hope those who have other Sentiments will permit me to injoy mine, as I leave them to theirs, at the same Time assuring them that in this (as well as in all other Matters) I do nothing out of a Spirit of Contradiction.

As to the *Style* which I use in the following Writings, I have not studied to be over-curious, and I never made it my Business. A Natural and Proper, a Significant and Perspicuous Way of Speaking I have aim'd at; and my greatest Ambition is to be Plain and Intelligible in my Expressions; which I must tell the Reader, requires some Art and Pains. I take it to be a great and prevailing Fault of some of our Preachers, that they affect a formal and starch'd Way of Speaking: They study

ſtudy to be Polite and Compleat, and thereby hinder a great deal of Good that they might do, whilſt their Hearers or Readers attend more to the Texture and Compoſition of their Words, than the Matter and Drift of their Diſcourſes. The Language of the *Stage* ſhould not be that of the *Pulpit*: It is far better to be *Bald* than thus *Deck'd*. Too great a Study to *Flouriſh*, hath been injurious to Divinity. We may obſerve, that ever ſince ſome have applied themſelves to ſpeak *Finely* in the Pulpit, they have not been ſo Orthodox as heretofore, nor have they been ſo Edifying to the People.

I might take Notice of the *Subſcribers* to this Undertaking. Tho' their Number is not great, yet their *Willingneſs* and *Heartineſs* merit an Acknowledgment from me: And I ought to be very Senſible, and I am, of this diſtinguiſhing Favour, in *the preſent* Circumſtances we are in. Some of my Brethren of the Clergy were pleaſed to honour me with their Subſcriptions: But as to the Coldneſs and Backwardneſs of others, it was no more than I expected, becauſe of the Freedom I had uſed in Diſcourſing on ſome Heads wherein I *differ* from them. But I flatter myſelf that this Difference will not hinder them from looking into theſe Papers, and eſpecially that *thoſe who ſtand in Need of ſuch Helps*, will not refuſe to make Uſe of them. I doubt not but Perſons of their Ingenuity, will *think* themſelves oblig'd to thank me, for that Part of the Proviſion which I have made for them, and which I purpoſely *deſign'd for their peculiar Benefit*, as I ſhall anon more particularly let them know.

Now as to the Book itſelf, ſome have ſuggeſted that there have been many Hundreds of Volumes compoſed on the *Creed*, the *Lord's Prayer*, and the *Ten Commandments*, which are Trite and Vulgar Subjects, and therefore I might have omitted the treating on theſe. But this is an Objection of no Weight, becauſe any Man may ſay the ſame of the *Bible*, which yet all Wiſe Men think is not diſparag'd by the vaſt Number of Writers that have Commented upon it, and have handled all the Parts and Contents of it ſome Thouſand Times over and over again: And the Decalogue and the Lord's Prayer are Part of that Sacred Volume, that hath been ſo often treated of. And I hope that my *Manner of Handling them* will convince the Reader, that I have not preſum'd to preſent him with what is *Vulgar*.

I would have added (besides what was mention'd in the Printed *Proposals*) entire Discourses concerning the *Graces* and *Duties* which in a due Latitude may be reduced to the *Ten Commandments*, tho' they are not mention'd there, because many of them are purely Evangelical, and above the Pitch of common Morality. They are those Parts of our Duty which chiefly belong to *Revealed Religion*, and particularly the *Christian*: They are Injunctions added by our Saviour and his Apostles to the Laws of Nature, and mere Moral Religion. But I could not comprehend them in this present Undertaking, and therefore they are reserv'd for another Volume afterwards.

I hope I need not be very Copious in setting forth the *Usefulness* of my whole Performance. I think I may say without incurring the Guilt of Ostentation, that there is no Head of Divinity which I have not treated of, no Considerable Question, but I have answer'd it; no useful Controversy, but I have endeavoured to decide it; no dangerous Error or Heresy in the Church, but I have attack'd it, and according to my mean Ability, baffled it. For, to speak freely, I don't think that that Excellent Gentleman the Honourable Mr. *Boyle*, was over-wise in ordering in his last Will, that the Sermons at his Lecture should be spent *wholly* in Defending the Christian Religion, against *Atheists*, *Deists*, *Pagans*, *Jews*, *Mahometans*, and that the Preachers should not meddle with Controversies that are among *Christians themselves*. This was not the Practice of the *Apostles* in their *Epistles*, nor of the *Primitive Fathers* and *Writers* afterwards, who were very earnest in detecting and refuting the Errors that were brought into the Church, by those that were seeming Members of it, and under the Shew of Christianity, corrupted its Doctrines. Wherefore it becomes us to follow such Unexceptionable Examples, and to confute the Mistakes not only of those that are without, but of those that are within the Church, that is, those who make an outward Profession of the Christian Religion.

Some Parts of this Undertaking are peculiarly calculated for profess'd Candidates in the Study of Theology, and for others that are vers'd in Humane Learning, as the Discourses about the *Original of the World*, proving it not to have been from Eternity; the Proof of the *Deity*, from the *Nature* of *Causes* and *Succession*; some Part of the Discourse about the

Trinity.

Trinity. I have a large Treatise of *Idolatry* or *Polytheism*, which, as it may serve to refresh the Memories of those who are no Strangers to the Writings of the Gentiles, especially their Poets, so it will be found necessary for Explaining *a great Number of Texts* in the Bible, where the *several Kinds* of *Idolatry* are so often mention'd: And I hope it will be of good Use to stir up our Thankfulness for our happy Deliverance from Pagan Superstition and Idolatry, which our Forefathers were enslav'd to. I have not neglected the *Critical* Part, which I have shew'd in several *Expositions* of *Texts*, and on other Occasions which offer'd themselves, which I hope will not be unacceptable to Younger Students in Divinity, if it be only for this Advantage, that hereby they will come acquainted with *good Authors*, and the *Works of the* most Judicious Criticks, whom I think I have quoted.

But tho' I intended that my Books should contain something that should be agreeable to *every Sort* of Readers, yet I have taken Care to fit the *far greatest Part* of them to the Taste of the Plainest, and the Capacity of the most Illiterate. I have endeavour'd to furnish them with intelligible and plain Apprehensions of Divine Truths, and to set them into the right and direct Way to Salvation and Happiness. It is the *Practical* Part of Divinity that I chiefly dwell upon; and accordingly *Proper Inferences* from the respective Doctrines, are every where interspers'd. All Classes of Persons have their particular and peculiar Duties here faithfully set before them. There is no State, Condition, or Rank of Men, but the Rules and Measures of their Practice are here prescrib'd in the fullest Extent.

This one Thing more I must needs advertise the Reader of, that I have all along taken great Care that the *Places of Scripture* which I quote be *rightly* and *properly applied* to the Matter treated of; for I have observ'd, that it is a common Fault in some careless, but well-meaning Writers and Preachers, to drag *Texts* into their Discourses, tho' they are little to the Purpose. And by this impertinent alledging of Scripture, they disparage the Bible, and even wrest and distort the Holy Writ. Wherefore I have always been careful to apply every Text pertinently and aright, that the true Meaning and Sense of them may not be lost, nor the Scriptures be thereby vilified.

I give my Books the Title of *Reformed Theology*: Which is enough to disparage them in some Mens Opinions, not only *Pontificians*, but some others, who, tho' they profess not themselves to be of the *Roman* Communion, yet look upon the *Reformed Churches* with a squint Eye, and have very mean Thoughts of the *Reformation* of our own Church. But I hope the Number of these Men is but few, and every true Friend to the *Protestant* Religion, will despise such False Brethren. I presum'd to give the Honourable Title of *Reformed Theology* to my Papers, with Relation to the Blessed Change in our Doctrines, which was made at the Reformation from Popery, in the Churches Abroad, and in ours at Home, according to the Form of Sound Words which is deliver'd in the Holy Scriptures. And these are the Patterns which I have set before me in my present Undertaking; and I have endeavour'd to copy out such Authentic Originals, with the greatest Sincerity and Diligence, tho' without Doubt with as great Deficiencies. For my Presumption and Arrogance would be very Unjustifiable, if I should not acknowledge, that my Endeavours are blended with many Imperfections and Defects: And as I never read any Man's Writings where I thought I found not something that was not Exact, so I question not but in my own the like (and much more) will be discern'd: Which I shall be ready to acknowledge when 'tis discover'd to me, and I shall be thankful to the Discoverer.

To render the Whole more useful, I have added these following *Indexes* and *Tables*; namely, an *Alphabetical Index* of all the *Principal Matters* contain'd in the First and Second Volumes; a Table of the *Texts of Scripture* which are Explained or Illustrated in the several Treatises, some of which are interpreted according to my own particular Judgment; a Table of those *Texts wherein I vary* from the usual Translation; a Table of the Chief *Problems*, *Controversies*, and *Cases of Conscience* which are stated and resolved in these Volumes; a Catalogue of Writers Ancient and Modern, who have given their Suffrage in *Confirmation* of the Opinions and Doctrines which I have maintain'd; a Catalogue of those Writers, whether Ancient or Modern, whose Opinions are modestly *censured* and *confuted*. Lastly, To make the Work more serviceable to those who are no Strangers to the Original Tongues, I have added a brief Catalogue of

of the *Hebrew* and *Greek Words* and *Expressions* which occur in both my Volumes, and are there Explain'd.

To conclude, the Reader is desired, with me, to beg the *Divine Blessing* on this Performance, that it may promote the great Ends of our Holy Religion, in this Degenerate Age, which is so corrupted in Doctrines and Manners, in Principles and Practice; and that it may be serviceable to the Edifying the Church of Christ, and advancing the Glory of the Divine Majesty. I am the Reader's

Sincere Friend and Servant,

in Jesus Christ,

J. Edwards.

The Reader is desired, before he reads the Books, to amend the Faults of the Press, which are too many, by Reason of the Author's Absence.

TREATISES
AND
DISCOURSES
ON THE
Principal Heads of Religion,
Which Compose a
Body of CHRISTIAN DIVINITY.

The First Part,
OF THE
Principles of the Christian Faith,
Which are Discours'd of from
Particular TEXTS of HOLY SCRIPTURE,
According to the Order of the ARTICLES
OF
The Apostles Creed.

B

ARTICLE I.

I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of Heaven and Earth.]

A Discourse on HEB. I. 6.

He that cometh to GOD, must believe that he is.

WHEREIN

The Grand Foundation of all Religion,

VIZ.

The Being of GOD,

Is demonstrated from

SEVERAL TOPICKS,

AND

Some of them Uncommon.

The First Discourse, *on the* First Article *of the* Creed.

THE main *Truths*, *Offices* and *Concerns* of Religion, and particularly of that which is called *Christian* (of all which it is my design to treat particularly, by the Divine Assistance) are contained, first, more copiously in the Holy *Bible* or Canonical Scriptures, and then more summarily in the *Apostles Creed*, the *LORD'S-PRAYER*, and the *Ten Commandments*. These being an Abbreviature of the Inspired Writings, and owned and received by all Christian Churches as the compendious Models of *Faith* and *Manners*, and of what we are to *Pray for*, I will discourse of the several Heads of Divinity as they are comprized in these.

And first, it is proper to begin with that main Principle of the Christian Faith, the *Existence of a God*, which is the general Subject of that *First Article* of the *Creed*, *I believe in God the Father Almighty, maker of Heaven and Earth.* This being the most Fundamental Principle, and the Basis of all Religion, it is necessary that I fully prove this, and make it very clear and evident. For though some may think it is needless to insist upon *Common Principles* (especially among *Christians*, and those that profess the Gospel, who are not to be carried back to the Foundations, but 'tis to be suppos'd that they are well acquainted with them;) yet if we consider that in this present Age some are Ignorant, others are Doubtful, and too

many are Atheistical, and laugh at all Principles, and even deny a God; and if we consider further that we are every day gathering fresh Arguments from Philosophy and Experience, and many other Topicks to prove the Being of an Eternal Self-Subsisting Spirit; and besides, it is the Task of Spiritual Instructors not only to confute Gain-sayers, but to confirm and establish Men in the Truths which they already own and embrace; I say, if we consider these things we shall find it needful to insist on this Theme which I am now upon; we shall be convinced that it is requisite even to lay the Foundation, and strengthen the Ground-work; we shall be perswaded that it is not only a necessary, but a seasonable and proper work at this day to offer Proofs and Testimonies of the Being of a God.

I will prove it, I. From the Origin and Existence of things in the World, and from that Order of Causes which is observable in the production of those things. II. From the Nature of Humane Souls. III. From the Innate Notions of God in them. IV. From the Dread of Conscience. V. From Universal Consent. VI. From the Strange and Wonderful Occurrences in the World. VII. From the Fulfilling of Prophecies. VIII. From the Remarkable Preservation of the Church.

I. The first Argument which I shall make use of to evince the Existence of the Deity, is the *Origin of the World* and of all the things in it. And so I shall join both the parts of the *Article* together, namely, the *Belief of a God*, and his being *maker of Heaven and Earth*; for I shall make it appear that this latter doth naturally conduct us to the former. And here, in prosecution of this First Head, I will proceed both Negatively and Positively. 1. Negatively, the World was not from Eternity. 2. Positively, it had an Origin or Beginning in Time. And therefore from both it follows that it had an *Author* or *Cause*, and that is *God*.

First, I say, there is no reason to think that the World was Eternal. Tho' it is certain this was the Doctrine of the *Platonists* and some others of old: Yea, and they held that this Eternity was not inconsistent with the Eternal Existence of God; for, say they, he was always Good, and consequently the World always existed. To prove the former part of the Argument, they assert that God's Goodness is *necessary*; and that being so, the World which depends upon it must needs be Necessary, and consequently Eternal. This is a false Collection of *Plato*'s Followers; I say his Followers, for I question whether their Master *Plato* was of that mind; yea rather it is plain that he was not, for you'll find in his *Timæus*, wherein he treats of the Author of all things, and the manner of their production, that he asserts the World had a Beginning. And yet in the same Book he holds it is *Eternal*, *i. e.* as to God's *Decree* of producing it. It was *ever* in the Divine Mind, but he doth not hold that it actually existed from Eternity. Yet the former Assertion of his is the ground of the Common Opinion, that *Plato* held the World to be from Eternity. And the mistaking of his words caused *Proclus* and the other later *Platonists* to maintain the same; especially when they saw that the Eternity of the World was defended by *Pythagoras*, Prince of the *Italian* Philosophy. Their great Argument was that which I have mentioned already, *viz.* That God acts by a Natural and Eternal *Necessity*, and therefore he could not but make the World co-existent with himself. The World flow'd from him, say they, as Rays from the Sun. The Sun cannot be without its Rays, so neither could God exist without the World. Because the Divine Beneficence was from Eternity, therefore All things are so. But the *Answer* to this is easie, *viz.* That God was no Necessary Agent in the making of the World, for then the World and every Creature would be of as Necessary Existence as He is, and consequently would be God himself. And as to what is said, that the World was by Emanation from God as Rays from the Sun, the Simile holds not good, for things created are from God, but not of his *Substance*, as the Rays are from the Sun, for so the World would be God, for his Substance is himself.

Then as to the Divine *Goodness*, which they tell us is as Eternal as God's Essence, and therefore could not but be communicated from Eternity, whence they infer the World was as soon as God was: This is (I conceive) a satisfactory *Answer* to it, *viz.* That though it may be truly and safely said, that God is necessarily and essentially Good, yet in respect of all External Actions and Operations he is Free, and without the least Necessity. *He worketh all things according to the counsel of his own will*, Eph. 1. 11. There is therefore Election and Freedom in him; he is not necessitated

necessitated to the production of any thing, being absolutely Perfect and Happy in himself. God had not been Unjust if he had not made the World or any part of it: which is a plain Confutation of the Conceit of a *Necessary Emanation of God's Goodness* in the Eternal creation of the World. There was no Obligation or Necessity of communicating his Essential Goodness. Being a Free Agent he might have suspended his Influences to External Things. The infinite and immense Goodness of the Deity did not bind him to act but when he pleased. His *Will* and *Pleasure* are the reason of the World's production, and of the determinate time of its Beginning. He that was always Perfect stood in need of nothing; he wanted no Creatures to add to his Happiness. * He that existed before the World was a World to himself, as an Ancient Christian speaks concerning God.

* *Qui ante mundum fuit, sibi ipse pro mundo.* Minut. Fœl.

Or, to clear this Point farther, we are to *distinguish* concerning the *Goodness* of God: and by so doing we shall more plainly discern the Fallacy of the foregoing Argument. *Goodness* signifies an Excellency of all Holiness, and a negation of whatever is Vitious, Unholy, and morally Evil; and in this sense God is Absolutely and Necessarily Good. But as *Goodness* signifies Beneficence and Communicativeness, and conferring Favours on others, so God is not necessarily, but *freely* Good. The Exertments of his Bounty are arbitrary; he can suspend and with-hold his Favours and Graces as he thinks fit. The Effusions and Exhibitions of his Goodness depend on his Will, especially as to the Time. We have an evident Demonstration of this in the Birth of the *Messias*; who was not born presently after the Fall of Man, though this might seem to be more desirable, and more advantageous for the world; yet he appeared not till four thousand Years after. This shews that God dispenses his Bounty when he thinks fit. Thus in the present case God erected the *World* according to the Laws of his Sovereign Will, for he acts when and how he pleaseth: therefore we cannot prove from the consideration of God's *Goodness* that the World was from Eternity. He freely and of his own good pleasure determined the making of it, and at last most freely brought it to pass, *Rev.* 4. 11. *Thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they were, and are created.* There was no *necessity* to enforce him, nor indeed could there be: for it is impossible that the freedom of an Infinite Will should be guided by Necessity, because no Power is superiour to his. And it appears that the World was no necessary Emanation of the Deity, because he could have been without it. He was (as hath been said already) absolutely Perfect, and therefore had no need of the Creature. It is evident then that he could not be necessitated to make the World, for this destroys the freedom of his Will, his Power, and his Perfection. Wherefore the World to be created was subject to all the Conditions of God's Will and Pleasure, and was such as he would have it, and was erected when he thought good. His Choice and Freedom limited the time of its Creation; for he being Free, acted as he thought fit, and display'd his Bounty according to his hidden Wisdom and Pleasure.

And whereas it is objected, that if the World had a Beginning, then God may be thought to be *Mutable*, this Objection will soon vanish if we consider that God suffer'd not any Alteration, though he wrought that which he did not before. He eternally will'd the Creature to be in the time appointed, and then by virtue of his Eternal Decree and Will it was produced. The *Newness* of the World consists in the actual being of it, not in the Power and Will of God: and therefore God cannot be said to be mutable, though he made the World, not from Eternity, but in Time, *in the beginning*, as *Moses* expresses it.

As I have before cleared *Plato* himself of the contrary Imputation, so I will do the same good office for his Pupil *Aristotle*. By any Man that reads him impartially he cannot be thought to be really of that Opinion which is commonly affixed to him, for he in several places holds an *Infinite and Eternal Succession of things* to be impossible, and asserts there must be some *First Cause*; both which are utterly inconsistent with the Notion of the *World's Eternity*. It is true, he often inculcates this, That the World was *not generated* (for as to the *Creation* of it, he hath not a Syllable that I ever met with) and what doth he mean by that? Certainly no other than this, (as is evident from his own words) that 'tis impossible the World could have its Beginning by Motion, and by the force of Natural Causes. This is all, so far as I can learn from him, that he asserts. Some * suspicious places in his Writings are quoted; but truly I think 'tis easie to make a good construction of them, and reconcile them with those other Tenets of his before named. I know he is often alledg'd

* Τὸ ἐξ ἀνάγκης, καὶ δεῖ καὶ ἅμα. De Gen. & Corrupt.

alledg'd for the *World's Eternity*: and according to some Mens Representations of him, he hath been thought to say, that there is no First Cause of the Being of things, but that they ever were as they are. But he that reads his *Book of the World* (which he writ towards the latter end of his Life, and had had time to digest his Thoughts) shall see he had no such wild Conceit: or however he retracts what he had formerly said, and is become a great Philosophick Penitent. Here he plainly asserts those things which overthrow the Eternity of the World. And why any should say that *that Book* was not his, I know not, for it hath the very Air of his Stile and Genius. But if I cannot obtain of them to believe that *Aristotle* differs from the *Modern Platonists* as to the Eternity of Things, yet this at least must be confess'd, that they disagree as to the *Mode* of their *Eternity*, the latter holding all things to be *of Necessity*, the former *Freely*, as some are not unwilling to grant from some Passages in this Author.

But truly for my part I am of Opinion that neither *Plato* nor *Aristotle* (if rightly understood) assert the Eternity of the World. There is no reason or ground to think that the former held the Eternal pre-existence of Matter, as if there were a Necessity of Material Concurrence, for he only maintains an Eternity of it in respect of its *Idea* in God, that is, as much as to say, in respect of the *Decree* concerning it. But in plain and direct terms he saith it was made and had a Beginning. In his *Timæus* he distinguishes between τὸ Ὄν ἀεὶ and τὸ γιγνόμενον, which puts a plain difference between the Creator and the Creature. And he frequently tells us that all things have a γένεσις. But it is undeniable that the *Platonists* afterwards held the World to be *Eternal* in the proper and strict sense of the word, whence it hath been generally (but falsly) said that *Plato* himself was of this Opinion. And as for *Aristotle*, who was the greatest Logician and Metaphysician that the World ever had, and was not behind any of the Ancients in Natural Philosophy, his *Book of the World* may satisfie any Man that Writers have mistaken him when they say he affirm'd the World to be *Eternal*, both as it had no Beginning, and as it shall have no End.

Yet it is not to be denied, that many of the Pagans were of a contrary Opinion: and on this was founded the *Idolatry* of some of them; particularly that of the *Zabii* or old *Chaldeans* had its rise hence, if we may credit * *Maimonides*. *Pliny* represents it as the general Creed of the *Gentiles*, That † the World is an Eternal Immense Numen, which had no Beginning, and shall never have an End. All the *Epicureans* (as you shall hear afterwards) avouch'd the World's Eternity; that is, that the Matter of it was perpetually existent, but that it casually hit into this frame and shape in time: Therefore these I shall consider when I come to shew the World was not by *Chance*.

* *More Nevoch.*

† *Mundum & hoc quod nomine alio Cœlum appellare libuit, cujus circumflexu teguntur cuncta, Numen esse credi par est æternum, immensum, neq; genitum neq; interituram unquam.* Nat. Hist. lib. 1. c. 7.

Yea, among CHRISTIANS there have been some that have favoured this Opinion It was part of the Heresie of the *Valentinians*, and is taken notice of by *Tertullian* in his Piece against *Hermogenes*, where he tells us, that it was that person's Opinion that *Matter was neither born or made, nor hath any Beginning or End, but was ever the same, and co-existent with God*: whence *Tertullian* rightly concludes, that *Hermogenes set up Two Gods*. *Origen* brings in one of this Sect asserting * that *Mattter is Co-eternal with God*. And what that Father himself said, hath some affinity with what hath been alledg'd concerning the Doctrine of the *Platonists*: He argued for the Eternity of the World because God was always infinitely Powerful and Good. And some Moderns encline this way, as *Thomas Aquinas* among the Schoolmen. *Vossius* is dubious, though he leans rather to the impossibility of the Eternal Existence of things: He concludes with the words of *Gregory de Valentia*, *We are to think that there is some reason for this Impossibility, though it seems not as yet to be sufficiently discovered.* According to *Des Cartes* the World began as soon as God was, he being able then to produce it. But Mr. *Hobbs* would have the Civil Magistrate (who with him can do all things) decide whether it was possible the World was from Eternity, or whether it was created by God. He thinks this and all other Knotty Controversies should be left to the determination of the Superior Powers. It is to be wonder'd at, that the Reverend Dr. *Pearson* (late Bishop of *Chester*) favour'd so Untheological a Notion in his Excellent and Admir'd *Exposition of the Creed*: where, upon the *First Article*, he speaks to this purpose, It is not impossible that there should be something co-œval with God, as the Heavens his Throne. The Creature might be

* Συγχρονος ἡ ὕλη τῷ Θεῷ. *Dialog.* 4.

be produced from all Eternity, by the free determination of God's will. You can assign no instant, before which God could not have made the World. There is no Impossibility of an Eternal Existence of things; but it doth not follow that it was so, for by Faith we believe the World was not Eternal, and we are certain it was not.

But by the leave of so Great a Man, and so Worthy a Father of our Church, I cannot but remonstrate against this unsafe Opinion, and I will briefly shew that the supposition of the Co-eternity of the world with God, hath great and intolerable Absurdities attending on it. As God did not, so he could not produce the World from Eternal Ages, because first it is certain that *Causes* and *Effects*, necessarily suppose Priority in time. The Cause precedes the Effect: therefore an Eternal Cause and an Eternal Effect are absurd. The *Creature* cannot be thought to have been produced from Eternity for this very Reason, because *God* was from Eternity: this being one of the greatest differences between *God* and the *Creature*, that the former was before the other; for what gives Being to another must needs exist before it. Whence it follows that there is *an instant assigned*, before which God could not have made the World: especially if you consider what we have said before, *viz.* That the Being of the World is the mere Effect of God's Soveraign Will, not of the necessity of Nature. Or we may reason thus, If the World be not Self-existent, but hath its Being from another, which our Adversaries grant, then that other must Exist before it. It is impossible that what depends on another, and had its very Existence from it, should be co-existent with it. This makes it very clear that the System of the Universe could not be from Eternity.

Again, we may argue thus, If God could have produced the World from Eternity, then it must have been either of nothing, or of some matter. If we say the former, then there was an instant, a time before the World was, therefore it was not Eternal. If we say the latter, *i. e.* that God made it of something, then that whereof he made it was either not Eternal, or Eternal. If you grant the First, you give up the Cause, for if the Matter whereof the World was made, was not of Eternal duration, then it is certain the World it self was not. If you assert the second, you make the World consubstantial with God, or rather you do as good as say it is God, for there is no real Being Uncreated (and if it be from Eternity it must needs be so) but you must hold it to be God.

In the next place, that Opinion is overthrown thus, Where there is *Succession* there is no *Eternity*, for where there hath been an *Infinite* vicissitude before the present state of things, there can be nothing *after*, for there can be *no more* than *Infinite*; but now it is evident that in this Mundane state there hath been one thing after another, or a continued *Succession*, and therefore there is no Eternity; for an *Eternal Succession* of things one after another is Impossible. Wherefore it is manifest that the World had a Beginning, and from some Cause, who is God; for one thing cannot *succeed* another where there was no *First*. Take this in the very words of * Bishop *Ward*, a Man of great Sense and Judgment, "If the World "was from Eternity, we must say that the course of Generations had no beginning, "and consequently that infinite Successions are past already, which is as much as "to say, that an infinite number of Successions are past, and if past, then they "are at an end: but 'tis a contradiction to say, that an infinite number hath "an end, and it will follow that there is a number greater than that which "is Infinite: and consequently not Infinite: so it is both Finite and Infinite. "The Eternity therefore of the World is impossible. So he.

* *Of God and the Souls Immortality.*

And as this Doctrine is adjusted to exact Reason, so it was the Unanimous suffrage of the Orthodox-Christians of old: That nothing could be created by God from Eternity, was the general sentiment of the Fathers, who used it often as an Argument against some of the * *Arians*, who granted the Son of God was from Eternity, and yet was not God. But they proceeded (and very rationally) on this Hypothesis, That 'tis the very Notion of a Created thing to be made of Nothing, and so it was nothing before it was something, and consequently did not always Exist. But on the contrary they looked upon Existing from Eternity, to be the proper Note and Character of Divinity. They held this was peculiar to God only, and not communicable to any Creature; so that it is utterly impossible the World should be Co-eternal with God, unless we confound God and the Crea-

* *Theodoret Contr. Hæret. l. 4.*

Creature. This is that which the Learned Dr. *Cudworth* insists upon, * *Nothing* saith he, *which is properly made or Created could be without Beginning: therefore the World could not have been made from Eternity; it was Impossible in the thing it self.* This is as much, I think, as can be said; God is not obliged to do Contradictions: that is, things that in the very Notion and Nature of them are Impossible; but we find upon a strict enquiry and reasoning, that to make the World Eternal is a meer Contradiction; therefore we cannot with any Reason maintain this Doctrine, of the Eternity of things that now are: there is not so much as a possibility of an Eternal Existence of them, for what was made had a Beginning, and whatever had a Beginning cannot in the least pretend to Eternity.

* *Intellectual System*, l. 1. c. 5.

This is that which *Moses* in the first place asserts: he affirms that the World had *a Beginning*. Indeed the contrary doctrine (as I have partly suggested) was the great Foundation of *Gentilism*, *viz.* That the Heavens and Earth and all things were from Eternity. Therefore *Moses* (to obviate this false Notion) not only in general asserts the *Creation*, but particularly sets down the origin and genealogy of *Light*, the *Sun*, *Moon*, *Stars*, *Earth*, *Sea*, and all other things in this visible World. This Divine *Genealogist*, lets Men know that the World had a Beginning, and that this Beginning was from God. *In the Beginning God created the Heaven and the Earth*: therefore they were not from Eternity.

But Secondly, more *Positively* we are to consider this Fundamental Principle, for though in proving *the World not to have been from Eternity*, we have at the same time, and by the same Arguments proved that *the World had a Beginning* (for the one follows on the other) yet now I will more directly pursue the same matter, in order to our main business, *viz.* to prove the Being of a God from the *Origin of the World*. Though (as hath been observed already) this Fundamental Truth was not acknowledg'd by the *generality* of *Pagans*, yet the *Wisest* amongst them were very apprehensive of it.

* *Principio, cœlum & terras, camposque liquentes,*
Lucentemque globum Lunæ, Titaniaque astra,
Spiritus intus alit, totamque infusa per artus
Mens agitat molem, & magno se corpore miscet,
Inde hominum pecudumque genus, &c.

* *Virgil.* 6. *Æn.*

This is that *Celestial Original* (as this Author calls it) which the World had at the first Creation, and which those of the most piercing minds among the Heathens freely acknowledged. And they had such Reasons as these for it; first, they proved it from the Novelty of all Histories, even according to * *Lucretius* (who was a Contemner of a Deity) the *Theban* and the *Trojan War*, are the utmost limits of knowledge, which Men have of the Antientest affairs of the World. Most of the *Grecian Historians* take their rise from the Empire of the *Persians*. *Plutarch* complains that beyond the times of *Theseus* and *Hercules*, nothing of certainty is discovered in History, nothing but vanities and Fables: and the very Life of *Theseus* is but a Fable, as this Author confesses. The first Age of the World was *Dark*, the second *Fabulous*, and there was only the third that deserved the name of *Historical*, saith *Varro*. *Macrobius* summs up all in short, telling us, † That the World cannot be very old, because all the knowledge we have of what hath been done in it doth not exceed above 2000 years, reckoning from the time wherein he lived, *viz.* in the Reigns of *Honorius*, and *Theodosius*; tho' his Computation be wrong, yet his Reasoning is right, that is, If there had been very many Ages before, yea many Millions of Ages (as some fondly dream) how come we not to have any Records and Monuments of those times? to say that all Ancient Records of foregoing times, were destroyed by some great Conflagration or Inundation is not satisfactory, for the Calamity was either Universal or Particular: if the former, so that the whole World perished, how came the World to be propagated again? if the latter, then those who survived might impart the Narrative to others that sprang up and succeeded; but we hear of no such thing from any credible hands.

* *Præterea si nulla fuit genitalis origo*
Terrarum & cœli, semperque æterna fuere,
Cur supra bellum Thebanum & funera Troja
Non alias alii quoque res cecinere Poetæ?
Quâ tot facta virûm toties cecidere? neq; usquam
Æternis famæ monumentis insita florent? Lib. 5.

† *Mundus non potest non novus admodum esse, cujus cognitio bis mille Annos non excedat.* Saturnal. l. 1.

It

It is true there are some strange Accounts talk'd of which are said to be before the Annals of *Moses*; such *Plato* speaks of, which an *Egyptian* Priest communicated to *Solon*, in which the *Athenians* were reported to be 9000 years old. And this people and others stiled themselves Αὐτόχθονες *Aborigines*, and said they were made out of the Earth, and proceeded from the fond conceit they had of their *Ancient* Original and Beginning; or perhaps it refers to the first Man's being formed out of the *Earth*. The *Arcadians* bragged they were before the Moon: but that perhaps is to be taken in another sense than 'tis generally, *i. e.* that they observed a Computation which was not according to the *motion of the Moon*, as others did. A prodigious Chronology or Account of the Age of the World, was maintained by the *Egyptians* and *Scythians*, by the *Chaldeans* and *Assyrians*, as *Diogenes Laertius* and *Diodorus* of *Sicily*, will inform us. The *Chinoise* likewise are very extravagant in their Calculations of the years of the World, and tell us they have in their possession the Histories of several Kings reigns, many Thousands of Years before *Adam*.

But it hath been proved by Learned and Inquisitive Heads, and particularly lately by * one who was a Worthy Prelate of our Church, that all these Historical Accounts which they brag of are mere Cheats and Fables. This they demonstrate in several particulars. And as for the People last mentioned, those that have lived among them, and have given us an impartial Narrative of them, acquaint us that this is part of their Character, that they are very Proud and Arrogant, and Magnifie themselves and their Nation above all Kingdoms in the World, and scorn to learn of others any Art or Science, yea though they know and confess it is much better than any among them. So their feigned boast of *Antiquity*, is of the same Original; it proceeds from their Pride and Self-conceit: they think hereby to inhanse their Credit and Repute among other Nations. So the *Praeadamites* assuming to themselves a Skill above others, set the World's Nativity back many Centuries of Years, pretending to argue from the Apostles words in *Rom.* 5. 13. but the Person who first founded this Opinion, recanted and abjured it in a short time, and all Men of sober and consistent Thoughts, have exploded it as a groundless fiction; and they reject all other Computations whatsoever, that Anticipate the *Mosaick* Chronology. It is easie to espy, by help of Sacred as well as Prophane History, the certain Series of Times in the several Ages of the World, and consequently to infer thence that it had a Beginning.

* *Stillingfleet's Origines Sacra.*

Besides, this Doctrine is proved from the account that is given of *Arts* and *Sciences*, how and when they first commenced. This is in some measure discovered by *Clement* of *Alexandria* in his *Stromata*, by *Jos*[illegible] his *Antiquities*, by *Strabo*, *Pliny* and other Ancients, who endeavour to assign the first invention of Arts, and to trace them to their first Authors. This Argument so prevailed on * *Lucretius* that he thence confesses *the World begun*. Whoso looks into past Ages, may discover the Original and Progress of Letters, Laws, Husbandry, Navigation, Mechanicks, Medicks, Mathematicks, and all sorts of Philosophy: he may observe the rise of Nations, and the first Infancy of Kingdoms and Commonwealths. If the World were from Eternity, how can these things be of so late a date? how comes it to pass that there are no Footsteps at all remaining of things that were before in Infinite Ages as was said before? But we may here confine our selves to the Infallible History of *Moses*, where the Beginning and First founding of Nations are recorded, *viz.* in *Gen.* 10. and other places. The first Plantation and Original of the chief People in the World, are particularly related by this Inspired Historian; or if you look upon him only as a bare Historian, it is certain that those things which he delivers could not be feigned by him, because the Memory of them was yet in Being among many at that time. It is ridiculous therefore to think he would wilfully impose upon Mankind, when there were so many able to confute him if he designed any such thing. Seeing then we can assign the *First rise* of Cities, Counties, Kingdoms, and of the very individual People that constituted them, we may conclude that even this alone, is sufficient to confirm the Truth of what we meet with in the very Entrance of the Bible, That the World had a *Beginning*. The apparent Rise and the gradual Progress of all these things, shew that the World

* *Quare etiam quædam nunc Artes expoliuntur,*
Nunc etiam augescunt, nunc addita Navigiis sunt
Multa, modo organici melicos peperere sonores:
Denique natura hæc rerum, ratioque reperta est.
Nuper, &c. Lib. 5.

was not always. The Learned *Isaac Vossius* hath attempted to offer *Physical* reasons to evince this, as namely that by the continual course of Rivers and Waters the Mountains would have been worn away by this time, and the Surface of the Earth would have been smooth, and such like things would necessarily be, if the World were so Old as some think of. But I have said enough already to convince any unprejudiced Man, and therefore there is no Necessity of flying to that sort of Reasoning. The main thing we are concerned in is to shew that this is a very solid *Proof of a Deity*, that the *Worlds Original* is a demonstration of it.

And to set this in a more advantageous light, and to urge the force of the Argument, I will proceed thus. Whatever thing had a Beginning, *once* was not, for if it *always* was, it had no Beginning. Now, that which once was not, cannot be brought into Being by that which is not, but by something that is, for that which is not is nothing, and therefore can produce nothing. Wherefore all things that are made, are made by some Existing Being, and that Being is the first Cause of those things, which is the very Notion of a *God*. There is not any Proposition clearer than this, That nothing can produce it self, for else it would follow that the same thing is, and is not in the same instant, and in the same respect, which is a perfect Contradiction. The World then could not give a Beginning to it self, when it was not Existing before, because the same thing cannot be and not be at the same time. So then the Being of *God* is evinced from the Being of the *World*. Whatsoever is produced is of some other, for nothing can beget and make it self: otherwise it will follow that the same thing is the Producer, and the thing produced, or to be produced. And then, as it is to be produced *it is not* yet in Being: but as it is a Producer, *it is*, which are Repugnancies that it is impossible to reconcile.

Or, we may argue thus; Action proceeds from Power and Force, these from Essence: but if things be *of themselves*, then they are by their proper Action, and so they had this before Essence, and they did something before they were: things exerted a Power and acted before they had acquired a Being, they operated, they made themselves before they had any Existence: which are Absurdities not to be admitted. Wherefore we may conclude that the World could not be of it self, or make it self, for *Nothing* hath no Power nor Action. Before things were they could not be the Authors of their production: therefore they had a first Cause, and that first Cause is *God*.

Again it is plain that no Finite Being can be the Original and Cause of it self, for if it gave a Being to it self, it was different from it self; it was the Agent and the Patient, which are two things: so there are Two Gods, Two Omnipotents, Two Infinites, (and yet one of them is Finite, as was supposed in the Argument, for we were speaking of a Finite Being) which is such gross and Palpapable Nonsense that no intelligent Ears can bear it.

Besides I could add that it is plain, by the light of reason that those Beings, (as Angels and Men) that know any thing more perfect than themselves, were not from themselves; for if they were, they would have given themselves all those Perfections the Idea of which they have. If they had Existed by their own Vertue and Power, they would certainly be Perfect and Unlimited; and the reason is, because there was none to limit them. And it is as plain, from the close dictates of Reason, that these Beings could not be produced by any other thing, which hath not in it all those Perfections, *i. e.* which is not *God*. Therefore on all considerations it is Evident that these Beings could not Exist of themselves; there is a *Cause* from whence they were, and that is the Deity. All the Art and Sophistry of Atheists cannot Evade this: and therefore we may rest in this Argument, and demonstrate a *God* from the very *Rise* and *Original of things*: the make of the World proves a Deity.

But especially, if we joyn with the *Original* of things the *Succession* of them, we shall find the Argument yet much stronger. The *Order of Causes*, which proceed not *in infinitum*, leads us directly to God. For when we trace and run up the whole Series of Causes, at last we come to One that was Self-Existent, who is that Being whom we call *God*. This we must necessarily hold, that something is which was never made or produced, or had a Beginning, or else we must admit either a Circle of productions, in which the Effect shall make its own Cause: or (which is as impossible) an Infinite Succession in Causalties, by which nothing will be made, for it

it is a thing impossible. To apprehend this we must know that there is a *Subordination* and *Dependance* of one thing upon another, and at last you arrive to the first Mover and Agent, who hath his Motion and Agency from none, but is the first cause of all Motion and Action. So that if you follow up the course of *Successive* Generation, you will find at length a First Principle, or Independant Being, by whom all things were made. And this Being is no other than *God*; for to be of Himself, and to depend on no Cause is the true Notion of *God*. We are sure that there cannot be an Infinite and *Eternal Succession*, because if one thing succeed another, then something was before another, and then they are not all Infinite and Eternal, and so the Infinite series of Generations cannot possibly be. This then we may rely upon, That the Progress of Natural Causes is not Infinite, seeing in *Infinite* there is no *Order* of *Causes*, this consisting in the *subordination* and *coherence* of them: but there is no such thing in *Infinite*, and consequently there can be no *Order*, and where there is not this, there is no Subordination. It follows then that there is a Self-existing Cause which was of no other, yet gave Being to all other things: *i. e.* there is a Supreme Infinite Eternal Being, that made the World. Thus a God is proved not only from the *Existence*, but from the *Succession* of things, for second Causes are subordinate to the first, and cannot move but by its permission: therefore there must be some First Essence by which all act, and on which all others depend.

But I have not yet done with my first Argument, whereby I undertook to Evince a Deity, from the *Worlds Original*. I will further consider the make of it, more strictly, as it is expressed by *Creation*, not only in the first Chapter of *Genesis*, but in several other places of Scripture. This then is the thing which I urge, that *Creation*, which is producing something into Being, which before had no præexisting Matter, and no Being at all, is a sufficient Argument to prove a Deity, that is, an Infinite and Almighty Being; for such a one only, properly speaking, can *create*, because 1. He is the Sole Cause, and Existence is the First Effect: and nothing can possibly intervene between these: *Non-ens* is the only medium, if any: but *Nothing* cannot act, and so it cannot put in to hinder: and where there is no hindrance or opposition, there a Free Agent can Act, and will Act when and how he pleaseth: and consequently *Creation*, i. e. giving Existence to things that were not, is God's prerogative, and his only. 2. It must be so, because he needs no Matter to work upon. All other Agents effect their business with some Instruments, and require Materials to Act with, whence it is, that Creation which is simply out of Nothing, is not the work of a Creature: it exceeds the Power of mere Natural Agents to produce one Atom anew. But 'tis not so where the worker is Omnipotent, and needs no pre-existent Matter to operate upon; accordingly he can produce all things out of Nothing. Indeed the Philosophers of old endeavoured to run down this Doctrine with their *ex Nihilo Nihil fit*. This was their celebrated Maxim, this was their old Saw, *Nothing can be made out of Nothing*, which is true of bare Matter, and of the Natural course of production in the World as now it is. Therefore when they went about to prove this Principle, they did it only from the present course of Nature and Generation in the World, or from works of Art, both which suppose some Previous Matter. It is plain, and none can deny it, that in the ordinary works of Nature and Art, *Materials* are requisite. But we must not argue from the present establish'd order of the Universe unto the First Production of it: we must not argue from usual and natural Occurrences, and from the force of Nature, which is Finite, to the Extraordinary Existence of things at First, and the Infinite exertments of Divine Power. The aforesaid Maxim signifies nothing as to the first Production of things, called *Creation*, for the weakness of the Creature must not prejudicate the Omnipotency of God. And therefore the Divine Omnipotency ought not to be scann'd by that Rule, *Something cannot be made of Nothing*: though we grant it is absurd to say, *Something is made by Nothing*, to which *Aristotle* gives his Suffrage, when he tells us more than once in his, *Metaphysicks*, Ἀεὶ ἐκ τοῦ δυνάμει ὄντος γίνεται τὸ ἐνεργείᾳ ὂν ὑπὸ ἐνεργείᾳ ὄντος, Always out of that which is potentially Existent is produced an actual Being by something that actually is.

I conclude then that the abovesaid Rule is not General, and therefore must not be attended to here. It is the privilege of an Infinite Being to make that exist, which had no Existence before. *God said, Let there be Light, Gen.* 1. 3. It expresses the

the *Facility* of the doing it: The Almighty Power produceth things out of Nothing as easily as Men can *speak* or pronounce a word. In brief, the First Cause is Infinitely Perfect, and therefore can do whatever implies not a contradiction: and 'tis certain that the *Creation* of things, (which is the making of things out of Nothing) is not of that Nature. Here is nothing harsh and irreconcilable to Reason, here is nothing insuperably difficult and impossible. And so I have finished the consideration of the Notion of *Creation*, whence it is Evident that the World was not from Eternity, but that it had a Beginning. What once was not could not Eternally Exist: but the World was *Created*, which implies *it once was not*, therefore it could not be from Eternity. And positively 'tis said by the Inspired Author that *God Created it*, there was a *First Cause*, a Wise and Omnipotent Being that gave Existence to it.

See then how Absurd and Groundless the *Atomical* Doctrine is, as the *Platonists* held that the World Eternally Existed with God, and flowed from him by *Necessity* (which wild Notion I refuted before) so others say there were Eternal *Atoms*, from whence afterwards the World was produced *by Chance*. Thus *Democritus* dated all things from the Casual Motion of an Infinite company of small Particles, variously agitated in an Infinite ultramundane space, and at last by mere hap jumping into this Conjunction we see. *Epicurus* afterwards maintained this Hypothesis, and from him *Lucretius* took it, and like a Fanciful Poet (as he was) rather than a solid Philosopher, pretends to give an Account of those frisking curvetting Atoms, whose fortuitous confluence produced this Fabrick of the World. Rather than he will confess that this Mundane System, was made by an Understanding and All-wise Being, he ridiculously ascribes the Original of all things in the Universe to the general Rendezvous of sensless Atoms, which being uncapable of any Consulting and Caballing, yet after frequent rencounters luckily fell into this Excellent Order which we see the World now in: whereas I have demonstrated that Eternal Matter could not move itself (which he asserts) and that there was a First Intelligent Cause of all things; *In the Beginning God created*; therefore the World was not by *Chance*. Where things are from a *Certain Cause*, they cannot be so; yea, to confound the *Atomists*, God *in six days* created the World, that it might appear that these things were not merely *Casual*, but that their Production was Gradual, Orderly and Methodical, wherein it is plain that one thing was in order to another. God would not absolve the Work in lesser time, to confute, and if it were possible to convince the Fortuitous Philosophers who give the Heavens and the Earth their Existence from a crew of prancing Atoms. I know *Philo* the Jew, and some Writers of the Christian Church, as *Origen* and *Austin*, have fansied the World was made in an Instant, but there is not the least colour for this Conceit of theirs, seeing 'tis directly and in plain terms said in the Book of *Genesis*, that God was so long a time as the space of *Six Days*, in finishing the Fabrick of the World: and the *Particular Days Works* are distinctly set down. This shews it was the deliberate Contrivance of a Wise, Powerful and Beneficent Being.

To draw then towards the conclusion of this Part of my Discourse, *viz.* concerning the *Origin*, *Make* and *Creation* of the World, we have Ground to bless God, for the full discovery of this Truth. * That of a late Writer is a great falsity, that *there is no other Ground, for the common belief of the Creation of the World, but the Tradition of the Jews, which afterwards came down to the Christians*: For we may be persuaded of this by Reason partly, of which you have had some Account; whence the Truth of that old Maxim hath been made good, *viz.* That the *Novity of Being* is of the very Nature and Essence of a *Creature*. But though there are Reasons sufficient in Nature to prove God to be the Maker of the World, yet the Beginning, Duration, and Manner of it are manifested only by the light of Faith. *Through Faith we understand that the Worlds were framed by the word of God, so that, things which are seen were not made of things which do appear*, but out of Nothing *Heb.* 11. 3. Indeed, to speak properly, the *Pagans* by the conduct of Reason owned God to be the *Maker*, not the *Creator* of the World. We are beholding to the *Sacred Scriptures* for the discovery and belief of this latter: we have this founded on the History of *Moses* an inspired Writer, and other plain Testimonies in the Old and New Testament; it was revealed from Heaven, that we might give the firmer

† *R. Simon. Crit. Hist. l.* 3.

firmer credit to it. The Philosophers are partly to be excused for their Disputes about the Origin of all things, for their talking of *Necessity* and *Chance*, for their wild conceits of *Eternal Atoms*, for their fanciful Hypothesis about the first Principles of all Beings, concerning which the *Phœnician* and *Egyptian* Sages (as *Sanchoniathon* and *Manetho* tell us) so much differed, and concerning which the most celebrated Writers among the *Greeks* (viz. *Thales*, *Anaximander*, *Anaximenes*, *Xenophanes*, *Parmenides*, *Democritus*, *Epicurus*, *Empedocles*, *Metrodorus*, *Diogenes*, *Apollionata*) formed so many different Notions, as *Diodore* of *Sicily* in the beginning of his *History*, and *Plutarch* in his *Placits* of *Philosophy* particularly report. But *We* are upon a sure Bottom, by *Faith* we understand the make of the World out of Nothing, in Time. Let us then admire and reverence the Sacred History, which gives us a compleat Account of the *Beginning* of all things. Here only the *Creation* is plainly and distinctly delivered: we have Divine Authority and Revelation to Back our Reason and Natural Argumentation.

Lastly, to shut up all, let us remember that this *Origin* and *Existence* of things, this making and creating of the World is a *Proof of God*, and therefore let us consider of it, and make use of it to this purpose, for I intend it for that end. The first and most obvious Notion that we have of *God*, is that he is the *Maker* of all things, that every thing had its Being from him. We have this apprehension of the *Deity*, that he is the First Agent, that he is that Great Being, who was the Cause and Author of all things. This is so natural that *Vossius* tells us those of *Peru* call the Sovereign Deity by a * Title which interpreted is the *Framer of the Universe*. So in the Holy Writings, *He that made the Earth by his Power, and established the World by his Wisdom, and stretched out the Heavens by his Understanding*, is the description of *God*, *Jer.* 10. 12. and it is a Proof that he is the True God. Whereas *Idols* are called there *the Gods that have not made the Heaven and the Earth*, *v.* 11 † There was a sort of Hereticks of Old that held the World was made by *Angels*, and thence they were called *Angelici*, and this was the Doctrine of *Simon* the *Sorcerer*, of *Menander*, *Basilides*, and others, as * *Theodoret* relates. But it was condemned, and that most justly, by the Ancient Fathers, because it is the sole Prerogative of *God* to create: this Almighty work is not to be attributed to any other, and therefore seeing the World was created, we are certain who was the *Author* of this work: for I hope I have sufficiently proved that the *Origin of the World* is an undeniable Proof and Eviction of a *Deity*. So much for my First Argument. I proceed now to the Second.

* *Pachaia. Chacic. de Idololat.* lib. 1.

† *Epiphan. hæres.* 60.

* *Hæret. Fab.* l. 1. c. 1. 2, 3.

II. The Nature of our *Souls* proves a God. Man is the greatest Wonder, and Master-piece of this lower World, for he consists not only of a Body, but a Rational Spirit: and it is certain that the Wonders of this latter, far exceed those of the other. Several have used that Topick, namely of the Frame of *Humane Bodies*, and likewise of the Structure of the *Greater World* for the proof of a Deity; And both these I have largely handled in a * *Particular Discourse*, which is the reason why I do not make use of those Arguments here. But I do not remember that any Writers have insisted on this Topick, which I have just now mentioned, that is, *the Souls of Men*, which without doubt are as great a proof of the Divinity as the others. And therefore it is worth our observing that it is the description of God, that he not only *stretcheth forth the Heavens, and lays the Foundations of the Earth*, but *he formeth the Spirit of Man within him*, *Zech.* 12. 1. Which lets us know that not only the Visible and Material World, but the Spiritual and Invisible Soul of Man argues a Deity. And indeed if we consider what a Spacious Habitation was erected for Man, before he came into it, and particularly what an Excellent Structure was built for his Soul, we cannot but conclude that the Soul it self which inhabits there, is much more excellent and admirable. And that is it which I am now to give you some Account of.

* *A Demonstration of the Existence and Providence of God from the Greater and Lesser World.*

In respect chiefly of this Noble Part of Man, it is said that he was created *in the Image of God*, for the Spirit or Mind of Man is a lively Representation of the Nature of God himself. Here the Divine Being is pourtrayed in Miniature: and therefore it is an undeniable Argument that there is such a Being. After God had made the World, he placed Man in it, to be his own Representative, Image and Memorial there. So Great Princes, when they have Built a Magnificent City, and compleatly finished it, cause their *Effigies* to be set up in the midst of it to be

be seen by all. The *Soul* of Man is the Resemblance of Divinity, and bears the very Mark and Impress of the Almighty on it. When I name the *Soul* of Man, I mean by it an Understanding Spirit fitted for the reception of Truth, desirous of it and delighted in it. I mean an Intellectual Being that is Calculated for the Knowledge of God and of Religion, that is endued with Faculties which can distinguish Good from Evil, and have Power to act accordingly; I mean a Being that hath such Endowments and Functions as render it serviceable not only to Religious and Holy purposes, but those that are Secular and Common.

To be more Particular and distinct in the account of the Excellent Nature of the Soul, we must know that it hath two Grand sorts of General Powers or Functions; First, those that are meerly Rational, Secondly, those that are Sensitive or Animal: and under this latter you must take in the vegetative Faculty too, that is, whereby the Natural and Vital Functions in the Body are performed: for even these in Rational Humane Beings depend partly on the Mind or Rational Soul.

First, Let us view the Soul as it is purely *Rational*, that is, as it consists of *Understanding* and *Will*, for all its Superior Faculties may be reduced to these two. The former of these, *viz.* the Intellectual faculty hath several noble Branches, belonging to it, as first *Simple Apprehension*, or a *bare Perception* of such Objects as are before us, without affirming or denying any thing concerning them. This act of the Mind lets us only into the Knowledge of the Existence of the thing, without farther enquiring into the Nature and Properties of it. It barely considers things in themselves, and forms a naked Idea of them, without pronouncing any further about them. But even here a Divine Character is discernible, for this knowing and Discerning Principle must be from one that is more knowing and discerning, even from an Omniscient Mind.

Secondly, *Reason*, which is accompanied with Affirmation or Negation; for the Mind having apprehended things proposed to it, joyns Notions together, and collects others from them. This is the *Discursive* or *Dianoetick* Power of the Soul; whereby it is able to infer one thing from another, and to draw Conclusions from them. It can turn it self to an Infinite variety of things, and multiply Notions, and out of the different respects which diverse things have to one another, coin different Conceptions of them. By reasoning we discover unknown Truths, by the help of some Truths which we knew: and the Concatenation of Truths is subservient to this Operation of the Mind; for this is certain that true Notions of things have a Relation to one another, and are linked together, and depend on one another. By *Reasoning* we can contract Ideas, and make one General one, which comprises indifferently and equally a thousand Particulars. Such is the Divine Make of Humane Souls.

Thirdly, *Judgment*, which is something more than Ratiocination, for this is in order to that: after the Mind hath been employed in the former, it passes to the exerting of the latter. It proceeds to *compare* things together, and Judiciously to *Determine* this or that, concerning the things and propositions which are before it. The Mind hath power to divide and cut through things, to pierce between those that lie close together, and to lay them open, and to allot to every thing its proper limits. As it multiplies Ideas, so it heightens and refines them: it can dive into the utmost recesses of things, and discern their individual Nature. The mighty Power of the Soul is seen in its deliberate and sober weighing of things, and Notions together, and its Judging and Censuring accordingly. And truly without this Accuracy and Steadiness of the Mind the Notions which we have of things, are but vain Amusements. To this belongs the *Methodizing* and Ranging of Ideas in a fit and proper Order, without which there can be no exact Judging concerning them. I do not see then any Reason, why * any one should call the Understanding a Passive faculty, and say that it only receives Ideas of things. But this as well as the Will, is Active, and shews its Divine Author.

* *Malebranch's search after Truth. Chap.* 1.

Fourthly, *Wisdom*, which takes Notice not only of the Truth, but of the Goodness of the Object; and its Office is to discuss of the Lawfulness or Unlawfulness of Actions. It's business is to discern when and how they are to be done, which shews that the Mind, which is endued with this Gift is of a Divine and Heavenly Extraction.

Fifthly,

Fifthly, *Providence*, which is the Souls looking forward, and from past Affairs knowing and judging what is to be done for the future. * The Divine Prescience and Man's Mind are akin, saith the excellent *Platonist*. God is seen in the judicious and wise Forecast of the Soul. It is an Argument of the Divinity that the Mind is inabled to foresee what is good and evil, in order to the doing of one, and avoiding the other. And under this exercise of the Rational Soul is comprehended its proposing some *Design*, and acting for some *End*: And it is the singular prerogative of Humane Minds, that in order to this they are able to contrive *Means* proportionably; they can make one thing subordinate and subservient to another; and that which first of all moved them, and is intended by them is the End, which they design to reach by those Means.

* Θεῖ δὲ μαντικὴ ἡ ἀνθρώπου νοῦ χρῆσις συγγενὲς. *Max. Tyr. Diss.* 3.

Sixthly, To the understanding or knowing Function belongs the *Fancy* or *Imagination*, which is a new minting of thoughts from the various Notions already in the Soul. It is so called because we more strongly and impetuously represent to our Minds the *Images* and Figures of things which before we had a Conception of: We do as 'twere set the *Picture* of the object before our Eyes, and with earnestness gaze upon it. And under this we may reckon *Invention*, or *Wit*, *i. e.* a quick and delicate, a brisk and active turn of the Mind, upon any occasion or emergency whatsoever, which argues a Divine Stamp upon it.

Seventhly, To the Intellect also belongs the *Memory*. for the Soul lays up in herself several Notions of things which she hath known and perceived; and this *Retaining* of them is called the *Memory*, and her *calling them to Mind*, and *Retriving them* is stiled *Remembrance*. The one is hoarding up Ideas in the Mind; the other is bringing them out upon occasion, and viewing them. The former is a Registering all those vast Multitudes of things taken into the Mind; the latter is a repeating the Perception of them, and making them present though they are past. The wonderful Capacity of this Faculty is an irrefragable Proof of the Divine Author of it. *Ezra* had all the Scripture by heart, and could rehearse it Word for Word, saith *Eusebius*. *Theomistocles* called all the Citizens of *Athens*, and *Scipio* all the People of *Rome*, and *Cyrus*, and *Xerxes* all the Souldiers in their Armies (though they consisted of so many thousands of Men) by their Names. *Theodectes* the Sophister was called *Mnemon* for his great Memory. *Charmidas* retained all that ever he had read in any Book, as *Pliny* tells us. The Emperor *Adrian* never forgot any thing he had either heard or read, saith *Suetonius*. The prodigious Memory of *Simplicius* is taken notice of by St *Augustine*, in his Treatise of the Original of the Soul, Book 4th Chap. 7th. This is the great Store-house or Treasury of all Objects that the Mind converses with; and that it should be able to hold so many different impressions is very Stupendious. Here the *Grammarian* and Critick lodge many Millions of Words. Here the *Orator* Treasures up all his Topicks; here the *Physician*, the *Anatomist*, the *Botanist* bestow all the parts of the Body, all the Herbs and Plants, all Symptoms, Diseases, and their Cures; Here the *Cosmographer* lays up all his Countries, Kingdoms, Cities, Hills, Vallies, *&c.* the *Mathematician* all his Theorems, Propositions, Demonstrations. Here the *Historian* ranges all his Relations and Narratives, the *Schoolman* his Distinctions and Divisions; the *Chronologer* his several Periods of time, and all the Passages that belong to them. The *Philosopher* his Physicks, Ethicks, Politicks, his Observations and Experiments. And the like we may say of all other Artists and Students, and we may say it with Admiration; for that this vast multitude of things should be preserved entire in the Mind, without being mingled and confounded together, and that a Man should be able in an instant to fetch out any or all of them for his present Use and Service, can be resolved into nothing less than a Power that is derived from an Omnipotent Cause.

Eighthly, To the Judgment and Memory belongs *Conscience*. This contains in it, first, enquiry and searching into our Actions and Condition; secondly, giving Sentence according to the Enquiry; which are both acts of *Judgment*: And the Soul's reflecting on its self, and taking an Account of its Actions is an Exertment of the *Memory*. So that Conscience is a compound Operation, a mixture of Judging and Remembring. By virtue of this it is that the Soul is capable of knowing it self, and calling it self and all its Actions to an Account. Which is a thing that is proper to this part of Man: For 'tis plain that our bodily Eyes, which can see all other things, cannot see themselves. And here it is to be taken notice of that Consci-

Conscience is that part in a Man, which is the Chief and Noblest, and therefore ought to bear sway and to be exactly obeyed. It was with great and profound Reason affirmed by *Aristotle*, that * a Man must live according to that, which is the *most Principal* and *Ruling* thing in him, *i. e.* his Mind and Conscience. This was called by his Mr. *Plato* the † *Chariotier*, the great Guide and Governour of Man; this is styled by *Antoninus* the * *President* or Leader, and at other times † *That which hath Dominion in a Man*, and by the Stoicks, * *That which hath Authority*, and lords it in the Soul: and by these and others it is frequently called ἡγεμονικὸν, that which hath the *Principality* and *Empire* in a Man: and sometimes it passes by the name of a † *Demon*, i. e. some Skilfull, Governing, and Superintending Spirit: yea, it is often stiled *a* † *God*, because it is God's Substitute and Vicegerent in a Man. Which proves that it is the Chief thing in him, and ought to be the Guide of all his actions. This is the Supreme and Ruling Faculty, and therefore all the Others are to submit to this, and to be conformable to its dictates in all things. Here then are the plain Marks of *Divine Wisdom* in the frame of the Soul.

Δεῖ πρὸς τὶ ἄρχον ζῆν. Ethic.

† *Ἡνίοχος.*

Προστάτης.

† Τὸ ἔνδον κυριεῦον.

* Κυριώτατον τῆς ψυχῆς.

† Δαίμων, ὁ ἔνδον δαίμων, ὁ δαίμων ὃν ἐν ἑκάστῳ προστάτην καὶ ἡγεμόνα ὁ Ζεὺς ἔδωκεν. *Plato. Antonin.*

* Θεὸς ἐν σοὶ θεός. *Plat.* O ἐν σοὶ θεός. *Antonin.*

Βροτοῖς ἅπασιν ἡ συνείδησις θεός. *Menand.*

Lastly, That which doth as it were comprehend all that I have remarked concerning the Soul, is *Contemplation* or *Meditation*. By this Act of our Minds we know both our selves and all external objects, we cast our Eyes inwards, and converse with our selves, and dwell at Home, and we also hold Commerce Abroad, and suffer Nothing to be concealed from us. We represent to our selves all past Generations of the World, and survey all the Events and Occurrences that happen, so that nothing can escape our View and Observation. We are able even when we sit still, to ramble all the World over; tho' our Bodies are confined to a Place, yea to a Prison, our Souls are free and at large, and our Thoughts can be any where, and we may make Trial of the utmost Capacity of our Understandings and expansion of our Minds. But especially when Contemplation is exercised about Divine Matters, it is in its utmost perfection. The Great Roman Moralist hath this Excellent passage, speaking of the Minds Contemplating these things; by this, saith he, * we are Elevated and seem to be Higher and Taller than we were: we despise Humane things, and whilst our Thoughts are Conversant about Things that are above, and that are Heavenly, we contemn these Things that are below as Petty and Mean, yea, as the meanest of all. And that is an Admirable Exclamation of *Seneca*, † what a sorry Groveling thing is Man, if he doth not raise himself up above Things that are meerly Humane, and Converse with Spiritual and Divine Objects! It is by *Contemplaeion*, by Attention and Application of Mind that he doth this: which demonstrates the Transcendent worth and excellency of the Soul.

* *Erigimur, altiores fieri videmur, humana despicimus, cogitantesque supera atque cœlestia, hæc nostra ut exigua & minima contemnimus.* Cic. 4. Academ.

† *O Quam contempta res est homo, nisi supra humana se erexerit?* Præf. ad lib. 1. Nat. Quæst.

Thus much of the *Knowing* or *Discerning Function* of the Soul The next is the *Will*, which is that Faculty whereby we embrace or disgust any thing, according as it was concluded right or wrong, good or evil, by our judging Faculty. As the work of the *Understanding* is to distinguish Truth from Error, and Virtue from Vice, so that of the *Will* is to choose the one, and reject the other; the Divine Framer of all things hath made the Will to follow the Understanding. He wisely appointed that this should be determined by that, that we might Will with Reason. It is the Office of this Function to decree what the Understanding had only debated. *This* determines, as *that other* Disputes. *This* chooses; *that* only propounded and shew'd what is fit to be done. *That* weighs; *This* peremptorily casts the Scale. Whence it is apparent that the faculty of *Willing* is more Noble and Excellent than that of the Understanding, because in its acting it depends not so much on externnal Objects as the other doth, for the Mind in willing is more a Mistress of this than of the other: And besides, it is rendred more perfect by this operation than by the other. And this must needs be of a nobler Nature than the other, because it is that which the other tends to, and ultimately aims at, for Principles and all the attendants of it are in order to Choice. In this great and considerable Power of the Rational Soul are observable these three things:

First, Its *Inclination*, which is twofold, *Appetition*, and *Aversation*; a Rational Appetite carryed towards that which Reason presents as good; or else turned a-

way

way from that which was represented to it as evil. For as Reason finds out and shews where the truth is, partly by affirming, as thus, This is Right; partly by denying, as thus, This is Wrong; so to these two are answerable in the Will, first a *Desire*, which is a kind of Affirmation; secondly *Avoiding*, which is a kind of Negation. The intellect apprehends and judges concerning the nature of things, whether they be true or false, whether they be good or evil: But by virtue of the *Will* we either Prosecute or Avoid those things which we have a Perception and Apprehension of.

Secondly, Its *Freedom* and *Choice*, which is the immediate Root of all Moral Actions. The Rational Soul cannot be forced; it hath an inbred and native, Principle whereby it acts Freely, and is not capable of Compulsion. Whence perhaps *Nedibah*, *Voluntaria*, *Spontanea*, *Job* 30. 15. is the word for the *Soul*, because of the Will, and Choice, and Free Consent of the nature of it. Liberty is of the intrinsick nature of the Soul, it hath an Elective Power which is inseparable from it. After the Understanding hath made a right discovery of things, the Will freely agrees to them, and there is a Rational Choice, and then the action is truly Moral; for when the Rational Appetite desires that which the Reason Affirms, flies from that which Reason denies, then result Honesty, Vertue, Goodness.

Thirdly, Its *Dominion* and *Sovereignty*, and that both in respect of others, and of our selves. As to the *former*, that of *Socrates* represents it fully, * no Man hath Lordship over another Man's Mind. A Man may always enjoy the liberty of his Mind and Conscience. The greatest Tyrants cannot usurp upon his Will; they have no power to change the true Bent of it: It is able to stand firm to its own Inclination, notwithstanding the most violent shocks from without; yea, and notwithstanding any Principle within. Which is the *latter* thing I mentioned: For it hath a Dominion over the other chief Power of the Soul, the Intellect. For tho' (as it was said before) the Will was made to follow the Understanding, and it is generally and for the most part true, that the Judgment and Perswasion move the Will more or less, yet they must not be thought to compel it, because that will destroy the free and elective Operation of the Soul. And besides, it is not to be doubted that sometimes the Will goes against the Judgment; the Soul Wills not with Understanding; yea, hath no hint at all from it, as in some very strange Actions. And on the contrary, it is not to be denyed that sometimes there are very Eminent Acts of Vertue and Piety proceeding from an impetuous Will and Choice, without any previous dictates of the intellectual part; the Elective Faculty hath the start of Reason, and out-runs it, but afterwards they meet together, and friendly Unite. But even then when natural Reason goes not before, and holds not the light to the Will, there is some higher Illumination from above, which powerfully guides the Rational Mind, and makes it submit to a supernatural dictate and influence, which are consistent with the Freedom of it. Thus there are plain Impresses of Divinity on the Soul of Man, whether acting in an ordinary or extraordinary way.

* Οὐδεὶς ἀλλοτρίᾳ ἡγεμονικῷ χρῆται. *Arian.*

To the Will belong the *Affections*, the excellent Contrivance of which argues a Deity. These are smart and brisk Commotions of the Soul, produced according to the difference of Objects presented to the Senses, or any ways convey'd to the Mind. These immediately flow from the Will, or the desiring and elective faculty of the Soul. Or, we should not speak amiss, if we said, that the Affections are the same with the Will, only accompanied with some Passion of the Body, and emotion of the Blood. These, as far as they are pure, and follow the dictates of Religion, appertain wholly to the Rational Will; but of the *Passions* properly so called, *viz.* as they contain any thing of Disturbance and Disorder, I shall speak under the next Head, *viz.* the *Inferior* and *Animal Faculty* of the Soul. It is sufficient at present to know that there is a close Affinity between the Will and Affections; yea, that they may be said to be the same; for the tendency of the Will are *Desire*, *Love*, *Hatred*, *Joy*, *Grief*, *Anger*, *Hope*, *Fear*, &c. These are operations of the Rational Appetite, or so many acts of the Will. Or we may express it thus, the Will according to the variety of Objects it is conversant with, hath various Names, and is called Love, Hatred, &c. just as the Ocean hath different Denominations, and is called the *British*, the *Caledonian*, the *Atlantick*, the *Indian*, the *Ethiopick* Sea, according to the different shores it washes.

Thus then we have displayed the several Faculties that belong to the *Rational* Life of Man: And we find the Understanding, Will, and Affections to be acts of the same Rational Soul; or if you will, thus, The same Soul from its diversity of Functions hath diverse Denominations; as it conceives things it is called the *Understanding*; as it discourses, *Reason*; as it determines, *Judgment*; as it more narrowly discusses the Manner and Circumstances of things, *Wisdom*; as it takes a Prospect of Futurities, *Providence*; as it nimbly works upon its Notions it is furnished with, *Imagination*; as it retains things, *Memory*; as it reflects on it self and its Actions, *Conscience*; as it chuses or refuses things, *Will*; as it loves, or hates, or fears, or grieves, *&c. Affections*, for it hath this name from the Souls *affecting* the Body by due and orderly moving and agitating of the Spirits, and likewise from the Body's moving and affecting the Soul by the different Objects presented to the bodily Senses, which is produced from the Union of Body and Soul. Thus when a convenient and suitable Object is propounded to us, and we have some knowledge of the excellency and goodness of it, the Soul then is filled with *Hope*, *Desire*, *Joy*, *Love*. And when we have the Fruition of it, we are much more ravish'd with these Affections, ardently *hoping* for, and *desiring* the continuance of it, *rejoycing* in the intimate Conjunction with it, and embracing it with *a love* that knows no intermission. Or if we have not arrived to the knowledge of the Object, but only as we apprehend it in general to be good, then we *admire* it, and if we continue long in doing so we are *Astonish'd*.

Hitherto the Motions of the Soul are placid and benign: but when Objects of another Nature, *viz.* such as are unpleasant and unsuitable are offer'd to the Soul, then it is disturb'd with contrary Passions, as *Hatred*, *Fear*, *Sadness*, *Anger*. As it sees them at a distance, it *Dislikes* and *Abhors* them, is grieved at them, is affraid of them, and enraged with *Anger* against them: But much more when these Evils are present and urgent on us, then these Passions are exerted to the heighth, and they push us on to avoid and fly from these Objects as hurtful and dangerous. In short all the Springs of these Motions, and the Motions themselves were design'd for the good of Man, either to promote his Knowledge, or his Practice (though 'tis true by his own willful Miscarriage they are often distorted and abused;) they were, I say, originally designed for the good and wellfare both of his Body and Soul; they were implanted in him, and engrafted in his very Nature, for the great ends of Religion, and in order to his Eternal Happiness.

From what hath been suggested it is plain that there are but two Grand and Capital Powers or Functions of the Rational Soul, *viz. Knowledge* and *Appetite*, or *Perception* and *Volition*, and that these are not really and essentially distinct from the Soul it self. Nor perhaps are the Faculties really distinct from one another, but are Modal Differences of the same Soul. In short, all these Operations and Functions are the same Soul, Understanding and Willing (for unto these *two* all the rest are to be reduced.) These two make but one *Rational Faculty*, which was the first thing to be consider'd, and which shews the wonderful Make and Structure of the Soul, and undeniably proves that it is the Workmanship of a Divine Hand. From these it's excellent Features and Lineaments we know who is the Parent of it.

Let us now pass to the other, but inferiour, Faculty of the Soul, the *Animal* one, for (as was said at first) Humane Souls have a sensitive Life, Inclination, or Appetite, as well as a Rational one, and this is a Faculty really distinct from the former. The Frame of Man is such that there are plainly to be discern'd in him not only Reason and Will, but a principle of outward Sensation. To give some account of the Nature and Quality of this latter, you must know that this Inferiour Power of the Soul imitates the Superiour Faculty. As there are in the former the Intellect and Will, (of which I have particularly spoken) so there are in the latter some Resemblances of these, for we find in it a kind of *Cognoscitive* and *Appetitive* Power, or as they are more generally stiled, *Imagination*, and *Sensitive Appetite*. The former of these (for there is the *Sensitive*, as well as the *Rational Imagination*, of which I spoke before) is that Perception which converses immediately with outward Objects, and holds intimate Correspondence with them. The bodily Senses are the main Instruments of this Faculty, and let in all sorts of Corporeal Objects to it. And the latter, *viz.* the Sensitive Appetite, follows the dictates and guidance of that sensual Perception, or Imagination, and there-

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by ſtirs up in us Anger, Fear, Sorrow, Joy, and all other neceſſary and natural Motions, and ſallyings of the Affections. For this we muſt inform our ſelves of (and it is of great uſe in order to the framing a right Notion of the Souls Men) that the *Affections* belong both to the *Rational Will*, and *Senſitive Appetite*. Thoſe that are Sedate, Orderly, and conducted by Reaſon, appertain to the one; thoſe that are irregular, inordinate and turbulent ſpring from the other. But as theſe muſt not be confounded, ſo neither muſt the *Rational* and *Senſitive* Faculties of the Soul, which is the grand thing I am now about.

Tho' the latter (as I have ſhewed) emulates the former, and ſtrives as it were to reſemble it, yet we muſt be careful to maintain the Difference between them. This I know is not eaſily done, and that is the reaſon why there are ſuch confuſed thoughts concerning this matter. But ſo far as I apprehend, the true account of that is this, the Humane Soul is both Rational and Senſitive, it is the former as it exerts pure intellectual or rational Acts; it is the latter as it operates on the Body, or is operated upon by it, for as the Body hath power to act on the Soul, ſo the Soul hath a power to act on the Body. Now, accordingly as the Soul acts or is acted upon, it hath the denomination of Rational or Senſitive, and may as it were be conſidered (in reſpect of ſuch different acts as are obſerved in it) as a double Soul, as conſiſting of two parts. And it is certain that to diſtinguiſh between the Dictates, Inclinations and Deſires of the *Rational* and of the *Senſitive* part of the Soul, is one of the moſt conſiderable things in Chriſtian Philoſophy.

I will briefly repreſent it in this manner; the Senſitive or Inferiour Faculty acts *neceſſarily*, it goes but one way: For what Object the Fancy propounds to it, it can't but follow, ſo that it is hurried away without Freedom or Controul. Hence the acts of the Senſual Appetite (barely conſidered as ſuch) are neither good nor bad in themſelves, becauſe they are not Free; but the Rational Appetite is Free, and acts of it ſelf. And there the formal reaſon of Vertue and Vice muſt needs conſiſt, where the liberty of acting reſides, and this is in the *Will*, not the *Appetite*, which acts not freely, but neceſſarily. Hence Brutes, in whom the Appetite wholly reigns, have no liberty: And hence there is neither Vertue nor Vice in them, and conſequently no Reward or Puniſhment belongs to them. Nor is the Rational part in Man Neceſſitated by the ſenſual Appetite, for whilſt one acts one way, the other may act another way: Which ſhews that they are really diſtinct Faculties. But yet too often the Senſitive part prevails on the other, and brings it to its Beck, and ſo by that means thoſe actions become Evil, which before in their own Nature were not Sinful, but indifferent. This is when Men let Sin *reign in their Mortal Bodies, and obey it in the Luſt thereof*; when they *yield their Members as Inſtruments of Unrighteouſneſs unto Sin:* When they make their bodily Senſes and Members Inlets to Vice, and Inſtruments for the executing of it, whereas they ought to *yield their Members as Inſtruments of Righteouſneſs unto God*, Rom. 6. 13.

And as theſe two Faculties are of a different Nature in themſelves, ſo their difference may be obſerved as to their Objects. As the Rational Appetite is led by immaterial Objects, ſo the Senſitive is wholly moved and wrought upon by ſenſual ones. And indeed it is proper and congruous that there ſhould be in Man a double Appetite, there being a double *Good* fitted to either, *viz.* an intellectual and a ſenſual Good. Truth, Vertue and Honeſty are ſuitable to the intellectual or Rational part of Man; and Riches, Corporeal Pleaſures, *&c.* are fitted to his ſenſual part, and raiſe a more groſs delight in him. That Faculty which makes uſe of Arguments drawn from Laws and the Reaſon of Vertue, and makes them its Counſellors and Arbitrators, is the Will, and Rational Power; but that faculty which uſes Arguments fetch'd from Profit, Pleaſure, and worldly Conſiderations is the brutiſh Appetite. Hence by the way, we gather that the Fleſhly Appetite is not a Judge of what is beſt and moſt deſirable. So it comes to paſs that a Religious minding of another Life, and croſſing of our worldly Profit is fooliſhneſs to the Animal Man: But right Reaſon dictates that Vertue is to be deſired, though it be not accompanied with Riches, and bodily delights, *&c.* nay, though it is attended with loſſes and difficulties. We ſee that the rational part refuſes to comply with the allurements and charms of the Fleſh, becauſe theſe are not agreeable to that Faculty, which is converſant with, and delighted in things of an higher Nature than thoſe of the Senſitive.

Yet this must be added, That they differ not *altogether* as to their Objects, for tho' the Rational Principle holds commerce chiefly with Spiritual Objects, yet at a distance it converseth with Sensual and Bodily ones. But to what purpose? to correct the false Representations of them, (this is the proper Employment of Reason) and also to make use of Earthly and Corporeal Objects, to Divine and Spiritual Ends. But as for the Sensitive Faculty, the Objects of that are only Matters, that are perceivable by Sense: for herein is the Excellency of the Rational Faculty, that it converseth in some Measure with both sorts of Objects, but the Animal Function goes no farther than bare Sensual Representations. The former therefore may justly be stiled the Nobler and higher Faculty of the Human Soul, and the latter must be lookt on as the Inferior and Ignobler; for the Nobler the Objects are, the Nobler are the Faculties. Hence it undeniably follows that the Inferiour Faculty ought to truckle to the Superiour, and this ought to have the Sovereignty over that.

This is the *Admirable make* and *Constitution* of the *Soul* of Man, and we cannot but grant that it is suited to the Nature of Rational Creatures, fitted to the disposition of Free Agents, and that there could be no Vertue without it. It gives an Account of the *Strugling* between the *Flesh* and *the Spirit*, which the Apostle speaks of, *Gal.* 5. 17. that Combat with every Good Man finds in himself. Some endeavour to solve this, and all the Phænomena of the Sensitive Soul, or the Sensitive Faculty of the Soul by the Motion of the Body, *i. e.* the brisker movings of the Spirits, or finer Parts of the Body: but this is to make a *Body* act the Part of a *Soul*, and to attribute Life, Sensation, and spontaneous Motion to Matter, which in its self is dull, heavy and unactive. How then can it be endued with Appetition or Aversation? a Body cannot Desire and Will; Matter cannot Refuse and Dislike. There is therefore a Sensitive Faculty in the Soul, distinct from the Body: but it is true it converses chiefly with the Bodily Objects; and the Springs of its Operation are corporeal Commotions. But there is no Reason why we should confound the Sensitive Power of the Soul with the Body, because the Sensitive Faculty works by the Body, and doth all its feats by the Carnal Part.

This is meant by the Apostle in that Famous Division of Man, in 2 *Thes.* 5. 23. *Spirit, Soul and Body.* These three constitute every Man; they are not unlike the three Partitions of the *Temple*: the *Body*, the External and Visible part of Man is the *Outward Court*; but besides this there is the *Spirit*, which is as it were *the Holy of Holies*, the Supreme and Noblest Faculty of Man, the best and choicest Exertments of the Rational Soul, the most worthy Operations, the most sublime Functions, and (if I may so say) the flower of the Mind, the chief Scene of Religion and the Root of the Divine Life. This sublime and refined part is called here πνεῦμα by the Apostle, by the Latin Philosophers *Mens* & * *Mens Animi*. There is another Part or Ingredient of Man, which is called by the Apostle ψυχὴ, the *Soul*, i. e. the Animal or Sensitive Power of the Soul, which I compare to that part of the Temple, which was *between* the *Outward Court* and the *Holiest of all*, for it is as it were a *Medium* between the Refin'd and Exalted part of Man, and that which is the Material and Gross. As it belongs to the Soul which is Rational, so it approaches to the Nature of the first; but as it tends to the gratification of the Body and Corporeal Sense, so it hath a cognation with the Second.

And the manner of Expression which the Apostle here uses, was not uncommon with the *Hebrews*, for they distinguished between these two faculties of Humane Souls, *viz.* *Ruach* and *Nepbesh*, meaning by the former the *Rational*, by the latter the *Sensitive* part of the Soul. And sometimes the *Greeks* expressed them by * νοῦς or λόγος and ἐπιθυμία or θυμός. The Moral Philosophers (especially the *Platonists*) do often Mention these two different Inclinations and Powers in Man, the former of which they call † the *Ruling part*, the *Charioteer*, the *Masculine faculty*, the *God within us*: the latter * the *Servant*, the *Beast*, to be rid and kept in subjection, the *Effeminate* part. Βούλησις and ἐπιθυμία, were the words that the *Stoicks* used to express these different Functions: and sometimes the one was called by them † ἔνλογος ὄρεξις a Rational Appetite, and the other ἄλογος ὄρεξις, an Irrational Appetite. This latter, is called σὰρξ and σαρκίδιον by *Antoninus*, which former is the same word that the Scripture makes use of to express the Inferiour part of Man's Soul, and sometimes as it is vitiated and corrupted. But that is not wholly under our Consideration

* *Mens animi vigilat.* Lucret.

* *Philo de Confus. Linguarum.*

† τὸ ἡγεμονικόν, ἡνίοχος, τὸ ἄρρεν, ὁ ἐν ἡμῖν θεός.

* ὁ παῖς, ὁ ἐν ἡμῖν ἵππος, τὸ θηλύ.

† *Laert. in Zenone.*

ration at present; I am chiefly speaking of this Faculty, as it is a Natural and Innocent Affection of the Soul, the same with ψυχὴ in the forementioned Text of the Apostle, the Inferiour Reason, or Sensitive Appetite of Man, which *in it self* is not a sinful and unlawful Principle, but a Natural and harmless Inclination, whereby he is carried forth to what is Natural and Sensitive, and suited to the conveniencies of his Body; which is absolutely requisite to the Nature and Constitution of Man, as he consists of those different Ingredients Soul, and Body, and as he is capable of acting freely with reference to different and contrary objects.

It is therefore an Argument of the great Excellency of Humane Souls, that they have a *Rational* and a *Sensitive part.* These are apparent Marks and Characters of the Divine Wisdom in the framing of these Beings. These shew the Soul to be an Excellent Creature and full of Wonders; This proves that all its Functions are Astonishing; especially the Rational and Elective Powers of the Soul are proofs of its Transcendent worth and Excellent Nature. These shew it to be (what *Thales* called it) φύσις αὐτοκίνητος, *a Self-moving Nature,* or (as the *Pythagoreans* and *Platonists* expressed it) * καθ' ἀριθμὸν ἐναρμόνιον κινουμένη, a Being that *moves by Harmonick Numbers,* that is, regularly and by an orderly Principle, yea a Divine one. I am apt to think that the sense of this, was the rise of that Opinion among some Philosophers, that the *Soul is a particle of God himself,* † *a Portion, an Influvium of the Deity.* And *Epiphanius* and *Theodoret* tell us, that some *Hereticks* held the same. I am inclined, I say, to think that the rise of this Opinion was the Natural apprehension which Men had that the Soul of Man is a Divine Workmanship: which they carried too far, and extravagantly thought it to be a Part of God himself. They discerned in the Soul a Heavenly Constitution, they saw that its Operations are incompetible to *Matter,* they far exceed the Capacities of *Bodies:* and therefore they can't be accounted for by the supposal of Matter only: this cannot give what it hath not; nay, it cannot be said to give any thing, for it is Sensless and Inert, hath no Motion and Operation belonging to it of it self. There must be something Spiritual and Incorporeal, to solve the Phænomena of Human Souls. And we must needs grant that a most Wise and Intelligent Spirit is the Author of these Noble Properties of Humane Souls; for it is absurd to imagine that an Intelligent Being (as the Soul is) can be produced by one that is not so himself; for here we may apply that of the Apostle, *He that Buildeth the House, hath much more Honour than the House.* If the Soul be of so Worthy and Excellent a Nature, then the Author of it is infinitely more so. The Cause and Source of so much Understanding, Reason and Wisdom, must needs be more Wise and Intelligent himself; for it is ridiculous to think or believe that we were made by somewhat that is of an Inferiour Nature to our selves.

* *Plutarch de placitis philosoph.*

† τὸν κόσμον διοικοῦντος ἀπόῤῥοια. *Antonin.* Τοῦ Θεοῦ ἀπόσπασμα. *Idem.*

Moreover, we see and observe in our selves, in these our Faculties that which answers, (tho' but imperfectly and faintly) to those very Excellencies which are in God. No Creature in the sublunary World, resembles the Perfectest Being but Man, and he doth it by Vertue of the Excellencies and Perfections of his *Mind.* This is a Transcript of that Divine Original, from the Vertues and Qualities displayed. Here we may very rationally infer the more Transcendent Perfections of that Being that bestowed them upon us. From the whole then we have Reason to conclude that a *God* is demonstrable from the Faculties and Operations of our Minds. The frame of Humane Souls proves a Deity.

Besides, we cannot but observe that all these Excellencies of the *Soul,* have reference to *God* and to *Religion,* so that if we should suppose no such Being, and no such Thing, these Faculties are of no use at all: for if there be no God, there is no Truth, and no Goodness, and consequently no Entertainment for our Rational Faculties and Powers. Here are Noble and Excellent Endowments, but nothing to set them on Work, nothing to be their proper Object. Nay, if you will not own a God, the *Understanding,* and *Will,* and *Affections* of Men, are their Plague and Torment, instead of being real Excellencies: The condition of Reasonable Beings, is far worse than that of Brutes and Irrational Animals. All this must be granted upon the Supposition of no Deity: but the Absurdity of it forbids any sober and considerate Man to assent to it.

Wherefore what I have been advancing is firm and solid, and from the Dignity of Humane Souls we may argue a Divinity.

We

We are then obliged to be acquainted at Home, to study our own Make, to converse with our selves, to Meditate on the Excellent Composure of our Faculties. The want of this breeds *Atheism* in the World: Men will not seriously rifle themselves, and observe the admirable Contexture of their Souls. But if they would earnestly apply themselves to this, they would soon discover that they carry within them proofs of an Eternal Divine Substance, of a most Wise and Prudent Agent that framed them after that Manner. We have not the Swiftness of Hares, the Sagacity of Hounds, the Strength of Lions, and the quick Sight of Eagles: but we have that which is far more Noble and Excellent, a Rational Mind, whereby we can Understand, Think, Remember, Contrive, Imagine, Consider, Ratiocinate, Judge and Determine: we have Souls that are Immaterial and subsist Eternally. If Man be a *little World*, (as he is usually stiled) his Body is the *Earth*, but his Soul is Heaven: and from this Celestial and Divine part of Man we may infallibly gather a Deity.

See the Immaterial Nature of the Soul and its Active Operations, more particularly insisted on in my Discourse of the *Immortality of the Soul*, under the last Article of the Creed.

III. The *Natural Instinct* and *Impress of a God*, on our Minds, is a good Proof of his Existence. *Cartesius*'s way of proving the Divine Being by *Inuate Ideas* is of great use, and is very demonstrative; for though the Souls framing a Notion of it self, or of any other Imperfect Being doth not infer its Existence, yet it is otherwise when we can clearly and distinctly form the Idea of a Being, that is infinitely Powerful, Just, Good, Wise, and hath nothing defective: for here (as he shews) the Existence of such a Being is included in the very Nature and Conception of it, and therefore it is necessarily inferred, from our clear Apprehension of such a Being infinitely Perfect, that it Exists: for such a Being cannot but Exist. But this way of Proof may perhaps be too subtile, and therefore I will not insist upon it. That therefore which I intend when I speak of *Ideas* is this (and it will be level to all our Understandings) that there is a Natural Religion, and that to it appertain *Connatural Ideas*, and *First Principles* congenite to the Soul of Man; and that among these this is one, *viz.* That there is a God. This is a Principle that we are Born with, and remains with us, till it be forcibly extinguished by us. I know *Socinus* contradicts this, and tells us, "That * the "Notion of God is not written in Mens Hearts by Nature; nor are there "any such Innate Principles in Mans breast, whereby he can by the Use of his "Reason come to the knowledge of God. But all the Knowledge we have of him is "by Faith only, *i. e.* by Revelation from God. And he averrs in the same place that the contemplation of the Works of the Creation will not lead to the Knowledge of a Deity; it comes only by Hearing and Relation. So that you see he not only denies that God can be proved by *Innate Ideas*, and *Connatural Impressions* on the Mind, but he also holds that the most improved *Reason* and *Arguments*, can do nothing towards this proof. Which if it be true, there is no *Natural Religion*; and no *Pagans*, though never so much Improved and Exalted in their Reasons, did ever attain to the Notion of a God. But this is a palpable mistake, and easie to be Refuted, because we can produce a Hundred places in those Writers, where they, enlightned only by Reason, in express Terms own and acknowledge a God, an Infinite Eternal Immaterial Being that made the World, and governs it: and they make use of Arguments, and consequently of their Reason, to prove the Existence of this Divine Being. This Author therefore had no Ground for his Asserting, First, that there is no innate Notion of a Deity, and Secondly, that no Man can by the use of Reasoning and Arguing infer or prove any such thing.

* *Prælect.* cap. 2.

Yet, as unreasonable and Groundless as this Doctrine is, it hath been imbibed by others: thus * *Conradus Vorstius*, and † *Episcopius*, hold that Man hath no innate Notion of a God, and some other Writers might be named, who adhere to this Opinion, which is so contrary to the sense of Mankind, and besides is repugnant to the discoveries made in the Divine Writings. For we are informed by an Infallible Pen, that there is *a Law written in Mens hearts*, *Rom.* 2. 15. which Law contains in it, Speculative as well as Practical Notions: and therefore the Notion of *God*, which is of the former sort is part of that *Law which is written in all Mens hearts*,

† *Not. ad Disp. de Deo.*
* *Disp. de Cognit. Dei.*

hearts, and cannot be blotted out but by some extraordinary violence on the Humane Faculties, and by inveterate Prejudice and Passion prevailing over them. God's *creating Man after his Image and Likeness* doth clearly import this; for this Similitude must be acknowledg'd to be placed in the intellectual powers, and gifts of the Mind: and if so, then the Soul was originally made and framed with some positive Resemblance of God. And that doth necessarily include an inbred Notion of God, for to say that the Mind of Man is *like* God as to his Intellectual Nature, and yet hath no *Notices* of him impressed upon it is absurd. It is evident then that we know God by inbred Notions.

And this a very understanding *Pagan* in his *Tusculan Questions* expresly acknowledges, saying, *We conceive the Being of a God by Natural Instinct, but gather his Nature and Attributes from Deductions of Reason.* We know God *to be* by Notices in our Minds, which the same Author calls *Presumptions* and *Anticipations*, because they precede all studying and arguing. By these immediate Impressions on our Souls, by this insite light we arrive to the knowledge of a God, *i. e.* that there is such a Being. * *God hath imprinted on all Mens Minds*, saith he, *the Notion of a Deity; and there is no Nation or Kind of Men in the World that have not some anticipating thoughts of a God, without being taught any such thing.* With whom *Seneca* agrees, who † gathers the Existence of a God from that *Connatural Perswasion* which is in all Men concerning such a Being: This is so bright a Truth that the force of it compell'd ‖ one, who was an intimate Friend and Scholar of *Socinus*, to thwart his Master in this Point, or at least to seem so to do. And * another, who was the most considerable man of that Party, made bold to dissent from *Socinus* in this, and to acknowledge, that all Men have naturally some Idea of God, though it is not full and comprehensive.

* *In omnium animis Deorum notionem impressit ipsa natura: quæ est enim gens, aut quod genus hominum quod non habet, sine doctrinâ, anticipationem quandam Deorum, quam appellat πρόληψιν Epicurus?* Cic. de Nat. Deor. Lib. 1.

† *Deos esse inter alia sic colligimus, quod omnibus de Diis opinio insita sit.* Epist. 17.

‖ *Smalcius cont. Frantz. disput.* 12.

* *Crellius de Deo & Attrib.* cap. 1. & 5.

Wherefore I think that † Ingenious Person, who, whilest he was baffling the *Atheists*, refused to make use of the Notion of *Innate Ideas* to prove a God, baulk'd one of the best Arguments he could have chosen. Whilest he undertakes to confute those Men from many Topicks (and those very excellent ones) he slights that which is as Valid as any, *viz.* those inbred Notions of a Deity stamp'd originally on mens Minds. These dictate a First and Supreme Author of all Beings. We have this Evidence at home, within our selves, in our own Faculties, to prove the Divine Existence. And therefore in my Judgment this Writer had better have not mentioned this at all in that way which he doth, seeing it hath been an Argument to prove a God used by Great Men, and One whom he publickly own'd himself related to. And his immediate Successor in the *Lecture* (lately in a higher Station) acknowledged these *Ideas*, and * asserted them to be *a good Proof* of the *Being of God*, and of other *Truths* in Religion. And without controversie they are so, and consequently ought not to be slighted. There is a natural Instinct planted in the Mind of Man which gives him a sense of the God-head; and Reason and Arguing call it forth and rouze it. As soon as we begin to exert our Thinking Faculty, and to make Reflections on things, this Notion presents itself to our Minds that we had some Author of our Being, that we did not come into existence of our selves, that some Perfecter Being made us, and this is the Notion of a GOD. So then, if we consult our selves, if we look into our own Minds, we shall see there (though we go no further) Domestick Proofs of a God; we have an Internal and Natural Guide to a Deity.

† *Mr.* (*now Dr.*) Bentley, *in a Sermon at Mr.* Boyle's *Lecture.*

* *Dr.* Williams *Sermon* 2. *at Mr.* Boyle's *Lecture.*

IV. The *Dread of Conscience* is another Argument to convince us of it. Those Panick Fears and Shakings which wicked men so often discover are a proof of this. *Every one that finds me, will slay me*, was the Language of *Cain*, tho' there was none to slay him. And the like Apprehensions are not seldom in those who feel the fury of an Enraged Conscience. This creates Terrors out of nothing, changes Secrecy into Company, Safety into Danger, and stirs up Fear where there is no ground for it. Accordingly the *Psalmist* tells us concerning those Men who *say in their heart, There is no God*, that *they are in great fear where no fear is*, Psal. 53. 5. Their guilty Minds invent Terrors, and thereby they confess a Deity whilest they deny it. For this is at the bottom, which is the spring of their Dread, that they are guilty, and that there is a *Just and Sovereign Being* who will punish them. *Pa-*

shur,

shur, who wickedly insulted the Prophet *Jeremiah*, and put him in the Stocks, had this for his reward, that *his Name should be Magor Missabib*, that is, *Fear round about*, for thus saith the Lord, *Behold I will make thee a terror to thy self* (as well as *to thy Friends*, as 'tis added) *Jer.* 20. 3, 4. When *Belshazzar* saw the Hand-writing on the Wall, *his Countenance was changed, his Thoughts troubled him, and the Joints of his Loins were loosed, and his Knees smote one against another*, Dan. 5. 6. he trembled even in the heighth of his Mirth and Jollity. This proceeds from the Accusations of a Man's own Mind; insomuch that he can't use his Reason to relieve himself, but he increases his Affrightments by Imagination.

This was the Sense and Acknowledgment of the wisest Heathens. *Plato* in his *Gorgias* and *Alcibiades* and other parts of his Writings doth very graphically set forth these dismal Reflections and Horrors. *Tully* frequently falls into this Subject, and represents how Mens consciousness of their Wicked Actions * vexes and enrages their Minds, and like so many Domestick Fairies haunts and torments them. This excellent Writer † relates how *Dionysius* the Tyrant of *Syracuse* was always in dread, whence it was that he dared not trust his Throat with a Barber. *Salust* observes of *Cataline*, that || he could not be quiet either sleeping or waking; his evil and impure Conscience laid wast his disturbed Mind. Thus the Emperor *Tiberius* was his own Tormenter, and, as *Tacitus* observes of him, * turn'd his villainous and flagitious acts into his own punishment. And hereupon the Historian seasonably remarks, that † if the Breasts of Tyrants and such like Profligates were laid open, we might behold there how grievously they are lash'd and scourg'd, how miserably they are cut and torn. They are the words of *Tiberius* himself, that Bloody and Lustful Wretch, as we find them in an Epistle that he wrote to the *Roman* Senate, || *Let the Divine Powers torment me worse, if they can, than I feel I am daily tormented.* *Suetonius* relates, how that after *Nero* had slain his Mother, tho' this act was approv'd of by the joint Congratulations of the Soldiers, Senate and People, he could not bear the Sense of it in his Conscience, but cried out, That he was haunted with his Mother's Ghost, and with the Lashes and Torches of Fairies. This timorous Consciousness made *Caligula* start out of his Bed, and hide himself under it as often as it thunder'd and lighten'd. That Emperor who would be call'd *a God*, was afraid of that *Divine Voice*; tho' he was pictur'd with a *Thunderbolt*, yet he dreaded the True Thunderer. I might add to these Examples that Barbarous Man, that Semi-Pagan Prince, *Theodorick* King of the *Goths*, * who after he had unjustly put to death *Symmachus* and *Boethius*, was continually terrify'd in mind, and died at last of Distraction and Anguish. To name no more, our Chronicles inform us, That our *Richard* the 3d, after he had murder'd his Nephews, was ever unquiet and restless, and found that bloody fact to be a heavy Burden on his Conscience. Thus the Minds of Sinners will be reveng'd upon themselves; nay, tho' they should be acquitted and absolved by Men, their own Consciences will not be so favourable to them. These first arraign them, and then with great severity pass Sentence upon them,

* *Sua quemq; fraus, & suus error maxime vexat, suum quemque scelus agitat, amentiáq; afficit: suæ malæ cogitationes conscientiæque animi terrent. Hæ sunt impiis assiduæ domesticæque furiæ.* Orat. pro Roscio.

† *In Tusc. Quæst.*

|| *Animus impurus Diis hominibusq; infestus, neq; vigiliis, neq; quietibus sedari poterat; ita conscientia mentem exagitatam vastabat.* In Catalin.

* *Facinora & flagitia sua ipse in supplicium verterat.* Annal. lib. 6. c. 6.

† *Si recludantur tyrannorum mentes, possunt aspici laniatas & igitas.* Ibid.

|| *Dii me Deæq; omnes pejus perdant, quàm quotidie me perire sentio.* Suet. in vitâ Tiberii.

* *Procop. Hist. Goth. lib.* 1.

—— *Prima est hæc ultio quòd se*
Indice nemo nocens absolvitur. ——

But you will say, There are thousands of great Offenders that feel no trouble of Conscience, but are easie and quiet after all their Villainies; where then is the Sense of a Revenging Deity? To this several things may be reply'd, and that with great Truth and apparent Reason. *First*, Some are grossly Ignorant, and are willing to remain so. They are strangers to their Condition, and thence their Consciences are not frighted, they feel no Terrors in their Souls. They *sleep* securely because it is *Night* with them, and they are in the *dark*. The Quiet of some great Sinners is the product of their Insensibleness of the heinous nature and direful effects of the Crimes they have committed. I have granted before, that the very Natural Notions of Good and Evil may be sometimes stifled and choak'd, and some Persons are so stupid and sottish as not to exert them. Now, this affected Stupidity doth

doth not rarely proceed in some part from their willful neglect of conversing with the Rules of Right and Wrong, and frequently setting them before their Eyes.

Secondly, Men are filled with false Hopes, groundless Perswasions and Presumptions which arise from self-love, and self-conceit; and hence it is that the Conscience is silent. There is that pernicious self-flattery which sometimes so prevails on the most guilty, that they cannot discern themselves to be such, and then 'tis no wonder that their Minds are not Stung and Tormented.

Thirdly, The charms and inveiglements of Pleasure, or the noise and hurry of worldly Business, do oftentimes drown the Voice of Conscience. These will not suffer it to recollect itself, and to take an account of what is done.

Fourthly, Conscience may grow remorseless and past Feeling, by the long Custom of Sin: As they say the People that live near the fall of the Cataracts of *Nile*, by being so used to the Noise, grow Deaf. Some Sinners do not feel their heavy Load, because it becomes as 'twere Natural to them. As the Philosophers heretofore used to say of the Ponderous Elements; they weigh not at all in their own place and proper Situation: As when a Man dives into the Deep, he is insensible of the weight of the Waters that are above him: So in some Criminals, Sin is as 'twere settled upon its own Center, seated in its proper place, and therefore they have no sense of the Burden of it. Yet notwithstanding this, Sin in its own Nature, and especially in the apprehensions of a distressed Conscience is unsufferable and unsupportable.

Fifthly, God doth sometimes Judicially, and in the way of Punishment and Vengeance suffer Men to proceed in the most Flagitious Practices without the least Remorse and Regret. God doth, as it were with his own Hand, stop the mouth of Conscience. For the Sinners have hardned their Hearts before, and therefore now He also may justly do it, as in *Pharaoh*'s Case.

Sixthly, Though some great and profligate Offenders may be suppos'd to live for a time in Peace and Quiet, yet God usually awakes their Consciences at last. It hath been observ'd that those who in their Prosperity strive against the Notion of a *God*, when they fall into great Misery, or are in sight of Death, shew themselves afraid of it, of which *Suetonius* gives a signal example in *Caligula*. And *Cotta* in *Tully* tells us of *Epicurus*, that * when he came to die he was the most faint-hearted Man in the World, he quaked and trembled at the apprehension of those things which before he had declar'd were not to be fear'd at all, *viz.* Death and a Deity. Thus it is with Men of vitious Principles, or lewd Practices: When they are in great Streights, or are leaving the World, they are filled with Horror. Which is a most substantial proof of a God; for at Death or in great Misery Men are generally in good earnest, and speak with Seriousness and Sobriety, though before they either dissembled, or spoke out of Vanity and Pride, or guided their Words and Notions by the Lusts and Passions which they most indulged. Now therefore, when they are stript of these Disguises, we may believe them, and we have reason to think that they believe themselves in what they say: For they speak from that Principle within them which is now awakened, and begins to utter Truth, but at the same time to give them a great Disturbance; and at last it will give them a greater, for then *the Books will be opened*, and that of their own Consciences among the rest: And when they descend both Body and Soul into *Hell*, the chief ingredient of their Torments will be that *Worm which never dies*, that very thing I have been speaking of.

*Nec quenquam vidi qui magis ea quæ timenda esse negaret, timeret mortem dico & deos. De Nat. Deor. Q. 1.

But generally in this Life also they are gnaw'd and tormented with it after the Commission of enormous Acts. Especially this is the fate of Tyrants, Persecutors, Murderers, and the like execrable Offenders. Though they do what they can to conceal their horrid Resentments, though they industriously labour to extinguish them, yet at one time or other they break out. Yea, though Men act their Villanies in secret, and are assur'd that no Man can come to the knowledge of them, yet they are strangely tormented and excruciated; which shews that this Torment of theirs proceeds not from the fear of *Men*, for *these* cannot punish them, because they know nothing of their Actions: Besides, that some Great Tyrants and Oppressors are above *Punishment*, because none dare to call them to Account. Therefore it is evident that a greater than Man is fear'd, even He from whose all-seeing Eye the most secret Deeds of Men are not hid; He who is Mightier than the greatest Potentate on Earth. The Apostle who had told us that there is *a Law*

*Rom. 2. 15. *Written in the Hearts of Men*, adds that * *their Consciences also bear Witness, and their thoughts accuse* (viz. on the Commission of wicked Actions) *or excuse them*, viz. when they do well. And if there be this *bearing witness* and *accusing* in their Consciences, there will soon be a *Condemning* and *Punishing*; there will be intolerable Fears and Tortures in the Mind: And these proceed wholly from an apprehension of one that will severely recompense their Misdoings. So that the name of *Conscience* is vain and insignificant unless there be a *God* to Judge and Punish. Whence I rationally infer that there is a Divine Numen who will animadvert on the Sins of Men: And the natural Sting and Horrour of Conscience are a demonstration of the Truth and Reality of it. Wherefore let Men be exhorted to take notice of those Fears which at any time they feel in their Breasts after the commission of Vice, and observe and call to mind that dread which other great and notorious Sinners have expressed, and be taught by both these to acknowledge a Supreme Being, and Impartial Judge that takes notice of the Affairs of the World.

V. *Universal Consent* is another Argument that may be used, and is of great Cogency. There hath ever been a Catholick Agreement in the *Article of the Deity*. I do not deny but there have been *Atheists* in the World, *i. e.* Men that have denied the Being of a God, but this doth not contradict what I say; for first, the number of these Persons hath been but small, and perhaps they held the Opinion but for a short time: And when they did, it is reasonable to think that they spoke not their real Thoughts and Sentiments, but affected to oppugn the rest of Mankind, and to assert something new and singular: Or, as being vitious Persons, they spoke as they would have it: They would fain perswade others as well as themselves that there is no Omniscient and Just Governour of the World, to take notice of their Crimes, and to call them to an Account for them. And even in this Age, there are none that patronize the cause of *Atheism*, but such whose lives are loose and vitious, and who are afraid there should be a God, and therefore they disown him. This impious Opinion therefore appears plainly to be the issue of a depraved Mind, and consequently it doth not prejudice the *Universal Consent* of Mankind, who unanimously declare that there is a God. It is true, there is * one that mentions some People of *Japan*, and those that live in *Brasil*, *South Sumatra*, about the *Magellanic Sea*, about the *Cape* of *Good Hope*, about New *Guinea*, and he tells us that they have no sense of a Deity. And some *Travellers* in their Writings assert the like of some of these places, and of others. Thus † one of them tells us of some *Indians* that have no Religion: And a People of the same sort belonging to the *Cape of Good Hope* are mentioned by * another. And a † third speaking of *Soldania* in *Africk* saith, *No signs of any knowledge of God, or of any Devotion, Worship, or Sense of Heaven or Hell appear among them*. And one in imitation of these Writers, but chiefly to maintain his denial of *Innate Ideas*, confidently averrs * *There are whole Nations at the Bay of* Soldania, *in* Brasil, *and the* Caribee Islands, *among whom there is to be found no Notion of a God.*

* *Varen. de diverf. gentium religionibus*, p. 238.

† *Mandesto.*

* *Tavernier.*

† Sir *Tho. Herbert.*

* *Essay of Humane Understanding*, *Book* 1. *Chap.* 4.

But the answer to all such allegations is this,

1. A Man need not travel so far as the forementioned places to prove that there are some People in the World that give no evidence in their *Lives*, that they believe a God or any Religion: We have too many at home that are a proof of this.

2. These Authorities to prove that whole Countries in the World acknowledge no God, and have no such Apprehension, are justly question'd by those that have more narrowly enquired into this matter: They upon a more diligent search, and a more impartial scrutiny acquaint us that these Countries before mention'd, tho' they are very rude and ignorant, are not *wholly* destitute of the Apprehension of a Deity, and that they in *some* of their Actions give testimony of a Supreme Being that made the World. So among the *Northern Americans*, lately discover'd by *F. Hennepin* and others, though they seem to have no Idea at all of a Deity, and have no Worship among them, yet we find in the *Continuation* of that *New Discovery*, Chap. 13. p. 57. *that sometimes by chance a Man may perceive in them a small glimmering Notion of a Deity. Some of them acknowledge the Sun for their God; others will have a Spirit that commands in the Air: some look upon the Sky as a kind of Divinity.* We are told afterwards, Chap. 29. p. 112. that *these People admit of some sort of Genius*

Genius or Spirit in all things; they all believe there is a Master of Life, as they call him. Every one of them carries always something, Animate or Inanimate, along with them, which they say is the Master of their Life. And again, chap. 34. p. 144. *They mention a Genius, whom they call* Micaboche *who covered the whole Earth with Water, &c. which hath some Analogy with the Universal Deluge. They believe that there are certain Spirits in the Air that foretel futurities, and cure diseases.* So that it appears hence these New-found *Americans*, are not wholly void of the Notion of some Being or Beings, that have Divinity in them, and bear a great Sway in the World. And hence it is evident, that when the Author of the *Essay of Humane Understanding* quotes *Travellers*, to prove that some Nations have no sense of a Deity, he hath mistaken their meaning in most places, and hath stretched their Words too far. See this clearly shewed by the Author of *the Account of Mr. Locks Religion*, chap. 1. Or, when they are positive, the matter of Fact and History (as 'tis represented by them) may justly be denied, for by Later and more Exact discoveries, we are informed that those things are not True which are related, concerning those barbarous People; for we are assured upon more perfect Information, that they are not wholly void of the Notion of a God, but discover it more or less in some of their Words and Actions.

3*dly*, Supposing or granting that some among those People before named, discover no sense at all of a God; yet this may and ought to be said, that a *few Exceptions* null not the Truth of a general Maxim. *Universal Consent* is not interpreted to include every *Individual.*

4*thly*, If there be any such Country in the World (though as yet we never heard it *sufficiently* confirmed) where there is no God acknowledged, we must conclude that they are Besotted and Stupid, and have put off Humanity; and who will or can reckon these in the number of Intelligent Creatures?

5*thly*, Therefore, we assert that the Notion of a God is found among all that are not sunk below the Nature of Mankind, and through Sottishness have not worn off the common notices of Truth. It is the language of every Country and Region which are not thus degenerated, that there is a God. We may observe that the Principle of a Deity hath been always kept alive in the breasts of Men. They would have something to Adore, though never so base and vile, for there was this natural Conviction in their Minds, that there is *a God*, and that He is to be worshipt. All their superstitious Rites and Ceremonies spoke this; all their Gods and Goddesses plainly attested it; so that the most abominable *Idolatry*, argues a *Deity*. The most ignorant Pagans had an imperfect and glimmering Apprehension of a Godhead: and by this, though they had not Light enough to know the True God, they were led to fix the Notion of a Deity on some false one, as the Sun, Moon, &c. Still they did not extinguish the conceptions they had of a Supreme Power, a Sovereign Being, though they erred in the applying of them; they could not blot out the innate Impressions of a Divinity. * All Nations, though never so Barbarous and Profligate, have confessed some God.

An Ancient Christian Writer alledges, this † *Testimony of People and Nations agreeing all in this one thing.* And this is made use of by all the Judicious Pagans: *Maximus* of *Tyre* the Famed Platonist calls this general Suffrage of Mankind * *one and the same consonant Law and Reason in every Country. Seneca*, uses this Argument to prove a God, in † one of his Epistles. This Universal Testimony of all People is mentioned by * *Aristotle* in his Book *of the World*; by † *Tully* who calls it *the Voice and Language of Nature*; by *Apuleius* who stiles it, *an Ancient Opinion that is deeply rooted into, and hath gotten fast hold of Mens Minds.* And the general prevailing of this Notion, is a sign that it is thus rooted, and that 'tis the pure dictate of Mens natural Reason. Here that of the Great Philosopher is true, that * the Voice of the People carrieth infallible Truth with it, and is like that of an Oracle. This Universal verdict of Mankind is no other than the Voice of God, the Testimony of Reason, and the Language of Nature. If the Belief or Acknowledgment of a God, were the product of a *Panick* † *Fear*, or of *Fancy* and *Imagination* (as some suggest) it would not be so Epidemical

* *Nec ulla gens usquam est adeò contra leges moresque projecta, ut non aliquos Deos credat.* Sen. Epist. 17.

† *Testimonium Populorum atque gentium in unâ hâc re non dissidentium.* Lactant. de falf. Relig. l. 1. c. 2.

* Ἔνα ἐν πάσῃ γῇ ὁμόφωνον νόμον καὶ λόγον. *Dissert.* 1.

† *Epist.* 117.

* Ἀρχαῖός τις λόγος καὶ πατρῴος ἐστι πᾶσιν ἀνθρώποις, ὡς ἐκ θεῶν τὰ πάντα, καὶ διὰ θεῶν ἡμῖν συνέστηκεν.

† *De Naturâ Deor.* l. 1.

* *Aristot. Moral.* l. 5. c. 1.

† *Primus in orbe Deos fecit Timor.* Peron.

demical and Spreading: for this could never have possessed the Heads of the Wise and Intelligent, as well as of the Vulgar and Illiterate, especially so long a Time. Wherefore among other Arguments we may make use of this to prove a God; There is no Speech nor Tongue where this Voice is not heard. Need I then be very earnest with Men to hearken to this Voice, and to attend to this general Sound and Echo in the World? They cannot but be Apprehensive of it, and see that there is Reason to be convinced by it. Though some love to be Singular and to shew themselves Dissenters from the rest of Mankind, let not any of us be guilty of this Folly; but own this Universal Suffrage as the Voice of God, (as well as Man) and heartily give Credit to it.

VI. I will add the Proof of a God from the *Strange* and *Wonderful Occurrences in the World.* First, the Astonishing *Miracles* which are Recorded in the Books of the Old and New Testament, are convictions that there is an Agent of Almighty Power, who doth things that far exceed the Ability of any Finite Creature, and that is no other than *God.* Before and under the Law there were Miraculous Exertments of a Divine Power: but the Miracles and Wonders which our Saviour and his Apostles wrought, are most remarkable and surprising, and are as plain Testimonies of a Deity, as any that we can desire. For what is a *Miracle*, but such a strong and surprizing Act as surpasses the Power of Created Beings, and can be Attributed only to a Divine and Infinite Cause? Wherefore we must needs grant that to Cure the Blind, and Heal all Diseases, and that with a Word, and in an Instant; yea to restore the Dead to Life, are such Acts as exceed all Finite Power, and can be ascribed only to a Supernatural and Omnipotent Author.

But I will chiefly insist on those Wonderful Events, which are commonly known by the Name of *Prodigies*, and thence lead you to the Acknowledgment of this great Truth. The Dispensation of the *Jews* was renowned for many Terrible instances of *Prodigious Appearances.* That grave Author who writ the Books of the *Maccbabees*, relates the *Wonderful Signs* which were seen in *Jerusalem*, before the Sacking of it by *Antiochus*'s Army: Then (saith he) * *it happened that through all the City for the space almost of Forty Days, there were seen Horsemen running in the Air in Cloth of Gold, and Armed with Launces like a Band of Souldiers: and Troops of Horsemen in Array, Encountring and Running one against another, with shaking of Shields, and multitude of Pikes, and drawing of Swords, and casting of Darts, and glittering of Golden Ornaments, and Harness of all Sorts.* These were the visible Signs from Heaven, which presaged the coming of that Execrable and Bloody Tyrant to *Jerusalem.* This Dreadful and Astonishing Apparition was remarkable for its *Continuance*, for it lasted about a Month together, and it was a Spectacle to entertain all Beholders, that would look up and see it. But it was most Notable and Significant in regard of the *Effects* and *Events* which followed it, *viz.* the horrible Persecutions which the Inhabitants of that place suffered, and the Bloody Slaughters which they underwent under *Antiochus*, † *There was* (as that Writer tells us) *killing of Young and Old, making away of Men, Women, and Children, Slaying of Virgins, and Infants. And there were destroyed within the space of three whole Days, Fourscore Thousand, whereof Forty Thousand were Slain in the Conflict, and no fewer Sold than Slain.* And to all this was added the Spoiling of the *Temple*, and the Prophaning of it no less than Three Years and a half.

* 2 Mac. 5. 2, 3.

† v. 13, 14.

But the most remarkable *Prodigies* were those which Christ himself foretold should be the direful Presages of *Jerusalem*'s Overthrow, its last and Final Overthrow by *Titus*, in the second Year of his Father *Vespasian*'s Reign, and in the Thirty eighth Year after our Saviour's Passion. *Great Earthquakes* (saith he) *shall be in divers places, and Famines, and Pestilences, and fearful Sights, and great Signs shall there be from Heaven*, Luke 21. 11. He that will give himself time to consult that Famous History of *Josephus*, which treats on purpose of the *Jewish War*, may be soon convinced of the Truth and Reality of what our Saviour here saith, and Abundantly satisfie himself that it was fully accomplished. There never were such Famines and Pestilences as happened at that Time; namely, at the Seige of *Jerusalem*: Armies and Chariots and glittering Troops, were observed in the Clouds, and other Strange and Ominous Apparitions were beheld in the Sky, before the Taking and Burning of that Renowned City. A *Fiery Sword* or a *Blazing Star*, in the shape of a Sword, hung over that place, and was gazed on by

by all its Inhabitants. This Comet appeared no less than a Year together, hovering over the *Temple*, and other parts of *Jerusalem*, as a certain Hieroglyphick and Symbol of the Desolation which was near at hand. They who would not attend to the Star over *Bethlehem*, had now a more Affrighting one, which denounced the Fate of *Jerusalem*. That is a wonderful Passage, which we find recorded by that Historian, that the heavy Gates of the Temple were seen to fly open, when there was No body near to forward their Motion. And this opening of the Temple-Gates of their own accord, is taken Notice of in the *Talmud* as a Prodigious thing, that happened to the *Jews* in those Days, and as a mark (among other Things) of the Divine Anger.

But the terrible Noises and Voices, which were heard, were as Notable. A little before the approach of *Jerusalem*'s Final Ruin, one day at the Feast of Pentecost, as the High Priest entered into the Temple to offer the usual Sacrifices, there was heard a sudden Noise, and this Voice following it, *Let us Depart hence.* Which was a Warning and an Alarm from Heaven, to signifie the Misery which that City was to undergo, as soon as God's Servants had quit the place. If the Reader would farther satisfie himself, he may peruse the *Twelfth Chapter* of the *Seventh Book* of that forementioned *History*, which particularly and purposely Treats of the *Dismal Signs*, which then appeared: and there also he will see what that Learned Man's Judgment is concerning those *Prodigies*. He cannot but be looked upon as a credible Author, because he accompanied *Titus* to the Seige of *Jerusalem*, and consequently beheld the things which then happened, and acquainted himself also with the Passages which had gone before.

But this withall is very considerable, that what this *Jewish Historian* relates concerning this Matter, is Seconded and Confirmed by that Sober *Roman* Writer, *Cornelius Tacitus*, who lived also in the Time of the Destruction of *Jerusalem*: he mentions the *same Prodigies*, that *Josephus* doth, but (being ignorant of the True God, and an Enemy both to Jews and Christians) he represents them in a slight manner. He expresly tells us, that * *Troops of Men appeared in the Sky, all in bright Armour, and with the sudden Light which flashed from the Clouds, the Temple shone. The great and massy Gates of this Holy Place, flew open of their own accord. And to Sights were added unusual Noises; a Voice spoke to this purpose, that the Gods were departing: and this loud Voice, far greater than that of Man, was accompanied with a Noise, as it were of a great many Persons rushing out and leaving the Place.* And it is well known by the *Event*, what were the deplorable Calamities, that were presaged by these Signs and Apparitions.

* *Visæ per cœlum concurrere acies, rutilantia arma, & subito nubium igne collucere Templum; expansæ repente delubri fores, & audita major humanâ vox, Excedere Deos, simul motus ingens excedentium,* Hist. Lib. 5.

A great number of Sober and Intelligent Writers, acknowledge that there are certain *Prodigies* which are *Forerunners* of the great Evils that are to ensue in the World. An * Antient *Father* tells us, that before the Civil Wars of the *Romans*, their Beasts and Cattle generally ran Wild, even those that were exceeding Tame before; a Presage, saith he, of their Masters Savage and Inhumane Temper. A known Ecclesiastical Historian, speaking of the Earthquake which happened in *Bithynia*, and the neighbouring Countries in the days of *Valentinian* and *Valens*, makes this Remark, that this unusual Concussion of the Earth seemed to be † *a certain sign of the Shaking and Convulsions, the Tumults and Disorders which afterwards were in the Christian Churches in those Places.* The Author of the *Byzantine Annals*, giving an Account of the Earthquakes and Comets, and other Terrible Accidents, in the Reign of *Constantinus Dux*, utters these remarkable Words, * " Those " Occurrences which then hapened were Punishments for Sin, " and Marks of the Divine Anger, by which Invasion and " Slaughter were portended to the Nations, for by *Prodigies* set " up by God not only things present, but future are Declared and Foretold.

* *St. Aug. de Civ. Dei.*

† Τεκμήρια ἐδόκει εἶναι τῶν σεισμῶν, καὶ τῆς τῶν ἐκκλησιῶν ταραχῆς. *Socrat. Eccl. hist. l. 2. c. 2.*

* Ταῦτα μὲν ἁμαρτημάτων ἐστὶ τιμωρία, καὶ θεῖος χόλος ἐπέτυχε, &c. *Mich. Glyc. Annal. par. 4.*

But besides these Instances in the Sacred History, and in the Writings of the *Jews*, and in Ecclesiastical Authors that were Christians, I will also mention what Prophane and Gentile Writers (besides him before mentioned) have said of this Matter. It is the Observation of the Antient Father of History, that † *as often as* † φιλέει δὲ κως περσὶ μάλιστα ἐν τῷ ἂν μέλλῃ μεγάλα κακὰ, ἢ πόλει, ἢ ἔθνεϊ ἔσεσθαι. *Herodot. lib. 6.*

Extra-

Extraordinary Evils and Calamities befall a City or Nation; they are wont to be fore-shew'd, viz. *by some unusual Sign.* And again, he saith in another place, * *The things which happen by divine appointment, are declared and foresignified by many Signs.* *Thucidydes*, a very grave Author, takes notice, that immediately before the *Peloponnesian* War, which proved so fatal, † there were Earthquakes, Drought, Famine, Pestilence that were the fore-runners of it. *Lucan* recounts the Prodigies which happen'd before the Civil Eruptions between *Cæsar* and *Pompey*, and acquaints us, that the whole Theatre of the World was filled with them.

* Δῆλα δ' πολλοῖσι πικμηρίοισι ὅτι τὰ θεῖα καὶ τὰ προγιγνόμενα. *Lib.* 9.

† *De bello Pelop. lib.* 1.

* *Pharsal.* 1.

* ——— *Superiq; minaces*
Prodigiis terras implerunt, æthera, pontum.

The Earth, the Skies, the Seas did all around
With dire and strange Appearances abound.

Dio Cassius speaking of the Fight between *Cæsar* and *Anthony*, relates, that it was usher'd in with great and wonderful Signs; and he adds withal, That * *God always foretells extraordinary Events by this sort of Occurrences.* And afterwards he calls these † *such Signs as are wont to happen before very great Calamities.* *Virgil* concludes the first Book of his *Georgicks* with the enumeration of several Prodigies which pre-signified the Death of *Julius Cæsar*, and were fore-runners of the Civil Wars that succeeded. He particularly mentions what strange *Armies* were heard (as well as seen) in the Air,

* Τὸ γὰρ δαιμόνιον, ὥσπερ καὶ αἰεὶ, περὶ τὰ ἀποβήσεσθαι φιλεῖ προσημαίνειν. *Hist. Rom. lib.* 47.

† Σημεῖα ὅσα πρὸ τῶν μεγίστων συμφορῶν συμβαίνειν εἰώθασι. *Lib.* 54.

Armorum sonitum toto Germania cœlo
Audiit.

And Others have taken notice in a more especial manner of this kind of Prodigies;

Ovid. Metamorph. l. 15.

* *Arma ferunt inter nigras crepitantia nubes,*
Terribilesque tubas, auditáque cornua cœlo
Præmonuisse nefas.

That is, strange Sights and Noises in the Clouds presaged the death of that great Man who fell by the *Senate*. And sometimes the loud Voices and Shoutings of Men, clattering of Armour, and prancing of Horses were heard, but nothing was seen, as a † Greek Historian observes, and reckons them as Fore-runners and Harbingers of Civil Wars.

† Ἀνδρῶν τε μεγάλαι βοαὶ, καὶ κλύπος ὅπλων, καὶ δρόμος ἵππων ἐκ ὀρωμένων ἠκούετο. *Appian. l.* 4.

Moreover, not only Ancient but Modern Writers give their suffrage here, and furnish us with Instances to prove what hath been asserted. * Two sufficient Authors assure us, that Armies in the Air, and other strange Sights and Noises were seen and heard at *Vienna*, before the first coming of the *Turks* thither, and laying Siege to it. † *Melancton*, a Person of known Truth and Integrity, ascertains us, that Armies and Squadrons in the Clouds were frequently seen in *Germany* from the Year 1524 to the Year 1548. There are some who imagine the Clouds may by chance fall into the shape of Horses and Men, and the Winds ruffling the Clouds, and beating them backward and forward, may make them seem to encounter one another; and if there be a mixture of Thunder and Lightning, that may cause a resemblance of great Guns going off. Thus they impute all to the natural and casual position and structure of the Clouds. But to think that this is the true solving of this Phænomenon, is so fond and idle, that I cannot believe it will be the Sentiment of any sober and thinking Heads; and surely the Noises which were before the Invention of *Guns* can't be attributed to such a Cause. Nor are Spectacles of so composed a frame to be thought to be the Works of mere *Chance*. Besides, the Experience both of the Wise and the Vulgar attests these to be Presages of approaching Evils and Calamities, which shews that they are not Casual and Fortuitous.

* *Scheretzius & Lavater, de Spectris.*

† *Meteor. lib.* 2.

The * great Philosopher and noted Physician of *Milan* acknowledges and testifies, that these *Armies* in the Skies have been seen and heard before great Wars and Commotions

* *Cardan. de rer. varietate.*

Commotions have happen'd in Kingdoms. And even his Countryman *Machiavel*, who had no great kindness for Religion or Providence (and therefore his words at present are the more remarkable) averrs and proves throughout a whole Chapter, from several Examples and Instances, That the strange and unusual Disasters that befall Kingdoms and Common-wealths, are foretold by Signs and Prodigies. * *The thing itself*, saith he, *I cannot but own to be true, both from ancient and later Instances, that all the great Commotions and Changes which have at any time happen'd to Cities or whole Countries, have been constantly foreshew'd by Prodigies and Signs in the Heavens.* And though he professes himself in the same place *ignorant of the Cause*, yet the reason of it is plain, *viz.* because he was loth to acknowledge a Supreme All-wise Being. *Joachim Camerarius*, a Man of great Learning and vast Experience, writ of the several *Prodigies* seen in his time, and he declares that they were Admonitions of Future Events that were very dismal. *Caspar Lucerus*, another excellent person, and an eminent Chronologer, freely gives his Judgment in this Point, and tells us, "That * Publick Slaughters and Miseries are before-hand signify'd by certain pre-"vious Signs, that these may be Sermons and Warnings to us of the Wrath of "God, and that they may call us to Repentance.

* *Disp. de Repub. lib. 11. cap. 56.*

* *Epist. Ded. ante Chronic. Carion.*

Sir *Walter Raleigh* hath these memorable words, † *Some Wise Men, not superstitiously, but discreetly, do think that prodigious Signs from Heaven, or on Earth, are not to be neglected.* Read what the Learned *Grotius* (a Man of that Composedness and Sobriety that he would not be led by Vulgar Opinions, a person indeed that had nothing common and vulgar in him) read, I say, what that great Observer hath deliver'd in his *Annotations*, in these few words, * *Comets and Flaming Swords, and other Signs of a resembling Nature are wont to precede and betoken great Alterations and Revolutions of Affairs.* I will add the words of the Learned *Petavius*, who speaking of these prodigious Spectacles in the Heavens, and other the like Portentous Occurrences, saith thus, * "It plainly appears both out of Sacred and Prophane Writers, "that many things have been discover'd and foresignified by extraordinary Signs "and Tokens long before they came to pass, and that not by any natural Connecti-"ons or order of Causes, but wholly by the Will and Pleasure of God. Thus we see that according to the Judgment and Perswasion of the wisest Men these Prodigies are designed on purpose to convince the World of the Being of a God. When the ordinary course of Nature is neglected, then by these extraordinary Occurrences the careless World is startled into a belief of the Divine Being.

† *The Acts of the Empire.*

* *In Joel cap. 2. v. 30.*

* *Theolog. Dogm. Tom. 3. l. 1. c. 10.*

Among these Tokens we are more especially to reckon *Comets*, for they exceed the ordinary course of things, and are above the usual Laws and Powers of Nature (as I have demonstrated in another place) and therefore must be the Product of an Extraordinary and Divine Agent. That is, it is GOD that speaks, and that aloud, by these strange and prodigious Appearances. And I conceive I may the rather be permitted to assert this, because the Inhabitants of the World, and more particularly We of these Kingdoms, have actually experienced that these Extraordinary Sights in the Heavens are certain Presages of wonderful Events that are in a short time to happen on the Earth. Here then I will presume to acquaint the Reader that I undertook several Years agoe, in a brief *Treatise* that I published, to maintain this Proposition, That *Comets are Prognosticks and Forerunners of Remarkable Events, and that they are design'd by Heaven to forewarn Men of ensuing Judgments and Calamities*; and now my Business shall be to make it evident that those Tokens and Prognosticks are *fulfilled*, that those very things which I assigned as the usual Effects and Products, or at least as the Attendants and Consequences of the appearance of *Comets* are since come to pass. Thus what I writ will be attested by the *Actual Events* of things, and I shall make the *Experience* of Mankind bear witness to my Assertions. By instancing in what hath happen'd on the Stage of the World; and particularly in these Countries where we our selves inhabit, it will plainly appear that what was look'd upon by some as a meer Paradox is a great Reality, an indubitable Verity, and such as ought to be embraced by all the lovers of Truth.

I shall confine my self to the two last Comets, *viz.* That vast and terrible one in *December*, 1680, which was seen not only in these parts, but in most parts of the World, and that other in *August*, 1682, to both which my forementioned *Discourse* referr'd, (not looking back so far as Sixty four and Sixty five, when *three Comets* appear'd within the space of five Months, and were immediately attended with

with those three Judgments, *War*, *Plague*, and *Fire*.) I shall, I say, confine my Discourse at present to the two last Comets which we saw; and I will observe that *Division* of the *Effects* or *Events* of Comets, which I made use of in my foregoing Treatise, *i. e.* I will consider them either as *Natural* or *Political*, and I will let you see that we have had sufficient Experiment of *both*, and thence prove the Superintendency of a *Divine* Cause and Author in these things.

I begin with the first, *viz. Natural Events*, by which I mean such as are to be seen in Natural Bodies, *viz.* excessive Heat and Drought, extream Cold and Frost; violent Winds and Tempests, Hurtful Inundations, unusual Thunder and Lightning, Earthquakes. All these I assigned to be the Effects of those Blazing Lights in the Heavens, page 65, to p. 72. and lo! we have found this to be undeniably True by what hath since actually come to pass. Thus (to mention a few particulars, though several others might be produced) The Comet in 1680 was immediately succeeded with an excessive Drought, and drying up of Brooks and Rivulets the year following, and with Tempestuous Winds and Inundations in the Year following that. Then it was, that a great part of *Zealand* was overflowed by the excessive Swelling of the Sea, which suddenly broke in upon them, and laid 2400 Acres of Land under Water, whereby that Country suffered an unspeakable loss. And soon after some part of *England* shared in the same Calamity, for at *Deal* (in the very same Year, *May* 16) the Sea over-run the Banks, which became exceeding harmful to those parts. And there were Extraordinary Floods in *Shropshire*, and about *Coventry* at the same time. Nor are we to wonder that *different*, yea *contrary* Effects, that is, Inundations as well as Drought, are produced by these strange Bodies, for their Tails afford that vast plenty of *Vapours*, which as they inflame the Air at first, so they afterwards supply the Earth with great and unusual quantities of Water.

And the *other Comet*, which appeared in the Year 1682, was followed with a prodigious Frost in the Year ensuing, *viz.* 1683, which continued ten Weeks at least, insomuch that the *Thames* was Frozen as far as *Gravesend*. We might mention the amazing Flood at *Hamburgh*, *December* 1685, and the unparallell'd warm Winter in *England*, in the same year. We might recall to mind, the most dreadful Thunder and Lightning with Rain and Tempest, which lasted here from Seven a clock in the Evening, till about the same Hour next Morning, *October* 1687. On the 13th of *July* before this, there was seen at *Buda* in the Air about 8 at Night a Stream of Fire, that had the shape of a Serpent; next there was a dreadful Storm of Wind, with Thunder and Lightning, the violence of which threw open two of the Town-gates, though strongly Bolted and Barred.

And as for *Earthquakes*, who knows not that since the last two Comets, yea since the latter of them, there have been more of these Prodigies, than there were in the space of two hundred Years before; which is a thing to be duly considered by us. To mention a few Instances, there was a sensible Trembling of the Earth in *Oxford*, and the parts adjacent *September* 17th. 1683, and the Shock was felt in many other Places in *England*, about the same time. Another such a Trepidation happened in the same Year, *October* 9 in *Oxfordshire*: it spread over all the midland Counties, and extended into *Nottinghamshire*, and into *Derbyshire*, in which latter it was very violent. We have since had certain Information of the unexpected Moving of the Earth in other parts of the World, as at St. *Christophers*, *Antego*, *Montserrat*, and at *Barbadoes*, they had some feeling of it at the same time; but it was most violent in *Nevis*, and that all over the Island. The late Earthquakes in *Smyrna*, *Madera*, *Naples*, *Benevento*, &c. are well known. No less than thrice at *Inspruck* in *Germany*, there hath been the like Calamity, which hath almost destroyed the whole City. In the Year following, *viz.* 1690, there were felt several small Earthquakes in *Calabria*, in the Month of *November*: and in *December*, there was a considerable Motion of the Earth at *Ancona*. Another happened at *Frankfort*, *Heidelberg*, and *Mentz*, *February* 20th 169$\frac{2}{1}$. And the like befel the Inhabitants of *Napoli di Romania*, a Town in the *Morea*, 1691. What lately befel the Island of *Jamaica*, *June* 7th 92, is known to all Men. And what we our selves felt a little while after, *September* 8th, *London* and diverse parts of *England* can testifie; besides that this sudden Concussion was felt in *Flanders*, *Holland*, and other foreign places. Had I been the Chief Man in *Lambeth* at that time, I should have thought I was obliged to have ordered Publick Devotions on that

that occasion, that God's hand might have been owned by us, in that amazing Providence.

Several Towns in the Ecclesiastical Territories of *Italy*, have lately suffered by Earthquakes: in *Rome* it self have been some slight Tremblings of the Earth. In *January* 1692, there were most Terrible and furious Earthquakes in the Isle of *Sicily*, which destroyed many Cities and Towns, with almost incredible Numbers of the Inhabitants. In the same Month there was a prodigious shock in the Isle of *Malta*. In *February* 1694, a Quaking of the Ground was felt at *Venice*, and it did harm in the neighbouring Country. At *Naples* in the same year, *September* the 8th, a shaking of the Earth happened at Noon, which lasted several Minutes; and in several Provinces of that Kingdom it did much hurt. And above twenty more particular Instances might be assigned. But I think I have said enough under this first Head, to make good what I undertook.

Those Occurrences and Events which are *Politick*, i. e. which referr chiefly not to Natural Bodies, but those which are Civil, are next to be considered by us: and those are such as these, *viz.* Wars and Slaughters, Persecutions and Bloodshed: the death of Kings and Great Men: Alterations and Revolutions in Kingdoms and States. It hath been the Belief of all the Wisest Men in the World, that these are wont to be portended by those *Fiery Monitors* in the Heavens. And judge now I pray, from what hath actually happened since those last *Comets*, whether there is not some good Ground for such a Belief. Have we not been alarmed with *Wars* and *Hostilities? Was* ever the Christian World up in Arms, as it hath been since that Time? Was there ever in Christendom, such Firing, Ravaging, Slaughtering as the *French* King set on Foot? Who can conceive the Calamities and Miseries which have attended his Arms, wheresoever he carried them? Who can recount the Bloody designs and practices of *France*, their Dragooning, Plundering, Persecuting, destroying of *Hugonots* and *Protestants*, their sending them to the *Gallies*, their Imprisoning them, their Hanging them, which began first in the Year 1685, with all the other Severities, Cruelties and Barbarities, shewed towards that innocent People ever since? I can only say this, Certainly they were such that they merited *Signs from Heaven*, to give the World notice of them.

Again, was not *the Death of Kings and Great Persons*, ushered in by these Tokens? Not to speak of the King of *Portugal*'s Exit, which was followed soon after with that of the *Queen Regent*, 1683. no less than two *Roman Pontiffs* left the World: and the *Grand Seignor* may be said to be Civilly dead, being deposed from his Throne? Thus both *Constantinople* and *Rome* lost their Heads: The two greatest Names and Interests upon Earth, *Turk* and *Pope*, were concerned. But at Home our concern was Greater, for the sudden Departure of King *Charles* the *Second*, *February* 6th 1684. Which was followed with the Death of the Duke of *Monmouth*, the next *July*, and that followed with the Condemnation and Execution of above 200 Persons that were concerned in that Expedition in the *West*, besides as many more that were Branded, Whipt, Transported, Fined, &c. I might add that in both the Reigns a considerable number of *Great* and *Brave Men* (who may be ranked with *Kings*, and whose Worthy Names and Memories will be more esteemed by the Future, than they are by the present Age) fell a victim to Royal Displeasure, and to the *Roman Cause*, and might deservedly have their unjust Fate pointed at by a Flaming Hand from Heaven.

In the next place, what was further said in my *Discourse of Comets*, may pertinently be inserted here; namely, *From what hath been said before, that they portend the Death of Princes, it follows that they probably boad great Changes and Vicissitudes in Kingdoms, in reference to Religion and other Matters; for History abundantly informs us, that these are oftentimes the Consequences of a new Prince's succeeding in the Throne*, Page 67, 68. What happened among us here in reference to this, *i. e.* what *Great Changes*, and *Vicissitudes*, were of a sudden in these Kingdoms, upon King *James*'s coming to the Throne, it is needless to insist upon. All the World saw it, and was astonished at it; and it was worthy to be foretold and signified, by some particular visible Messengers in the Skies. And these also were the Precursors and Monitors, of those Great and Amazing alterations in other Kingdoms and States, as the unthought of Changes in the *Ottoman* Court and Empire, the deposing of *Sultan Mahomet* the 4th, 1687, and the setting up his Brother *Solyman* in his room, the Civil Broils and Commotions, the unheard-of Confusions and Distractions a-

mong that People, and the wonderful defeating of the *Turkish* Forces; the new Designs and Projects that have been on Foot, for the humbling of *France*; the Solemn Alliance and Confederacy which the Kings and Princes of *Europe*, have mutually entred into for that purpose, which was thus referred to and expressed, pag. 70.

Monarchs make Leagues to render Empire sure:

The vast Armies and Forces raised both by Sea and Land, to oppose and repell the *French* and *Ottoman* Power. And whether we look at Home or Abroad, we find that there have been extraordinary Commotions and Changes: we have seen that which I quoted out of *Silius Italicus*, and *Palingenius* (who was an Astronomer as well as a Poet) actually verified, *viz.* that *Comets Portend the Fate of Kings*, pag. 107, 109. and all that I said, pag. 71. is accomplished. In brief, there have been most surprizing Alterations of Government; there hath been a strange Catastrophe of Affairs, such as the World hath not known some Centuries of Years, and I doubt not but they were foreshewed and declared by those Prodigious Spectacles in the Heavens.

I advanced yet farther, to *guess* at the *Particular Calamities*, which might be the Punishment of this Nation. But first I premised this, *that it is intolerable Folly and Presumption to determine Peremptorily, concerning the Particular Events of Comets*, pag. 288. *We might*, I said, *with modesty guess (but go no further) that God would try us with those Evils, which we had not very lately Experienced, and groaned under in this Land*, p. 289. And is not *Popery* (which hath been expelled this Land above 160 Years) of that sort? Was not this Grand Evil returning to us again? Nay, had it not in some measure taken actual Possession here, by the influence of a Popish and Bigotted Prince, who was endeavouring to Supplant our Religion, by dispossessing his *Protestant* Subjects of all Civil and Military places, by Erecting Mass-houses in the chief Cities of the Nation, by framing his Council, Officers, Ports, Courts of Judicature, and even Colleges to that purpose; and lastly, by pouring in upon us a Popish Army from *Ireland*, and designing to have another Land here from *France*? It was not therefore rashly said, pag. 290. *We may look for Invasion from Abroad, when we are so divided and distracted at Home.* We had certainly experienced this Event among others, *viz.* the Descent of the *French*, if the *Prince of Orange* had not made *his* first, and thereby hindred that designed Invasion. And now may be apply'd what was said pag. 70, to our *French* Adversaries,

A Foreign foe in glittering Arms appears.

And he *hath appeared*, as a Twenty Years bloody War (only with some short Intermission) between *France* and the Confederates sufficiently testifies.

I hinted likewise, how deservedly we might be punished with a *Famine*, not only of *Bread*, but *of Hearing the Word of the Lord*: but though in singular Mercy, God was pleased not to send the former, yet how *near* we were to the latter we may easily discern from what hath been said, and from what we all know of the Approach of the *Roman* Religion. And for *a more General and Spreading Plague over all Christendom*, the *Turks* then actually invading *Germany*, it was at that time to be feared that the *Mahometan* Forces would have prevailed. This the Crying Sins of Christians deserved, but God was pleased to divert that Plague, and to give success to the *Imperial* Arms. The short is, *Comets* are not *Absolute* Causes or Signs, but *Conditional*. Though they naturally produce or judiciously Portend such and such Effects, yet the Almighty Controler of the World, is pleased sometimes to interpose; He can and oftentimes doth prevent and divert the Evils which are threatned by them. And this is that which I asserted, p. 154. *They do not necessarily and unalterably signifie Evil to come:* And again, *Comets speak not the Absolute and Inevitable futurity of such Events, but let the Persons know to whom they are shewed, what they are to Expect, and what shall certainly happen unless God shall, for Reasons and Inducements best known to himself, interpose between the Sign and the Events.* ibid. To the same purpose, pag. 291. *Our doom, I hope, is not Irreversible: nay, 'tis certain that He who sheweth us the Tokens of his Anger, can divert it when he pleaseth.* As for any *Other Effects* of Comets which I mentioned, if I had leisure and opportunity to enquire into the World, and learn what hath happened in Remoter parts, it is likely

likely I should satisfie you, that they also are accomplished. But it is sufficient that *all those more Remarkable Events*, which I assigned as the Effects of those Prodigious Appearances, have happened since those *two last Comets* which I wrote of.

I will not deny but that they might have come to pass, though there had been no Comets, for God is not obliged to give us Warning. But when these Warnings are given us, we are to take Notice of them, and to look upon them as Forerunners of Strange Events, as presages of Future Calamities, and as Arguments of a Divine Disposer in the World. What we have seen happen, makes it Evident that my Assertions were not vain and at random, *viz.* That *Comets are set up by God as Beacons to give notice of some Dreadfull Occurrences*, pag. 125. and p. 164. *The Astonishing Comet in* 1680, *which was visible to all Europe and other parts of the World, shall be of universal influence, and many Nations shall share in the Revolutions and Occurrences, which it shall produce.* It appears also that I had Reason to assert that *Comets do not always operate presently:* (of which I assigned the Reasons.) *We shall not Experience the full influence of the two last which appeared, till some years hence*, p. 150, 151. And p. 287, *The Evil which a Comet portends seizeth oftentimes by degrees.* Nor was it vainly said that *they are sometimes sent out of Kindness and Favour*, that is, if we respect the Final issue of all, as I have shewed in the Discourse it self, and as we have since found it.

But, after all, I would not have the Reader think, I pretend to a Prophetick Spirit, I assure him I arrogate no such Gift to my self, but all the Foundation that I build upon is this, That the Supreme Being gives warning to the World by *Prodigies*, and therefore when we behold these, and particularly when those *Blazing Lights* in the Heavens shew themselves, we may easily foretel that wondrous Events are at hand, and from former Experience and Observation we may guess of what Nature they will be. It is now sundry years since I published that *Discourse*, and I do not all this while see any Reason to alter my Opinion (though I am not so wedded to it as to censure others that dissent) but I am rather more confirmed in it, *viz.* That God gives Notice of Future Events, by such Prodigies and Signs as I have mentioned. I am every day further convinced that these are not Vain and Insignificant Spectacles, but that they are both Operative and Indicative Signs, that they are generally Menaces from Heaven, and Harbingers of Divine Vengeance, except we repent.

The basis of what I have said is this, That things that are *Ordinary* and *Natural*, things that are produced by the constant and settled Laws of Nature are not Ominous, because there is no Evil lurking in *Nature:* but *Comets* being Bodies of an *Extraordinary kind* (for their Rise, Make, Motion, Figure, and every thing in them as I have largely proved, are Strange and Extraordinary) must be thought to be designed by God, to *signifie something Extraordinary* to the World: and they are set in the fair and spacious Theater of Heaven, as the fittest place to present those Divine Shews to the view of all. I was very well pleased with what I found in the Writings of a * late Judicious Philosopher, who having occasion to speak of *Comets*, tells us that *the Course in their Orbits is not determined one way, but indifferently some of them Move one way, others another: that the vast Fluid with which they are surrounded composes an Irregular, unequally disposed, and uncertainly agitated Mass*; which in another place he calls a *Confused Atmosphere.* And he owns that *the Returns of these Bodies are Irregular and Uncertain:* and he complains that *there is not a solid Foundation to build our Reasoning upon.* And after he had shewed how Strange and Unaccountable the Appearances belonging to these Bodies are, he concludes that *it is probable that these Frightfull Bodies are the Ministers of Divine Justice, according to the design of Providence.* Which is the very thing that I have before urged: and he argues upon the same Ground, namely, the Wonderful *Strangeness* and *Irregularity* of these Bodies: which plainly tells us, that they were designed to be Significant of something Wonderfull and Unusual.

* *Doctor* Cheine, *in his Philosophical principles.*

I know there is a late Author, *Monsieur Baile*, who hath in his *Miscellaneous Reflections on the Comet in* 1680, undertaken to prove, that Comets have not the Power of influencing on the Earth, or producing any Effects here, and he laughs at the Prognostications of Comets. But when I have given the Reader the true Character of this Writer, I believe he will not Think that what he saith is to be Regarded. Tho' it must be granted, that he is one of an Uncommon Reach and Penetration, and hath sufficiently shewed his Wit and Parts in what he hath Published, yet it

is as true that his Books are made up of tedious Digressions, Excursions and Impertinencies, of rambling Conjectures and Guesses; he hath a great deal of Philosophick Banter and Sophistical Arguing, and any one may perceive that he could have said as much on the other side. He that reads him can scarcely think that he is Serious, but must needs take him to speak in Raillery and Ridicule. He is Bold and Daring to a Fault, and every where Sceptical, and makes it his business to dissettle Establish'd Truths. Yea, he hath advanced several Notions injurious to Religion, he speaks favourably of Atheism, and may justly be ranked with such Authors as *Cardan* and *Montaigne*.

Now, it could not be expected, that he who hath such Wild and Extravagant Notions of every thing he writes of, should not have very odd Conceits when he exercises his Faculty on *Comets*. And accordingly we find that he hath strange and unaccountable Sentiments on this Subject, and all his Reasoning is Precarious and Arbitrary, and he proceeds on no firm Principles. When he pretends to Reason most closely, he is furthest off from Solidity: and sometimes he borders upon Irreligion and Impiety, as when he saith of Comets that * *they are Signs attended with several Circumstances which are inconsistent with the Wisdom and Holiness of God.* Any body may plainly see that he had first resolved to maintain that part of the Controversy which denies the *Influence of Comets*, and that then he studied for Arguments to that purpose. He insists much on this, (and thinks there is great weight in it) that *we can't shew the Connection between Comets, and the Effects that are said to be produced by them:* but tho' I have baffled this in some particular *Instances* before mentioned, yet, if we should grant it in some others, this makes for what I have asserted concerning Comets, for in my Judgment *this* is one Reason that may establish us in the Belief of their being *Extraordinary Phænomena*, and even sent by God. For if there be no Natural Connection between the Appearance of them and the Events that follow them, then this directs us to look Higher, and to own the Divine Conduct in them. If there be no necessary Relation or Correspondence between the Cause and the Effects, we may gather thence that the settled Laws of Nature are broken, and we may look for some Wonderfull and Astonishing thing from it.

* *Vol.* 1. *Sect.* 74.

And truly Mr. *Baile* himself prepares us to think no less, when he expresly owns that the several Hypotheses about Comets are attended with *Inexplicable and Insuperable difficulties*; † and when he tells us, that *a Comet is truly a Phænomenon that perplexes all the World. The Philosophers can't exactly tell how 'tis formed, the Astronomers admire its Motion and Magnitude, much more then they can account for either.* In other places he grants, that the Course of Comets is not determined one certain way, as 'tis in the Planetary Bodies: the Motion of some of them is from *East* to *West*, others from *West* to *East*: and there are those that move from *North* to *South*, and others from *South* to *North*: and in short, their Motion is against the ordinary Course of Nature, and is wholly Irregular. And he is so modest as to acknowledge that *the Time of their Revolution is not known*, tho' * some daring Philosophers talk peremptorily of the Return of the same Comets at stated times, and pretend to tell us when they shall fulfill their Revolutions. We see then that Mr. *Baile*, hath done nothing towards the Evacuating the Influence and Effects of Comets, but rather establishes this Doctrine, when he acknowledges that Comets are of an *Extraordinary Nature*, and consequently are designed to Portend *extraordinary Events*, and are made use of by Providence to that end. For tho' we have no Reason to look for any such thing from the *Regular* and *Orderly* appearances of Nature, from the Simple and Uniform constitution of it: yet when we behold these *Uncommon Spectacles*, which are acknowledged to be out of the ordinary course of Things, we justly infer thence, that there is a Divine Hand in them. And God sheweth these Signs but *Seldom*, lest they should by often appearing become Vile and Mean, and not be taken notice of, which is the Fate of such Things that are common.

† *Vol.* 2. *Sect.* 220.

* *Monsieur Petit, Cassini, &c.*

We are to consider that *Comets* are not like such frisking Meteors, as the *Ignis Fatuus*, &c. Nor are they Thin and Slight Exhalations of the Nature of *Parelia*'s or *Halo*'s; nor are they such a Phænomenon as the *Rainbow*, which a Man may look out of its Being (as any may find to be true when they please) for if you behold it with a very fixed Eye, it vanisheth. But a *Comet* is a *Continued Appearance*, it lasts for several Days or Weeks; it is the same, and can't be looked out of Countenance. It is a solid and compact Body, fixt and durable, and a sort of Planet, if we may credit * one of our own Philosophers. And therefore it is fit to be (what

* *Newton. Princip. Philos.*

(what it is) a Divine Monitor to the World: it is made to *Signifie* both in it self, and by God's Institution.

This is a Truth grounded on the Sacred Writings, on Reason and Good Sense, on the Suffrage of the Wise and Prudent, on the Experience and Observation of Mankind (as I have abundantly shewed) and therefore ought to be received as an undoubted Reality and Certainty. If any foppish Sciolist, any shallow Pretender to Philosophical Notions, shall think that they betray their ignorance in *Natural Philosophy*, who talk of *Prodigies* and *Signs*, let such know that we ought to Study the Laws of Physicks, and to know how to admire the Great Operator and Contriver of them; but we are not to be so Unphilosophical as to mind the *Material Causes* of Things, with a neglect of the *Final* ones. And this is the present case; we may laudably enquire into the *Matter* and *Substance* of Comets (though that likewise is Extraordinary and Unusual, if not Supernatural, as I have proved in the *Discourse* to which I have referred all along) but we are not to forget to consider the *End* of them, and *to what Purpose* they are set up, and exposed in those lofty Regions above, to the view of Mankind here below. This is as necessary, and as noble a disquisition as the other, this is as Worthy of a True Philosopher, and Vertuoso as the other; especially seeing it directly leads us to the Acknowledgment of the All-Wise Being. And therefore I might deservedly reckon these Signs and Prodigies, among the Arguments that are made use of for the Proof of a Deity.

VII. The *Foretelling of Future Events*, and the *Accomplishing of those Predictions* are another Proof of an Omniscient and Almighty Being. We have abundance of these Prophetick passages in Holy Scripture; *Daniel* foretold the Translation of the Empire from the *Assyrians* to the *Medes* and *Persians*, and thence to *Alexander*, and his Successors, under whom the *Jews* should suffer the greatest Calamities that they ever underwent; and he predicted that the Empire afterwards should be Translated from *Greece* to *Rome*: Insomuch that *Porphyrius*, who had read the Histories Extant in his Time, and compared them with those Prophecies, could get off no otherways than by saying, That the Writings that go under *Daniel*'s Name, were Written after the Event of those Things. And in the same Prophecy of *Daniel*, and in other Books of the Old Testament, especially *Isaiah*, there are express and undeniable Predictions concerning *Christs* coming, and the Glorious Times of the Gospel. Yea, some of the most particular and individual Circumstances belonging to our Saviours Person, Nativity, Life, Death and Resurrection, are punctually related by the Prophets of the Old Testament. Then if we should pass to the New Testament, we might there find that what our Saviour foretold, concerning the Destruction of *Jerusalem*, and the utter Overthrow of the *Jewish Nation* and *Government*, and many other remarkable Things predicted by Him and his Apostles, were all of them accomplished long ago. Now, any unprejudiced Man will confess that Things of this Nature (which depended not on any necessary Causes, or could possibly be foreseen by any Humane Sight and Sagacity) could not be foretold, without Divine and Supernatural help. None but an All-Seeing Eye could have a Prospect, and accordingly give Notice before hand of these Future Occurrences.

It is true, Mortal men are eager of knowing Futurities; the desire of which was the Occasion and Rise of all the sorts of *Divinations* among the Pagans. There was a College of *Augurs* or Soothsayers for this purpose, whose business it was, when there was any great Enterprize on Foot, to give a cast of their Office; and not only Prophane Writers, but the Holy Scriptures take notice of these *Diviners*. This is attempted at this day, by the *Horary* part of Astrology, that is, the Resolving of all Questions, whatsoever concerning the future Condition of Men in this Life. But tho' all this be Bold and Daring, yet it is mere Conjecture, and rises no higher. For the Divine destiny hath fixed the Things of Mans Life, so that it is not in the power of any Creature to alter them: but it is not within the compass of our Apprehensions to discover what the Almighty hath predetermined. Of this the Royal Preacher seems to speak in *Eccl.* 8. 7. *Because to every purpose there is Time and Judgment, therefore the Misery of Man is great upon him: for he knoweth not what shall be, for who can tell him when it shall be?* There is a *Dutch* Author who tells us of a Friend of his that was about making and contriving an * Instrument wherewith a Man may see any Object in the other Horizon. Certainly more vainly do they talk who pretend to have a Cognizance of Futurities, and to look and pierce as 'twere into

* *Burton's Anatomy of Melancholy.*

into the other Horizon, to discern things before they come to their view. It is an undeniable Truth that the Future Events of our lives are hid from us, and are such as no Human foresight can discover, *Jam.* 4. 14. *Te know not what shall be on the Morrow*, much less can we dive into the Futurities of a longer distance from us. It was well said by one of the Antient Fathers of the Christian Church, † *It is not fit and proper for any but the only True God to know what shall be.* And it is by Revelation from Him that Future things are discerned by Men. But none could foresee these Events but God, and therefore the *Prediction* of them is an irrefragable Argument of his Being.

And so is the *fulfilling* of them, which is from his Infinite Power, as the other is from his Immense Knowledge, when Events exactly answer to the Predictions, we may infer thence an All-Seeing and an Almighty God. I have made use of this Argument heretofore, as an Inducement and Motive to our belief of the * *Scriptures* and all the Truths contained in them, and therefore I shall add no more now. But this is certain that it is as strong and valid in the present Point; namely, for evincing the Truth of the *Divine Being*, as it was on the other occasion. So the following Argument was likewise insisted on, to gain our *Assent* to these Truths, and therefore it must but lightly be touched upon at present.

* Πρέπει γὰρ τῶν ὄντων ὑπὲρ τὸ μὴ νοεῖσθαι τὰ μέλλοντα πλὴν ἐπὶ τῷ μόνῳ κατὰ φύσιν θεῷ. *Cyril. Alexander.*

† *See the Discourse of the* Authority of the Scriptures, *and of* Faith *and* Justificat.

VIII. *The Wonderful Preservation and Protecting of the Church* in all Ages, which the History of the Bible acquaints us with, may be justly reckoned as another Argument for our present Purpose. The Writings of the Old Testament inform us, what great things were done for that chosen People the *Jews*, what strange and unexpected Punishments were inflicted on their Enemies, what Remarkable Deaths and Miserable Ends befel some of their notorious Persecutors, till at last their incorrigible Enormities, and their crucifying the Lord of Life, put a Period to the Divine Favour. But the *True Israel* was still preserved and prospered: the *Christian Church*, which succeeded in the Room of the other, was miraculously Planted and Propagated, maugre the Fury and Malice of their implacable Adversaries, some of whom were signally cut off in the heighth of their Bloody Attempts against the Christians, and thereby yielded a fair demonstration of a Revenging Deity, of a Divine Nemesis. This is fully and amply attested in the Holy Scriptures, which therefore we are obliged to pursue with great Care and Assiduity, for there we shall find that the Church was always fostered by the Extraordinary kindness of Heaven. Read the Bible, turn over this Sacred Volume, and you will have a most profound Sense of this great Truth. One great Reason why Men doubt of the Doctrine which I have been urging is this, because they converse not with the Holy Writ, because they are not sufficiently acquainted with this Infallible and Inspired History. If you frequently consult this, you will be throughly convinced that Religion was the constant Care and Charge of Heaven, and that there were innumerable Testimonies (and those very visible and apparent) of a Divine Power that accompanied it: you will be forced to say with the Psalmist, *verily there is a God that judgeth the Earth.* But I shall have occasion to enlarge upon this, when I come to discourse of God's peculiar Care of his Church, under the Article concerning *the Holy Catholick Church*, and therefore I will say no more at present.

After all that hath been said, I might prove this Doctrine from something, that is known and felt in every Holy mans Heart. There is an irrefragable demonstration of God's Existence from the blessed work of the Holy Ghost on the Minds of the Regenerate, from the extraordinary Impressions and Influences of the Spirit of Grace, from the inward sense and feeling of Religion and Holiness on their consciences, from the Testimony and Experience of the Divine Goodness on their Spirits, from the Communion they have with the whole Sacred Trinity, from the Power and Energy of a lively Faith, from the Testimony of the Divine Favour, from the powerful operations of the Heavenly Grace, which are more forcible and convincing (because experimental) than all that hath been said. But these are ments to a Mans own self only, and they can't be made use of to others, *i. e.* so as to convince them, and leave them Unexcusable, and therefore it was not proper to insist upon them here.

But the other Arguments which I have propounded are suited to the condition of all Men, and their own Natural Reasons and Judgments, with which they are endued, cannot but perceive the force of them. I have used all sorts of Topicks, that if

if some of them should not affect us, we might be wrought upon by others. I have been dealing with Men, *i. e.* Rational Creatures, and accordingly have demonstrated the Existence of God, from the dictate of the Law of Nature, which is both written on the Mind of Man *within*, and on the Nature and Frame of things *without*, and made useful and practicable by Reflection, and the serious Exercise of Reason. Accordingly we have reasoned in behalf of this Truth from the contemplation both of the inward Notices in our Minds, and the outward Signatures of a Deity which are to be found. We have improved both the *Instinct* and the *Works* of Nature and Providence; what is *Imprinted* and what may be *Collected* from Reason: and we have found that *God hath not left himself without Witness*, The Testimonies of a Deity are Internal and External: we bear them within us, and we discover them every where without us. In a word, not only the light of Nature but Divine Revelation, not only Reason but Scripture, and all things that we meet with there, if rightly considered and duly reflected on, argue a God in the World. Thus, I hope, I have sufficiently proved what I undertook: and truly there was reason to insist Copiously on this Subject, because it is the First and leading Article of our Religion, for he *that comes unto God*, he that enters himself into Religion, *must* in the first place *believe that he is*. There is an absolute Necessity of assenting to this Truth; and I hope there is not one person, who seriously reads what I have said, that hath not full assurance of it in his Mind.

But if there should be such a one, one that is not convinced by any or all those Arguments which I have made use of, if he still persists in his Infidelity, I will deal with him another way. These three things I have to propound to him.

1. He cannot deny the thing to be *Possible* and *Probable*. He can only pretend that he hath Scruples and Objections against a God, that he is dissatisfied with those Arguments, whereby we endeavour to prove it: but then he hath no undoubted Assurance on the *contrary*, he hath no demonstrations against a Deity. He is not Certain that there is no God: he is not, he cannot be sure of that Negative: he cannot prove the Impossibility of his existence; for a Being infinitely perfect is no Contradiction, and that is the Notion of *God*. Now a Rational Man would proceed upon that side which hath the greatest *Probability*. In the World it is so always: the very hope and probability of things are sufficient Motives with Men to undertake and suffer much. And why should it not be so here? If there were no Absolute Certainty, but only a high Probability of the existence of God, this is enough to determine our Belief and Acknowlegment of it. After all Arguments remember this, that the Doctrine of a Deity is the most probable in the World: I speak this to accommodate my self to the Persons I have now to do with, for, strictly speaking, this Doctrine is more than Probable, it is *absolutely Certain* and *Indubitable*, and beyond all Controversy. It is as really Demonstrable as any Proposition in Mathematicks, though not just in the same way. And this must be said, that if the *Atheist* had but half as many Arguments to prove some other things, he would certainly think them to be sufficient, and would forthwith rely upon them.

2. Let him remember (after all his Cavils and Disputes) that this is the *safest* side; and a Wise Man will adhere to that. If the thing we are speaking of prove True, then those that believe and worship a God are unspeakably Happy: or if we could *suppose* it not to be True, yet then they are no losers by believing it, they can come into no danger here or hereafter. Yea, in this life they reap much Advantage by this Belief, for it brings Ease and Satisfaction with it. Therefore 'twas the confession of *Pliny* the natural Historian (who was little better than an Atheist) that the * Belief of a God is advantageous to the Government of the World. Even those who denied there was a God, wished there was one for the benefit of Mankind. However, if a Man were not assured beyond all doubt that there is a Supreme Infinite Being, yet it doth not become a prudent Man to run the risque, especially when it is of such vast Moment and Consequence. Thus to believe a God is the safest, the securest course, and that is the best.

* *Deos agere curam rerum humanarum, credi ex usu vitæ est.* N. Hist. l. 2. c. 8.

3. The other side is the *Unsafest* and *most Dangerous*. For if the Atheists opinion proves false, he is the most *miserable* Man that can be imagined: his disbelief is destructive and damnable to him for ever. Therefore on this account *Atheism* is the greatest *Folly* and *Madness*; because an Atheist stands all the ventures and hazards of a Future Misery. If there be a *God*, he perishes everlastingly, and undergoes

goes the remedileſs Torments of Hell to Eternal Ages. To conclude then, let the Atheiſt in time conſider that his Eternal Happineſs lies at Stake; and let him know that according to the Rules of common Prudence, he ought to chooſe the ſafeſt way: and this he cannot do unleſs he renounces his impious Perſwaſion, and believes a God, and lives accordingly.

So much for the Subſtance of the Firſt Article of the Creed, for the main thing in it is the *Exiſtence of God*. That which follows, *Maker of Heaven and Earth*, is but a Periphraſtick explication of the Deity, which is Self-exiſtent, and gives Being to all other things. And beſides, I have brought in this *Creating* and *Making of all things* under the Heads of the foregoing Diſcourſe.

THE

THE
Second Discourse
ON THE
First Article of the Creed,

Namely, Concerning the

DIVINE ATTRIBUTES
OR
EXCELLENCIES,

Grounded on PSAL. VIII. 9.

O Lord our Lord, how Excellent is thy Name in all the Earth?

WHEREIN

The Distinct *Nature* of them is assigned, and amply insisted upon, and the proper *Inferences* are drawn from them.

A DISCOURSE

Concerning the

DIVINE NATURE and ATTRIBUTES.

HAVING already fully proved the *Existence of God*, and more particularly from his being *the Maker of Heaven and Earth*, I proceed to speak distinctly of his Glorious and Transcendent Nature, to delineate him in his Excellent and Divine *Properties*, for these are naturally contained in the Explication and Illustration of the Nature of the Deity. And it is certain that these are necessarily included in the *First Article* of the *Creed*, for when we profess our Belief of *God*, it is implied that we have some Knowledge and Sense *of his Essential* Properties. And when this one Attribute *Almightiness* is mentioned here, all the rest are implied. Therefore in the next place I will endeavour to fix on our Minds true Notions of God by considering him in his *Attributes*. We are to know then that the naked Essence or Substance of a thing is exceeding difficult to be conceived (as * *Philo* of old, and a Learned † Philosopher of our own hath lately observed) but, instead of this, the Operations, Properties, Exertments and Modifications of it make up our conceptions of it. Though the understanding cannot sufficiently penetrate into the bare Essence of things, yet the Powers and Properties which they have in themselves, or in relation to others may be reached by us. This is much more true of *God*: the understanding of no Created subsistence can fully comprehend the Divine Nature and Being, as it is in itself. Its infinite splendor dazzles our Eyes, and suffers us not to view it. This is thus expressed by a Pious *Father*, ‖ *There is not in Mans nature a power of accurately perceiving the Divine Substance.* And thus by another * *God cannot be comprehended by Mans thoughts: All the Deity, as it is in its own native Perfection, cannot be imagined by us.* The Excellency of this Glorious Nature is unconceivable. A comprehensive knowledge of this Transcendent Essence is above a Finite intellect. In this respect he is, according to that Dedication on the *Athenian* Altar, Ὁ Ἄγνωστος Θεός, *the Unknown God.*

* Τὸ τί ἐστι καθ' αὑτὸ τὴν οὐσίαν, οὐ χαλεπὸν μόνον, ἀλλὰ καὶ ἴσως ἀδύνατον. *De Monarch. lib.* 1.

† *Dr.* More's *Immortality of the Soul.*

† Οὐκ ἔστιν ἐν ἀνθρωπίνῃ φύσει δύναμις εἰς ἀκριβῆ καταλαμβάνουσιν θεοῦ οὐσίας. *Greg. Nyss.*

* Τὸ μὴ λογιστὸν ἀνθρωπίνῃ διανοίᾳ τι θεῖον, μηδὲ ὅλον ὅσον ἐστὶ φαντάζεσθαι. *Greg. Naz. Orat.* 34.

But though it be thus, though the Redundaut Lustre of the Deity hinders him from being directly looked upon, though this Brightness renders the bold gazing on him an impossibility, yet we may safely behold this Glorious Sun by Reflection. Notwithstanding his Divine Substance is difficult to be comprehended in it self, we may attain to some knowledge of it by his *Properties* and *Attributes*. Not that these are really distinct from his *Nature*: for the *Wisdom* of God, is God himself, and the *Power* of God, is God himself, and so is his *Goodness*, and the like we may say of all the other *Attributes*. But this is some help and ease to our understandings, that these are *different Considerations* of the Divine Essence and Nature; and so what was hard, yea impossible to conceive in the whole and gross, and in its abstract and simple Nature, becomes intelligible by being distributed into several ways of conception. For the *Attributes* of God are those several particular Excellencies and Perfections of his Nature, which we form distinct and separate apprehensions of: so that we do consider apart one and the same Perfect Being, which makes the knowledge of it more facile to us. Because of the imperfection of our Understandings which cannot conceive altogether, we divide our Notions, and Contemplate the same Infinite Being under diverse Apprehensions: for though Gods Essence be one, yet his *Attributes*, which are the various Modes of his displaying his Essence are many.

As to the Distribution of them, it hath been made into *Negative* and *Affirmative* by some. The former are those Attributes that are Negatively expressed, as God's *Infiniteness*, his *Unchangeableness*, &c. The latter are those that are set forth in positive Terms, as his *Holiness*, *Justice*, &c. But this division is blameable, because in those Negative Attributes (as they style them) there is included a Positive Excellency, as will be made Evident when I come to treat of them. But the usual and most received Partition of the Attributes is into *Communicable* and *Incommunicable*: the former ones are such, as are common to Men with God, as *Wisdom*, *Holiness*, *Justice*, &c. the latter are proper to God only, as *Eternity*, *Omniscience*, *Omnipotence*, &c. But if we will speak properly and exactly, we must needs say that all God's Attributes are *Incommunicable*, because they are all Infinite, as his knowledge is Infinite, so is his Power, his Goodness, his Justice, &c. It is true some of these Excellencies, Knowledge, Goodness, &c. are in Men, but they are but shadows and resemblances of the like Perfections in God. There is this Threefold difference between these Properties, as they are in God, and as they are in us, 1. They are Essentially in God, whereas 'tis otherwise in Mankind. 2. They are Originally and Radically in God: which is the meaning of our Saviours words, *There is none Good but one, that is God*, i. e. there is none Absolutely, Independently, Originally good but He. Which was a Truth that *Plato* had attained to, as appears from his styling God * *the Primitive Idea of Good*, and *Good it self*, and *of it self*. But this and all other Excellencies are in us, in a derivative way. All the Good that is to be found in us, is but a Beam, a Ray, an Emanation of his Essential and Original Goodness: it is communicated to us from the Source of all Good. 3. These Excellencies are in God Eminently, Superlatively, Fully, Infinitely, but they are and exert themselves in us Meanly, Imperfectly, and according to a certain Measure and Degree. Thus the Divine Attributes cannot properly be said to be *communicated* to Men, but are spoken and meant of *God*, in a different way from what is found in us. The Distinction therefore above-named seems to be ill framed, and not to give us an exact Distribution of the Attributes of God.

* Ἡ τοῦ ἀγαθοῦ ἰδέα, Αὐτοτελὲς, Αὐτοαγαθόν. *In Politic.*

I chuse rather to divide them thus, 1. into *Primary* or *Fundamental* Attributes, such as are the Root and Basis of the rest, *viz.* the *Existence* of God, his *Life*, his *Spirituality*, his *Simplicity*, his *Infinity*, under which last are comprehended his *Ubiquity* and *Eternity*. 2. Into those Attributes which are *Secondary*, and are either built upon those foregoing ones, or upon one another: such are God's *Knowledge*, his *Power*, his *Holiness*; which latter contains in it his *Mercifulness*, his *Justice*, his *Veracity* or *Faithfulness*. And the heighth of all these Excellencies (whether Primary or Secundary) are the Attributes, of *Immutability*, and *Perfection*, and *Happiness*. This is the Method that I draw them up in, and in which I intend to discourse of them.

The first Attribute of God in his EXISTENCE. For this must be treated of here, tho' I have discoursed of it before: for then my business was to prove *there is such a thing*, but now, under the Notion of an *Attribute*, I must speak of it in another manner, that is, I must shew the particular Nature of it, and how it differs from the Existence of all other Beings and Things. We are to know then that God is a Being that *exists of Himself*, and *Independently* on any other Being: For tho' I have proved the being of God, from several Topicks, yet it depends upon none of them, nor on any thing else whatsoever. But before I insist upon this and further explain it, it may be serviceable for the commending and inhancing this First Attribute, to observe this to you, That this is of so great Importance that it is expressed in no less than Three of those *Names*, which are ascribed to God in the Holy Scriptures, *viz. Jehovah*, *Ehejeh*, *Jah*. For though it is to be granted that in a rigorous sense * *Justin Martyr*'s words are true, *the Ineffable God hath no Name*, because we have no Adequate Notion of him, therefore he is above every Name. Accordingly when *Jacob* asked to know the *Angel's*, that is, *God's Name*, Gen. 32. 29. there was no positive return to the question, but God told him it was enough to know him otherwise, *viz.* by his *Blessing him*. Names are not commensurate to an Immortal and Infinite Nature. Yet, though it be thus, though no *Name* properly and strictly speaking can be given to God, so as fully to express his Nature and Propertie as they are in themselves, yet some Names are made use of to express our Thoughts and Conceptions of him. The conceited *Cabalists*, as we find

* Ὄνομα τῷ ἀῤῥήτῳ θεῷ οὐδεὶς ἔχει εἰπεῖν. *Apol.* 2.

find in *Galatinus*, assign 72 *Names* of God, but there is no foundation for that number. St. † *Jerom*, following the best and sobrest of the *Jewish* Doctors, reckons 10, and they are these, *El*, *Eloah*, *Elohim*, *Shaddai*, *Eljon*, *Adonai*, *Sabaoth*, *Ehejeh*, *Jah*, *Jehovah*. Some of these Names, as *El*, *Eloah*, *Elohim*, are given not only to God, but to Angels and Men, but the three last are peculiar to God alone. Some of them express God's Power and his Works, but these three *Jehovah*, *Ehejeh*, *Jah*, denote his Being, which is of a peculiar nature, and such as no other Beings whatsoever are or can be capable of.

* *Epist.* 136. *ad Marcellam.*

The *Jews* tell us, that the pronunciation of the first of these Divine Names is not known, because it is not found Written with its proper *Vowels* or *Points*, from whence we might know how to pronounce it. But it is more probable that out of mere Superstition they refused to pronounce it, and instead of it read *Adonai* or *Elohim*, which appears from the LXX's Translation, who generally render this Name by Κύριος, which answers to *Adonai*, and sometimes by Θεός, (as in *Gen.* 4. 1. *Isai.* 54. 13.) which answers to *El* or *Elohim*. The *Jewish* Priests strictly forbad the people to attempt to utter this Name on pain of Death, yea of Damnation, according to that of the *Talmud*, * *He that pronounces this Name, according to its Letters or Writing, hath no part in the World to come.* And the High Priest himself was permitted to use this Name but once a year, and that in the Holy of Holies (which confutes the Notion of its being utterly unknown :) yea † some tell us that the ordinary Priests, while they were in the Temple, might speak this Name as it is written, but it was unlawful to do it when they were out of the Temple. Nay, some of the *Jewish* Doctors in the *Babylon Talmud*, testifie that the *Jewish* people used heretofore to pronounce this Name. All this Shuffling shews that the pronunciation of the Name was not unknown, but only the *Jews* superstitiously concealed it, and out of a groundless reverence would not utter it. Yea at last they begun to be shie of Writing as well as Speaking it, thus in the *Targum* for *Jehovah*, they sometimes set down three *jods*, and sometimes two. So that it was by the particular Care and Providence of Heaven, that this Glorious Appellation was preserved. But this is to be lamented, that from the general disuse of this Sacred Name among the *Jews* we are not so fully satisfied about the pronouncing of it, as otherwise we might have been. *Galatinus* seems to be one of the first that brought in the Pronouncing and Writing of the Name *Jehovah*, and *Junius* and *Tremellius* (the latter a Christian Convert from *Judaism*) were the first Translators that rendred it so. But if we are mistaken about the true and exact pronunciation, we ought not to be offended, because we cannot assign another that is better, and so far as we are able to know, this very pronunciation is the Primitive and Original one. The latter *Jews* grew fond and besotted, and dreamt of strange Mysteries in this *Tetragrammaton* (though I deny not that the Name as to its very Make, having all the *Hebrew Vowels* in it, is remarkable, and Religious Criticks have made other observations on it) they fansied Wonderful Vertues lay in the very Letters of the Name; they tell us *Moses* wrought all his Miracles by it, and they are so blasphemous as to say that our *Saviour* performed his Miraculous acts by vertue it. And a great many Cabalistical Niceties and mere Fooleries there are about this Name, and the Letters of it.

† *Sanhedrim. cap.* 11.

* *Tamid. cap.* 7.

To pass these by, I will take Notice of what is certain and unquestionable, and what is of real use to us, *viz.* That first this Name imports *Being*, secondly *Truth* or *Faithfulness*, which latter I referr to that *Attribute*, and shall then treat of it. At present I am only concerned to observe, that *Jehovah* is a *Name of Essence* (as the *Hebrew Rabbins* rightly called it :) it owes its original to the Verb substantive *Havah*, which is of the same import with *Hajah* suit, but this latter is more in use among the *Hebrews*, and the former among the *Chaldees* : or, as some Criticks have distinguished, *Hajah* signifies properly *the Act of Being*, and *Havah* the *continuance of that Act*. Thus it is a Name of Being or Existence, and conveys unto us the true Notion of Him, * *of whom and through whom are all things.* This is a Periphrasis of that Glorious Name *Jehovah*, and of that Infinite Being that Exists from Himself, and gives Being to all things else. Therefore this is Emphatically called by the *Jews*, *Ha Shem*, *the Name*, as much as to say the Incommunicable Name, the Name appropriated to God only : and so † *Maimonides* owns it to be. Nor are the places which the *Socinians* alledge (that from *this* and the Name *God*, being used in common they may evade the Argument, which is brought from *Christ*'s being called *God* in Scripture to prove his Godhead) at all to the purpose, because what-

* *Rom.* 11. 36.

† *More Nevoch. l.* 1. *c.* 61.

whatever hath the Name of *Jehovah* affixed to it in Scripture, hath it figuratively, not properly, as *Jerusalem* is called *Jehovah Shammah*, *Ezek.* 48. 35. not as if this Name were in a proper and direct sense attributed to that City, but only to signifie the Presence of God there in a special manner. But this Name, when properly used, and attributed to *God*, is a Name that distinguishes him from all other Persons or Things. *Thou whose Name alone is Jehovah, art the most High over all the Earth*, *Psal.* 83. 18. To thee in a peculiar and incommunicable manner this Title belongs, and that because 'tis a Name that imports *Independent Being and Essence*, and that the owner of it is the Author and Producer of all other Beings. Wherefore the Name *Jehovah* is first mentioned in *Gen.* 2. 4. when God had finished all his Works of the Creation; when this was done by *him*, from whom first they received their Being, and on whom they constantly depend, this *Name* is very appositely added, it being a Title of *Essence* and *Subsistence*.

Another Name of *Essence* (and of the same signification with the former) is *Ehejeh asher Ehejeh*, Exod. 3. 14. *I am that I am*, and more absolutely *Ehejeh I am*, in the same verse: for though the Verb be in the *Future*, yet (as is most usual in the Holy Style) the *present Tense* is understood, and accordingly that Text is rendred ἐγώ εἰμι ὁ ὤν by the *Septuagint*. And to this proper Name of God, it is likely our Saviour alludes when he saith, *before Abraham was* ἐγώ εἰμι *I am*, *Job.* 8. 58. The import of this Name is that 'tis Gods Nature *to be*, that he is *of himself*, and that all have their *Being from him*. Τῷ γὰρ καὶ γένος ἐσμέν; or in the Language of a more Authentick Writer, *In him we have our Being*, Acts 17. 28.

The third Essential *Name* of God is *Jah*, and is of the same original with the two former. It is an abbreviature or contraction of the word *Jehovah* (as *El* is of *Eloah*) and as that declares his peculiar way of *Being and Existence*.

And this is the *Attribute*, I have now propounded to speak of, and which is the foundation of all God's other Attributes; all other Beings *Exist*, but not in that manner that God doth. This is worthy of our consideration, and it is necessary to be known and acknowledged in order to the right understanding of this first Glorious Property of God. We are to know then in the first place, that *God's Being* different from that of any Creatures, in respect of its *Fecundity*, *Pregnancy and Exuberancy*, as the doctrine of the Holy *Trinity* plainly discovers to us, and as the Learned Bishop *Pearson* hath shewed in his remarks on this Plenitude and Fecundity of the Divine Essence, in his *Exposition of the Creed*. The Divine Essence displaying it self in three distinct Persons or Subsistencies (which cannot possibly be said of any other Being) is a peculiar proof of this.

Secondly, *Necessary* and *Essential Existence* belongs to God, and him only. God exists by the Transcendent Excellency and peculiar Privilege and Eminency of his own Nature; for he being infinitely Perfect (and indeed we cannot possibly form any other Notion of *God*) it follows that he hath this Perfection among the rest, to *Exist*. Wherefore it is Natural and Essential to him *to be*, and *always to be*. Thence that ingenious Philosopher who argues from the Idea of God to his Existence argues not amiss, though some have ill managed this Argument, and have so stretched it as to make it Inconclusive. But thus far we may go, Existence is necessarily contained in our Notion and Conception of the Divine Being, he being the most Perfect *Ens*, and therefore we may conclude from our Idea of him that he is. God's Existence is not any thing superadded to his Essence, but it is included in it. He exists by vertue of his Essence: which is thus demonstrated, the Divine Essence or Nature hath all Perfection in it, because an Infinite Being can't be otherwise conceived, for if it hath not all Perfection in it, it is not Infinite: *now Existence* is necessarily included in Infinite Perfection. But we cannot argue in this manner concerning the Existence of any other thing, because the Existence of no other thing is necessary, but contingent. The necessity of Being is the sole privilege of God; for a Being that hath all Perfections whatsoever, cannot possibly be without *Existence*, which is the foundation of all the rest.

Thirdly, as the consequence of this his Existence is *Eternal* and *Independent*; I joyn both these together, because they are inseparable; for what is Eternal hath no Beginning or Cause, and what hath no Cause must be of it self, and what is so must needs be Independent on all other things. This demonstratively proves the *peculiar* quality of the Divine Being. His Existence is of a different Nature from that of all other Beings, because he exists of himself, and by himself: for this is one

one of the grand things which makes the difference between God and the Creatures. The summ is, God is a Self-existing Being, and he could not be so unless he were Eternal, wherefore the *French* Translators of the Bible have fitly rendred *Jehovah The Eternal.*

Fourthly, the Divine Existence is such that from this alone all other Things have their Being, and could not have been without it. No finite Essence in the World can confer Existence upon any thing, for nothing can Create but what was Uncreated: whence it is the sole prerogative of Divine Being to impart and bestow Existence on other things. For this reason God is called τὸ Αὐτὸ εἶναι by *Dionysius*, and τὸ Ὄν and Αὐτοῦν by *Plato:* by which they mean not only that God really exists but that he is the Author of all Existence. His existing is of that singular Nature, that it is the Source and Fountain of all Beings whatsoever. Yea, we cannot possibly prove our own Existence but from the conception we have of God's Being. For whence had we that Conception or Idea? The Cause is not from our selves, but from that Being which is so Perfect, for though we conceive such Perfections in a Being; yet we find them not in our selves: therefore both we and our apprehensions of them must be from that Perfect Being, and therefore it follows that we are really existing things.

Fifthly and Lastly, it follows from all that hath been said that *Being* is so simply and absolutely proper to God, that other things can scarcely be said to be. In respect of God all Creatures are nothing, and their Existence is a Shadow, for as 'twas borrowed at first, so ever after it is precarious and alterable. Accordingly it is observable in the Sacred style, that these things are represented, as if they had but a seeming Existence. The Scripture doth as it were annihilate the World, calling it *Nothing*, yea *less than Nothing*, Isai. 40. 17. *Man*, saith the Psalmist, *walks in a vain shew*, Psal. 39. 6. *in an Image*, as 'tis in the Original, in a mere Figure and Appearance. He is not what he seems to be, he is but a kind of a walking Shade: and the things which he is conversant with are but Shadows and Semblances, Shews and Appearances. *Solomon* is as expressive as his Royal Father, for he calls this imaginary Scene of the World, with all its possessions and enjoyments, *that which is not*, *Prov.* 23. 5. These are not truly τὰ ὑπάρχοντα *the things that are*, tho' they are so styled according to the common apprehension of Men, but they are by this Wisest of Men degraded into a Non-Entity.

And this is not only the language of Scripture, but of the most Intelligent Philosophers and Moralists among the Pagans. When they discourse of the Properties of True Being and Existence, they conclude that it is not properly to be attributed to the things of this World. One of the sublimest of them (as *Seneca* represents him, and at the same time approves of what he saith) * denies that any of those Impressions which we see and feel, and are subservient to our outward Senses, and which kindle and stir up our Passions, are of the number of those things that *truly are.* And so ὕπαξις a *Reality of Being* is not allowed by † *Plotinus* to be the proper and absolute qualifications of that which is merely Corporeal and Sensual. For comparatively speaking, nothing hath a *Being* but God, because nothing exists in *that Manner* that He doth. Hence the Great and most usual Name, that the Ancient *Egyptians* attributed to Him was *Being*, as * *Plutarch* reports. Who observes that there was this Inscription over *Isis*'s Temple in *Egypt*, † *I am all that Existeth, is and shall be.* And on occasion of another such Inscription on the Temple at *Delphos*, he saith, *God only exists*, * *we have no Essence or Being at all*, compared with Him. For *to be* in that eminent manner that I have described is the Chief and first property of *Divinity.* Therefore from this God takes his *Names:* in the Old Testament he is known by the Title of *Jehovah*, and *I am*, and in the New by ὁ ὢν *Rev.* 1. 4. So that it was truly said by an Antient Father, † *no Name seems to be more agreeable to God than that of* Τὸ Ὄν, *He that is, that Being that Existeth.* To conclude this First Particular, the *Use* we are to make of it is to raise the Character of the Divine Majesty of Heaven, and to humble our selves on the consideration of our meanness and inferiority. *All Nations before him are as nothing: and they are counted to him less than Nothing and Vanity*, *Isai.* 40. 17. We are reminded from what hath been premised to admire the Divine Being above all things,

* *Quæcunque videmus & tangimus, omnino ista quæ sensibus serviunt, quæ nos accendunt & irritant, negat Plato ex iis esse quæ verè sunt.*

† *Enn.* 2. 1, 6.

* *De Isid. & Osir.*

† Ἐγώ εἰμι πᾶν τὸ γεγονὸς, καὶ ὄν καὶ ἐσόμενον. *Ibid.*

* Ἡμῖν ὄντως τοῦ εἶναι μέτεστιν οὐδέν. *Ibid.*

† Δοκεῖ μὴ κυριώτερον πάντων τῶν ἐπὶ θεοῦ ὀνομάτων εἶναι, τὸ Ὄν. *Cyril.*

things, yea above the order of the Celestial Spirits (whose Nature excels that of all other Created Beings) for they as well as we are but dependent Creatures, and derived their Essence from God; but He is of Himself, and exists by a Simple Necessity, which is in himself, not in any Cause of him, because indeed there is none, and it is impossible there should.

The next Attribute, and which is very nearly related to that which I have been speaking of, is the LIFE of God. This is more than his Absolute *Being* or *Existence*, for it is that Glorious Property whereby he exerts his Essence, and Acts agreeable to his Excellent Nature. And we are to take notice of it, because 'tis so solemnly mentioned in the Sacred Scripture. He is both in the * Old and † New Testament frequently styled the *Living God*. And the Second Person in the Trinity is called by himself *the Life*, *Joh.* 11. 25. and St. *John* styles him *the Word of Life*, *Joh.* 1. 1. And the denomination of *the Spirit of Life*, is given to the Third Person, *Rom.* 8. 2. It is observable that God *swears* by this Attribute, and this only, *As I live, saith the Lord*, *Isai.* 49. 18. *Jer.* 22. 24. *Ezek.* 5. 11. Yea, when God *swears by himself*, or as 'tis in the *Hebrew by his Soul*, *Jer.* 51. 14. *Amos* 6. 8. it is the same Oath, for as *R. Kimchi* notes well on the latter of these Texts, his *Life* is *Himself*. And as God himself, to confirm and ratify the Truth of what is said, useth this Oath, so we find Religious Men doing the same, *i. e.* swearing by the *Life* of God, in this form, * *As the Lord liveth*, or as it is barely in the Hebrew, *the Lord liveth*.

* *Deut.* 5. 26. *Jos.* 3. 10. *Psal.* 42. 2. *Dan.* 6. 25. † *Acts* 14. 15. 2 *Cor.* 6. 16. 1 *Tim.* 3. 15. *Heb.* 10. 31.

* *Judg.* 8. 19. *Ruth* 3. 13. 2 *Sam.* 4. 9. 1 *Kings* 17. 2. 18. 10.

The *Life* of God is the foundation, on which all his other Attributes are built, or rather they are but different Exertments of Life. The *Life* of God is that whereby he Acts and Moves, and effectually worketh all things in all. It is most properly said of God that *he liveth*, because he acts and operates of himself, which cannot simply be said of any Creatures whatsoever, for ‖ *in Him they live and move*, as well as have their Being. *The Father hath Life in himself, and he hath given to the Son to have Life in himself*, *Joh.* 5. 26. The Father and the Sons Life is from themselves, and 'tis the sole Origin and Principle of Life in all other Beings. *He giveth to all Life*, *Acts* 17. 25. *With him is the fountain of Life*, *Psal.* 36. 9. As he *existeth* absolutely, so he *liveth* after the same manner: he hath no dependance on any thing in his operations, but all depend upon him, all act and live by and from him.

‖ *Acts* 17. 28.

Again, this Life of God hath this peculiar property (which distinguishes it from the Life of all other Beings) that it hath no limits † *He that liveth for ever and ever* is the Periphrasis of God alone. As he was of none, so his Life can be bounded by none, his actions and operations can be restrained by none. Thus he alone can be said to have Life: *he only hath Immortality*, as the Apostle speaks, 1 *Tim.* 6. 16. and all other Beings have a stinted and terminated Life, that is, none of them were always, and those that for the future shall be Immortal shall be so in a dependent way on the Supreme Being. This very sentiment the *Pagans* had, and thence called their Supreme God * Ζῶνα, *i. e.* the *Living God*, for they were sensible that *Life* is one of the Fundamental Attributes of God, and that whereby he exerts all his other ones.

† *Dan.* 4. 34.-12. 7. *Rev.* 4. 9, 10.-10. 6, -15. 7.

* Ἀπὸ τοῦ ζῆν.

How much more then ought we, who boast of the Title of Christians, to acknowledge this great Truth, *viz.* That in the highest and most absolute sense God *liveth*, and in respect of Him nothing can be said to Live? How intimately are we concerned to be sensible of the reality of this Divine Attribute, and to frame our Minds according to the deep apprehension we have of it, to entertain becoming thoughts of Him in whom we *live*, and in all our acts not only of Natural but Spiritual Life to own our continual dependance on him by whom we Live and Act? and Lastly, how reasonable and just is it, that we should dedicate our whole lives to his Glory and Honour, seeing he is the sole Donour not only of our *Beings*, but of our *Lives*?

The third Attribute of God is his SPIRITUALITY, for 'tis positively affirmed, *God is a Spirit*, *John* 4. 24. We can never have a true Notion of the Supreme Being unless we believe this. And because Men generally conversing with Sense and Bodies are apt to imagine God to be Corporeal, therefore we ought to be the more concerned to assert the Spiritual Nature of God. *Tertullian* in some places seems to hold

hold the contrary, though another † *Father* labours to excuse him, and bring him off from Heresy, by saying he means by *Body*, speaking of God, his *Divine Substance* or *Essence*, in contradistinction to *Non-ens*. But whether this be so or no, I shall not now stand to dispute. This we are certain of, that it was the Heretical opinion of the *Old Monks* of *Egypt*, that God had bodily parts and members, as Ears, Eyes, Hands, &c. whence was the first rise of the *Anthropomorphites*. As for the *Pagans* they generally believed a Deity to be some Corporeal Substance, and particularly of Human shape, only of a more Excellent Nature. The *Mahometans* stiffly assert the Corporeity of the Divinity, and for the most part the common people of the *Roman* perswasion have the like gross Conception concerning God, and frame no other apprehension of him than of a goodly Ancient Man. Yea *Stenchus Engubinus*, a Man of some Learning in that Communion, holds God to be of bodily figure and proportions: and of late some of the greatest pretenders to Philosophy imbrace this Doctrine. None hath more zealously defended it, than Mr. *Hobbs*, according to whom *God* is no other than *Almighty Matter:* for he would make us believe that *Incorporeal Substance* implies a Contradiction, and that whatever exists is *Matter*, and therefore *Omnipotent fine Matter* is his *God*. It is pretended by him and several other advancers of Atheism that they cannot frame a Notion of a *Spirit:* but the true Reason is, I fear, because by that Notion they would be lead to a right understanding of that Supreme Being which they have no mind to believe or acknowledge, lest it should prove dangerous to them.

† *Aug. de Haresi cap.* 86.

But if we will be impartial, the Notion of a *Spirit* is as intelligible as that of a *Body*. Yea, by the apprehension we have of the latter, we may gather what the former is: for a *Body* or *Matter* is such a Substance as consists of extended parts, and consequently is capable of Division, and thereby of alteration and corruption. Even in the finest and subtilest parts of Matter (which therefore we call *Spirits*, not that they are so in the sense we are now speaking of, but because they are a refined sort of Bodies, and are so quick and volatile that they seem to have laid down their Corporeity, and to approach to the Nature of *Spirits* rather than Bodies) even these are not exempt from outward Assaults, these subtile Atoms may be dissipated, corrupted, exhausted. In our selves we daily feel the inconvenience of Matter which we are cloathed with, which renders us obnoxious to innumerable Evils, Dangers and Diseases. Besides, what is Material and Bodily, is Inert, Dull, Sluggish, and hath no principle in it of activity: whence it is void of all Motion and Operation of its own Nature; but more especially it is uncapable of such refined acts as Understanding, Thinking, *&c.* And lastly, it is the object of bodily Sense and External Perception.

Now, that which hath qualities *contrary* to these is a *Spirit*, and therefore may easily be conceived by us. A *Spirit* in its own Nature is incorruptible, and indiscerpible, not to be invaded, divided, separated, as Bodies: for what hath not parts is not capable of being so. Again, it is of the Nature of a Spiritual Substance to move and actuate itself, to have its life and vigour in itself (though not *of itself*, if we speak of a finite Spirit) and its chief and most distinctive operation is to understand, think, ratiocinate, and to exert all spiritual acts of that Nature, that is, if we speak of *Spirits* of the noblest order. And the last property of *a Spirit* is that it cannot be seen, or felt, or apprehended by any other Corporeal Sense, for what hath no quantity or parts cannot be the object of sensual Perception. Therefore that is a short but very significant account of a *Spirit*, * *It hath not Flesh and Bones:* it hath nothing belonging to it that can be felt or sensibly discerned, as Body and Matter can.

* *Luke* 24. 39.

This excellent sort of Beings is either Finite or Infinite: to the first do chiefly belong *Angels* (whether good or bad) and the *Souls* of Men. Of the second rank is *God* alone, who is an Infinite and Perfect Spirit; and what hath been said of a Spirit in general must in a higher and more eminent way be applied to Him. He is an Immaterial, Incorruptible, Impassible Substance, uncapable of being divided, disjoined, impaired by any force whatsoever: he is an immense Mind or Intelligence, Self-active, Self-moving, and wholly above the comprehension of Bodily Sense. Briefly, by saying God is *a Spirit*, we hold that he is utterly free from the Imperfections of Matter, and all the infirmities of Corporeal Beings: and withal that he is of a far more Excellent and Transcendent Nature, than finite and created Spirits. For he alone is Originally such; he is so *a Spirit* that all of that kind are

from him: wherefore he is justly termed the * *God of the Spirits of all flesh*, and † *the Father of Spirits*, whether Angelick or Humane. He is a Spirit in so exalted and eminent a manner that he is said by one of the Ancients to be || *the only Spirit*.

Let us then rectify our apprehensions concerning the Nature of God, and be throughly perswaded of this, that 'tis one property of the Divine Nature to be *Incorporeal*, that 'tis the prerogative of the best Being to be a *Spirit*; and let our Thoughts, our Affections, our Worship be agreeable to this Divine Perfection: this is the inference which our Blessed Master makes from those Premises, *God is a Spirit*, therefore *they that worship him, must worship him in Spirit and in Truth*, *Joh.* 4. 24. Which, in a lower manner, was the Argumentation of one of the best Moralists among the *Gentiles*, *If God be a Mind or Spirit*, saith he, *then we are to adore and worship him with a pure Mind and Heart*, as becometh a Spirit. Another discourses thus, " The best and choicest Oblation thou canst make to God is the " Soul, for 'tis this only that joyns us to God; there being no affinity between " Matter and Spirit, but there is between Spirit and Spirit: hence arises the like- " ness between God and Man; and they being alike, they consort together. The " worst and vilest persons can bring rich Offerings to the Altar, but Good Men " only can make an Oblation of their Hearts. Wherefore (saith he) give thy self " to God, give something of thine own, something that is inward, for things " without us please not God. After this admirable manner speaks *Hierocles* on *Pythagoras*'s Golden verses, and what he saith is founded on the Nature of God, namely, his *Spirituality*.

And with this Attribute we may joyn the SIMPLICITY of God, which may be reckoned as a distinct Excellency, but 'tis certain it is founded chiefly on God's *Spiritual* Nature: for what is Immaterial and Spiritual is of a pure and simple Essence, which is not consistent with bodily members and diversity of parts, for a part differs not only from the whole, and is less than it, but from the other parts also; which necessarily destroys *Simplicity*. This Divine Property excludes all Mixture, all Allays: * *God is Light, and in him is no Darkness at all*, for whatever is in God is God himself, and therefore he must needs be Pure, Simple and Unmixt. He is not (as finite and created Beings) compounded of matter and form, or of subject and accident, &c. but is void of all Physical and Metaphysical Composition, as was long since proved by † *Origen*, || *Clement* of *Alexandria*, * St. *Augustine*, and afterwards by the *Schoolmen* largely. And this was the Sense of the best improved Moralists among the Pagans, † *God is an abstract Mind*, saith *Plutarch*, *an abjunct form, mixed with nothing Material, compounded of no sensible or patible thing*. So the Divine Being is represented by *Tully* to be a † *Free and disintangled Mind, separate from all Mortal concretion*. And it was a profound Thought of *Plato*, suitable to the Nature of God, || *It cannot be*, saith he, *that there should be in Him any part, nor can he be said to be the whole; for a part is a part of the whole, and that is the whole which is deficient in none of its parts*.

Thus Reason, as well as revealed Religion and Theology, dictates this to be one of the Excellencies of the Divine Being, for it is a most Rational Proposition, That the most Perfect Nature is one and entire, and void of parts and all composition. Wherefore we may justly place this among the Divine Attributes, and confidently, averr with an Ancient Father of the Church, * *The Divine Substance is One, and Simple, and of one kind, not compounded, and no ways to be seen in a various composition.* Which sublime Doctrine should teach us to have reverent apprehensions concerning the Divine Majesty, and with the most affectionate emotion of our Souls to admire and adore this his matchless and unparallell'd Property. All other Beings are of an Heterogenous and mixt Make, † *Every one of us is Double and Compounded*, as *Plutarch* well expresses it; we are of different and jarring Principles, and consequently are imperfect Creatures; but God is uniform and alike, and there is nothing dissimular, nothing various and discrepant in him: for which reason we ought to extol the Divine Being above all others whatsoever.

The

* *Num.* 16. 22.
† *Heb.* 12. 9.
|| Μόνον ὄντως ἄυλον τὸ θεῖον δεῖ καὶ ἀσώματον. *Damasc.*
* 1 *John* 1. 5.
† *Contra Cels.* l. 7.
|| *Pædagog.* l. 1. c. 8.
* *De Trinit.* l. 6.
† Νοῦς ὁ θεός, χωρισὸν εἶδος, τὸ ἀμιγὲς πάσης ὕλης, μηδενὶ παθητῷ συμπεπλεγμένον. *De Placit. Philos.* l. 1.
* *Mens soluta & libera, segregata ab omni concretione mortali.* Tusc. Qu. l. 1.
|| Οὐτε ἄρα μέρος αὐτοῦ, ὅτι ὅλον αὐτὸ δεῖ εἶναι, &c. *In Parmenide.*
* Ἡ μὲν θεία οὐσία μία ἐστὶ ἁπλῆ καὶ μονοειδὴς, καὶ ἀσύνθετος, καὶ καθ' ὅλου τρόπον ἐν ποικίλῃ τινὶ συνθέσει θεωρουμένη. *Greg. Nyss. cont. Eunom.*
† Διπλοῦς ἡμῶν ἕκαστός ἐστι καὶ σύνθετος. *De Virtute Morali.*

The INFINITY of God is another of his Excellencies, and distinguishes him from all other Beings. The whole World and all things created were Finite: for the whole Mass of the Creation consists of several parts, that are Finite; now, that which consists of finites is Finite. Whence it is evident that the Nature of God is Infinite, because he is void of all such parts, and is one entire and inseparable Essence. Again, this appears to be the natural result of his Essence, which (as we have said) is Independent and of itself. He having no Author of his Existence, there was nothing to set bounds to him and his Perfections: so that by vertue of his Self-existence he must needs be Infinite. And when I say he is so, the plain meaning of the word is this, That God hath no limits: his Transcendent Nature is such that we cannot reach the fulness of it, we cannot possibly rise to all of it: there is more, yea ineffably more yet behind. So that (whatever some suggest) nothing is more easie to conceive than *Infinite*, for imagine no Limits, no Measure, no End, and it is done. But then it is the hardest thing (yea impossible for Finite Creatures) to comprehend the things contained in this Infinity. Not is it a wonder that there are many such in God's Immense Nature, which exceed our Conceptions, for there is no proportion between Finite and Infinite. Therefore 'tis in vain to dispute about this latter, and to attempt to make it Finite by comprehending it. But yet this which I have said is true, That the general Notion of *Infinite* is conceived without difficulty, for *Infinite* is that which is without bounds, without dimensions and confinemement.

This Infiniteness of God extends itself to all his other *Attributes*, for they are all without measure and quantity. The Divine Essence being Infinite, it must needs be that all his *Properties* are so too. * *His understanding is Infinite*, his Knowlege and Wisdom are boundless: he is infinitely Powerful, Just, Good and Merciful, for there can be no additions made to any of these Excellencies. Yea, Infinity runs through all the Divine Attributes: there is nothing in God but what is Infinite. But at present I speak in a more abstract Sense, and consider the Infiniteness of God as to this double Notion, 1. his *Essence* or *Presence*, 2. his *Duration*. He is Infinite, because he is not circumscribed by any Place: he is Infinite, because he is not limited or terminated by any *Time*. Whence arise these two distinct Attributes, Gods *Ubiquity* and *Eternity*, of which I will now treat.

* *Psal.* 147. 5.

First under the *Infinity* of God, is comprehended his UBIQUITY or OMNIPRESENCE, that Divine Property whereby he is present every where. But it will be requisite to shew you *what kind* of Divine Presence it is, that this Attribute sets forth to us. It is not to be denied that God is present every where by his *Knowledge*, for he seeth and knoweth all things in all places, but this is proper to the Attribute of *Omniscience*; God is every where by his *Power*; on the Earth, above it, and under it; Men, Angels and Devils feel the influence of it; but this belongs to the Attribute of *Omnipotence*. God is present by his *Goodness* and Mercy in all places of the World: the whole Creation experiences his Love and Bounty; there are every where some Testimonies of his Forbearance, or of his actual kindness, especially in some great Emergencies; whence we read, even among the Gentiles, of an Acknowledgment of † *præsentes Divi* and ‖ *præsentia Numina*. God is present by his *Justice* and *Righteousness* throughout the whole World, and so God is every where by all his other Attributes. What *Presence* then of God is it that we are to understand by this Attribute which I have now propounded?

† *Virgil. Eclog.* 1.
‖ *Idem Georgic.* 1.

Briefly, it is no other than his *Presence by Essence*, which sufficiently distinguishes this Property from all the rest. God is every where Essentially and Substantially; *there* can no place be assigned where he is not thus present. This is called by some *the Immensity* (and that very rightly) of God: and it is by this *Infinite Greatness* (for that explains the meaning of *Immensity*) that he fills all places, yea, all the wide and imaginary Spaces (as the *Schools* call them) beyond the World, all the Spacious Vacuities possibly to be conceived. Or rather we may say, this *Immensity* or *Ubiquity*, is that whereby God Infinitely surpasses all places, for he is neither *Circumscriptively*, as Bodies, nor *Definitively*, as Angels and Souls (as the *Schoolmen* speak) in any place, and so he is void of all space and bounds. Whereas all Created things are contained in some place, he is contained in none, but fills all, and is present with all persons and things; which, by the way, doth confirm the Truth of that

Attribute I spoke of before, namely, God's *Spirituality*: for if he were Material, he could not be Infinite and Immense in his Being, for Matter or Body takes up but a Finite place.

This is confirmed by several express Texts of Scripture, as when 'tis said, *The Lord he is God in Heaven above, and upon the Earth beneath*, Deut. 4. 39. and not only so but *the Heaven and Heaven of Heavens cannot contain thee*, 1 Kings 8. 27. And this is the pious Acknowledgment of the Holy Psalmist, *Whither shall I go from thy Spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy Presence? If I ascend up into Heaven, thou art there: If I make my Bed in Hell, behold thou art there. If I take the Wings of the Morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the Sea, even there shall thy hand lead me and thy Right-hand shall hold me*, Psal. 139. 7. &c. *Am I a God at hand, saith the Lord, and not a God afar off? do not I fill Heaven and Earth, saith the Lord?* Jer. 23. 23, 24. This is confirmed by Humane as well as Divine Testimony: the *Hebrew Doctors* call God המקום *the Place*; yea they reckon *Makom* among God's *Names*, because he is as 'twere the *Place* of all things, because nothing is *Extra Deum*, but all Things and Persons are in him, and are full of him. The Christian Writers bear witness to this, as *Gregory Nyssen* who hath these significant Words, * *Nothing that we can conceive to be circumscribed can be God, but it is proper to the Deity to be every where, and to make its way through all things, and to be confined by nothing.* *Cyril* of *Alexandria* positively asserts that † *God cannot be comprehended in a place, or limited by any distances of Space*: and he hath this remarkable passage (which gives us a summary account of this Doctrine I am treating of) ‖ *God is not in a Place, nor is he absent from any Being whatsoever, for he fills all Things, and pervades all Things, and is without all Things, and yet in them all.*

This also was a Notion imprinted on the Minds of the Wisest *Pagans*: thus *Trismegist* pronounced God to be a Circle, whose Center is every where, and whose Circumference is no where. Which in other and plainer terms is thus expressed by *Porphyrius*, Ὁ Θεὸς πανταχοῦ, ὃν οὐδαμοῦ, *God is every where, because he is no where.* That is, he is included in no place, though he be excluded from none. * *Which way soever you turn*, saith *Seneca*, *you may take notice of God meeting you as 'twere, for nothing is void of him: he himself fills all his Works, and is present with the whole Creation.* And the sobrest of the Gentile Poets give their Suffrage here,

† *Jupiter est quodcunque vides, quocunque moveris.*

Which was but an imitation of * *Virgil*'s

——— *Jovis omnia plena.*

Thus this is a Truth attested by all ranks of Persons, which shews it to bear conformity to the Catholick Reason of Mankind. They all unanimously agree in this that God fills all things, and contains all, and yet is himself contained of none.

If you enquire into the particular *Reasons* of this, these may satisfie you, 1. This Attribute of God arises necessarily from the peculiar Excellency of his Divine Essence, which (as I have proved) is *Infinite*, and accordingly the *Ubiquity* of God is a Branch of his *Infinity*. Finite and Created Spirits, can as 'twere contract and dilate themselves (as a ‖ Learned Philosopher of our Age acknowledgeth) but God is not capable of doing so, for no limits can be set to an Infinite Being. Wherefore God being as to his Essence Infinite, he must needs be such as to his Presence. The Immensity of his Nature suffers him not to be bounded by any Place. Thus his Omnipresence flows Naturally and Unavoidably from his Infinite Essence. 2. He made all things, even the Greatest and Largest, the vastest Spaces and Extensions imaginable; and shall we deny Immensity and Ubiquity to the Author of them. 3. God upholds as well as made, the Universe, therefore he is every where. This was the Logick of the Great St. *Paul*, when he dealt with the Learned *Athenians*, *He is not far from every one of us*, (*i. e.* he is intimately near to us, and present with us, for any Man may discern that the words are a *Meiosis*) *for in him*

* Οὐδὲν ἐν περιγραφῇ νούμενον θεῖόν ἐστιν, ἀλλ' ἴδιον τῆς θεότητος τὸ πανταχοῦ εἶναι, καὶ διὰ πάντων ἥκειν, καὶ μηδενὶ περιείργεσθαι. Orat. 2. cont. Eunom.

† Οὐ τόπῳ περιληπτὸς ὁ θεός, ἢ διαστήμασι περιωρισμένος. Lib. 11. Comment. in Joban.

‖ Οὐ γὰρ ἐν τόπῳ τὸ θεῖον, ἅπερ δὲ παντελῶς τῶν ὄντων οὐδενός. πληροῖ γὰρ τὰ πάντα, καὶ διὰ πάντων ἐρχόμενον, ἔξω τε πάντων, καὶ ἐν πᾶσιν ἐστι. Ibid.

* *Quocunque te flexeris, ibi illum videbis occurrentem tibi. Nihil ab illo vacat, opus suum ipse implet.* De Benefic. l. 4. c. 8.

† Lucan. l. 3.

* Eclog. 3.

‖ Dr. Henry More.

him we Live and Move, and have our Being, *Acts* 17. 27. By him all things and persons, at the greatest distance from one another, are preserved and sustained, therefore he is every where. His Providence being spread over the whole World, it follows thence, that He is Omnipresent.

But notwithwanding these Arguments, there are and have been some Men that will not digest this Doctrine of God's Ubiquity. Some *Platonists* and *Stoicks* of old excluded him from this lower World, making his residence fixed in the Spaces beyond this Universe. And the *Epicurean* Philosophers shut God up in Heaven, and would by no means believe that he concerned himself with, or shewed himself present in this inferior World. Among those that have born the Title of *Christians*, there have also been some who have been guilty in this kind; thus the *Valentinians*, *Gnostiocks*, *Manicheans* limited the Presence of God, by confining him to the Supream Heavens, as the Ecclesiastical Writers, who confute them, acquaint us. And the *Aëtians*, another sort of *Old Hereticks*, maintained, That the True God may be circumscribed. And this false perswasion hath descended to some in these latter times: thus a *Roman Catholick*, whom I have mentioned before, is so bold as to assert * that God is not present every where as to his Essence, but only as to his Power and Efficacy: for which one of his † own Communion wonders at him, and thinks it strange that he who was bred up in the bosom of that Church which is the Castle and Fortress of the true Faith and Religion, as he calls it, should run into such an Absurd Opinion, but he will not call him *Heretick*.

Yea, some that go under the name of *Protestants* have espoused this Error, as ‖ *Vorstius*, who peremptorily averrs that God is not every where as to his Essence. And * *Episcopius* is partly of the same Mind, for he professes he can't say that God is Immense as to his Essence, because the manner of God's Omnipresence is not expressed in Scripture. And *Socinus*'s Friends and Well-willers generally encline to this Doctrine, and may be reckoned among those that deny the Divine Ubiquity. The main Argument that is used by these Men to support their Opinion is that God's pure Nature would be polluted by vile and sordid things, if he were present there: but this Cavil (for so indeed it is rather than an Argument) shews they have unworthy Thoughts and Conceptions of God, and that they are ignorant of his Nature and Essence, which are not capable of being polluted. They may as well say God is infected and defiled by the wicked World, and all their filthy and abominable Actions; and on that account they may exclude him from having any thing to do here below. They seem to forget this Great Truth, that the Substance of God, being Infinite and Unmeasurable, must needs be every where, and this likewise that he being a Spirit is not in a capacity of being hurt by any Corporeal pollution.

If it be objected against the Doctrine of God's Omnipresence, that 'tis said of *Cain*, † *He went out from the presence of the Lord*, this is from a misunderstanding of the expression here used, for *the face* (that is the word in the *Hebrew*) *or presence of the Lord*, is his Favour and Grace: so that the meaning of that Text, is that *Cain* was bereaved of the Divine Favour and Benediction: instead of being under the happy influences of these, he was doomed to be a Vagabond and a Cursed wretch. And by this you may rightly understand that place, *Psal.* 51. 11. *Cast me not away from thy presence*, where 'tis implyed and supposed that *David* might be debarred of the Divine Presence, therefore some may inferr that God is not *every where present*: but the plain answer is, that by *Face* or *Presence* we must understand God's Favour, Love and Grace, which are frequently in Scripture called *the Light of his Countenance*. It is true that this *Gracious Presence* of God is not extended to all alike, but we are now speaking of his *Essential Presence*, which is universal. In respect of this God is in all places whatsoever, and cannot possibly be otherwise, because his Substance or Essence is Immense. What *Aristotle* saith of the Soul of Man in regard of the Body, is true only of God in respect of the World, *He is all in all, and all in every part*. His entire Essence is every where because it hath no bounds, because it exceeds all dimensions; This is the true ground of God's Ubiquity.

This Doctrine will be very useful, to these following purposes,

1. It will remind us of entertaining Thoughts agreeable to the immensity of the Heavenly Majesty, and of behaving our selves humbly and reverently before him. All other Beings are stinted, and have their certain boundaries set them, beyond which they cannot pass: even the glorious Sun travels not beyond his Tropicks. In comparison of God, all Creatures are shrivel'd, contracted Beings: the whole Earth

* *Stenchus Engubin. Comment. in* Psal. 138. 2.

† *Petav. Theolog. Dogm.* tom. 1. l. 3.

‖ *De Deo & Attribut. cap.* 27.

* *Justit.* l. 4. c. 13.

† *Gen.* 4. 16.

is but a Point, the Ocean is but a Drop, the Heavens are but an expanded Vapour, the whole World an Atom. But the Creator of these is Unmeasurable, Unlimited, and surpasses all bounds. He is every where, and replenishes all places, and his Presence is spread through all extents of Space, whether real or imaginable, and yet is confined to none. Now, if it be a disrespect and dishonour, when a Great and Eminent Person is present, not to take notice of him, how much more is it not to be mindful of that Supreme and Infinite Spirit, who gave us our Being, and is never absent from us? how much more should we be Apprehensive that the Soveraign Maker of all things is present with us at all times? This ought to create a dread and awe in our Souls, to check all Irreverence; and to fill us with a holy Shame and Modesty, according to that Sentence of the *Rabbins, be covered with shame because of God, who is so near to thee.* And let us remember that of a Pious Father, *It is the great misery of Man not to be with him, without whom he cannot be*, and out of whose Presence 'tis impossible for him to escape. Wherefore seeing God is with every one of us, let us take care to be with him, to preserve a constant Sense of him in our Minds, to contemplate his Divine Presence which fills the World, and to possess our Souls with reverential Thoughts concerning his Immense Divinity.

2. The deep and serious consideration of God's Ubiquity, ought to restrain us from Sinning: and that upon a double account; first, because God is always present to observe what we do. When we think on God's universal Presence, it should so influence on our Lives, that we should not dare to do any thing displeasing to Him, and unworthy of our Holy profession. He is a most wicked and debauched Child that will venture to violate his Fathers commands, even when he stands by him. He is a most profligate Malefactor who will not abstain from Blood or Rapine, whilst the Judge is present. He certainly is more egregiously desperate in the course of sinning, who is not check'd by the Sense of the Divine Omnipresence. Or doest thou think, O fond Man, to baffle the Divine Ubiquity! and to betake thy self to that place whither this doth not reach? They were notable words of *Seneca*, * *God is present, what dost thou do? what dost thou contrive? what dost thou hide? God thy Keeper will follow thee; he will stick close to thee, even he whom thou canst not possibly shift off; Why therefore dost thou seek for a Secret place, and shunnest Witnesses of thy Actions?* It is in vain to endeavour Privacy, and to perswade our selves that our evil Actions shall not be taken Notice of. God who is ever present observes whatever we do; our secretest Enterprises are visible to him. Even the *Postcœnia vitæ*, as *Lucretius* calls them, the Actions of Mens lives, which they keep close from the Eye of the World; whatever is acted behind the Curtain, and no Spectators are admitted to see, all this is not unknown to Him. Yea, the failures of our Hearts, no less than of our Lives, are open to his Piercing Eye, and therefore let us not presume to offend him, though it be but in Thought and Desire. But this part of the Inference I will more amply prosecute, when I treat of God's *Omniscience*, for then it will be most proper to urge and improve this Doctrine: though I find most Writers and Preachers confounding these two Attributes, the *Ubiquity* and *Omniscience* of God, which I have laboured to avoid.

* *Adstat Deus: quid agis? quid machinaris? quid abscondis? Custos Deus sequetur: hæret hic quo carere nunquam potes. Quid locum abditum quæris, & arbitrum removes?*

Again, this Consideration ought to be a restraint and determent from Sin, because God being Omnipresent we cannot be secure in any place, if we break his Holy Laws and wilfully disobey him. *Jonas* undertook *to flee into* Tarshish *from the presence of the Lord*, Jonah 1. 3. as if he thought he could Sail away from God, as †*Tertullian* expresses it, as if God were in one place and not in another. But he soon met with a confutation of his Error, and a remarkable recompence of his Folly, for God pursued him with a Storm, and effectually convinced him, that the Divine presence is at Sea, as well as at Land, and that no place can shut out God. If we Sin, we are no where secure from him: he can reach us wheresoever we are, because his Essence is Infinite, Immense, Unlimited. This is admirably and elegantly set forth in the words of the Psalmist, *Psal.* 139. 7. &c. which I have already produced: and the Prophet *Amos* seems to allude to them when he saith, *He that fleeth shall not flee away, and he that escapeth shall not be delivered. Though they dig into Hell, thence shall my Hand take them: though they climb up to Heaven, thence will I bring them down. And though they hide themselves in the*

† *Quasi à Deo transfretaret. De fugâ in persecutione.*

Top

Top of Carmel, I will search, and take them out thence: and though they be hid (as they think) *from my Sight in the bottom of the Sea, &c.* Chap. 9. v. 1. 2, 3. The Thoughts of which ought to check the Exorbitant lives of Sinners, and to arrest them in the most impetuous carrier of Vice. *Joseph* saw *God* in that Room, where his Mistress saw none but *him.* And if we had the same spiritual Eye-sight, it would be an effectual Charm against the most alluring Temptations, and it would excite us to our Duty in whatever Place or Company we are. Nay, we should always converse with God, even whilst we are conversing with the Creatures, for they lead us Naturally unto Him, because he is in them all, and is every where present.

3. This may be serviceable to administer Comfort to Persons, in their greatest Necessities and Hardships. Art thou abandoned of thy Friends and Acquaintance? God is nigh thee. Art thou bereft of Humane help? The Divine Presence is never wanting. Art thou in Prison? God who is every where, is there. Art thou banished to the fartherest parts of the World? God is present. Which consideration, though barely of itself it can afford us but little Refreshment, because God's Essential Presence reacheth to all alike, yet thus far it may be a ground of Solace, that this Presence of God must necessarily be supposed as the foundation of that Help and Succour which we expect from him. Thence even among the *Pagans* their Deities were said to be * οἱ παρὰ μικρὸν θεοί, *Gods that were near at hand*, which was as much as to say, Propitious and Favourable Gods, Gods ready to help; for the Notion of the *Divine Presence* conveyed this with it. Because they were not afar off, but present, this assured them of speedy Relief and Succour. Yea, some of the Heathens, to be more sure, as they thought, wherever they went, carried their Gods along with them, and so thought themselves safe not only in their Journies, but all their Undertakings. But rejecting this fond Conceit, it is certain that this natural Sentiment and Perswasion of *God's Presence*, gives comfort and spirit, whatever our Circumstances are. We read that the first *Roman* Emperour, when he was sailing in a Storm, was so foolish and impious as to bid the Mariners not fear, because they carried *Him* in their Vessel: *his Presence* he vainly thought was Protection enough against all the dangers of the Sea. But every Vertuous and Good Man may upon Wise and Solid grounds chear himself, in the greatest Tempests and Disturbances of the World, with this reflection, that God is with him, who is his Safety and Security, who is *a present Help in time of Trouble.* If God be never distant from us; yea, if he be constantly and inseparably present with us, we may thence take occasion to raise our Minds to some comfortable hopes of his Assistance and Favour. This the *Immensity* and *Omnipresence* of the Divine Majesty will happily suggest to us.

* *Pausanias in Laconic.*

Another branch of God's *Infiniteness*, is his ETERNITY, for (as hath been said) he is Infinite and Unmeasurable not only in respect of Place, but Time. As he is of Immense Greatness, and so is *every where*, so he is of Immense Duration, and consequently *always* was, is, and shall be. This then is the Attribute which I am to discourse of in the next place, *viz.* the *Eternity* of God, the perpetual and uninterrupted Duration of his Essence, which is a distinct Property from all the rest which hath been Named, or shall be afterward insisted upon. Therefore we must be careful to give a particular Account of it, and not to confound it with any other of the Divine Excellencies. God's *Eternity* comprizes in it three things.

1. That He is *without beginning.* For it is of the intrinsick Nature of that which is *Eternal* to have *always been*, and never to have any Rise of its being. Look back as intensly as you can, and reckon as many Millions and Millions of Ages, as 'tis possible to number, yet then you are as far off from reaching any Beginning as you were at first, *i. e.* before you reckoned any Time at all. To imagine any such thing as a Beginning in God's Existence, is to destroy the very Notion of a God: for if he had a Beginning, then there was a Time when he had no Being, and then he was not God. Thus you see how Absurd and Blasphemous it is to deny God's Eternity as to this first particular. So absurd were *Orpheus*, *Homer* and *Hesiod*, as to present us with the *Genealogy* and *Pedigree* of the Heathen Gods. The Cradle of the *Cretian Jove*, and his Infancy are ridiculous: Divinity that bears a date is a Solecism. And to Translate this from the Pagan Deities to the True God, is yet more absurd and intolerable, there never was or could be any instant when it could be said that *God was not*: therefore he ever was, and if he was so, he had no Begin-

Beginning. This is the meaning of the Prophet *Isaiah*'s Character of the Almighty, † *The High and Lofty one that inhabiteth Eternity.* He always was the same Blessed and Perfect Being, and had no Original or Author of this Divine Perfection: he hath from Eternal Ages *continued* and *dwelt* as 'twere in this Eternal State of Blessedness: this is to *inhabit Eternity.* Which *David* the Man of God thus expresses, ‖ *Before the Mountains were brought forth, or ever thou badst formed the Earth and the World, even from Everlasting* (and it follows) *to Everlasting thou art God.* Which brings me to the

† *Isai.* 57. 15.

‖ *Psal.* 90. 2.

2d. Particular, *viz.* that God is not only without *Beginning*, but without *Ending*: he is not only *from Everlasting* but *to Everlasting.* As he had no Original of his Existence, so he can never have any Period of it. * *He is the same, and his Years shall have no End.* After the Revolution of as many Myriads of years as you can imagine, there shall be no possibility of saying, *He is not*, or *He shall not be*: for 'tis as absurd and irrational for the Divinity to cease, as to begin. The understanding *Ethnicks* were sensible of this, whence the Answer which a very † Wise Man among them gave when he was asked, *what is God?* was, *That Being which hath neither Beginning nor End.* And after their manner, they signified this Truth by certain *Symbols*: thus the *Egyptians* represented God by a *Circle*, which is without Beginning and End. Some of the Ancients built *Round Temples* to their Gods; *Numa Pompilius* erected such a one to *Vesta* at *Rome.* *Augustus Cæsar* built another of the same Figure, to all the Gods, and called it *Pantheon.* *Pythagoras* would have his Disciples worship God, with turning of their Bodies round, and *Numa* made an order to the like purpose; which Circular Motion had reference to what I am now speaking of. *Eternity* looks not only backwards but forwards; it being the Essential Notion of that which is *Eternal*, to remain incessantly in that Being without which it never was. This is proper to *God* only, and is communicable to no other Being whatsoever. It is true, Angels and Men may be said to have a Half-Eternity; *i. e.* they shall endure for ever, though they once were not. But nothing is wholly and absolutely Eternal but God, who neither had a Beginning of his Existence, nor shall have any Cessation of it. Therefore He alone can claim the Title of the * *Everlasting King*, and *of the Everlasting God*, as he is called both in the † Old and ‖ New Testament.

* *Psal.* 102. 27.

† *Thales In Diog. Laert.*

* *Jer.* 10. 10.

† *Gen.* 21. 33.—*Isai.* 40. 28.

‖ *Rom.* 16. 26.

3. As there is no Beginning or End, so there is no *Succession* in Eternity: for where there is nothing before or after, where there is no distinction of Times, there can be no Succession. For Time is the measure of *Before* and *After*, and that duration wherein is Succession of parts necessarily implies a Beginning, for the Time that is past cannot be infinite. But 'tis otherwise in *Eternity*, where (as a * Learned Writer long since observed) nothing is past and nothing is future, because that which is past ceases to be, and that which is future hath not yet begun to be. Therefore in Eternity all *Successive* duration is excluded, and all things are *together* and in a *moment*, all Things and Actions subsist at once, all is gathered and united into one Instant. Thus it is in the duration of God, who is an Infinite and Eternal Being, and it cannot be otherwise; for being Infinite he cannot be measured by Days or Years, he is above all differences and intervals of Time. For *Time* is that limited duration of Finite things, which are here below, whereby we measure how long a space hath been since their first beginning, and how long they shall continue. There is nothing like this in an Eternal Being, and consequently there is no *Succession* in his duration, but unto him all things, and the parts of Time wherein they are, coexist, and are present together. *Episcopius* and some others who seem to disallow of this, and say we can't conceive God's duration, but by certain infinite succedaneous Moments, yet confess that this argues no imperfection in God, for it is only an extrinsick denomination whereby Duration is conceived; and our conceptions being weak and imperfect, cannot apprehend the Continuance of a thing without a *prius* and *posterius*, and by consequence some kind of *Succession.* Another † Learned Man gives his Judgment thus; concerning this Great Point, "There "is, saith he, a Vertual, Relative or Applicative Succession competible to God, "*i. e.* this Eternal duration contains in it vertually, all the Successive duration "imaginable, and is perpetually applicable to the succeeding parts thereof, as be-"ing always present thereunto, as the Chanel of a River, to all the Water that passes

* *Nihil præterit in Æterno, & nihil futurum est, quia et quod præterit esse desinit, & quod futurum est nondum esse cœpit.* Augustin de Vera Religione.

† *Dr. H. More.*

" passes through it, but the Channel is no such successive defluxion, though the " Water be. Such is the steady and permanent duration of God, in respect of " all Successive duration whatsoever. Or, the duration of God, is like that of a " Rock, but that of Natural things, is like that of the Sea which flows by it. " The former, being indeed God's necessary Self-existence, is without all deflu- " xion, but the latter is Fluid and Successive. So that at last you may perceive this Judicious Writer comes to this, that *Successive duration* is not formally and properly to be attributed to *God*, as being an Essence necessarily Existent, and therefore without Beginning, whereas all Successive Continuance supposes a Beginning.

I do not see therefore but that the Doctrine of the *Schools*, which excludes Succession from the Nature of Eternity, and make Eternity a Point, entire and altogether co-existing with all times whatsoever, is impregnable. And thence it follows that all the things that ever were and shall be are present to God in one instant, though if you speak of them as they are in themselves, and in respect of us, they are not present all at once, but some at one time, and some at another. * It is seated in all Mens minds, saith a Famous *Platonist*, to conceive God to be Altogether, and that his Essence and Duration are whole and entire, and the same at once every where. Which is the true meaning of God's Name *I AM*, *Exod.* 3. 14. *i. e.* he always Is, and is the same in a constant indivisible and unsuccessive Duration. Thus *Christ* the True God saith of himself, *I am Alpha and Omega*, *Rev.* 1. 8. expressing his *Eternity*, by the first and last *Letters* of the *Greek Alphabet*. As these begin and close the whole number of Letters, so the whole Series of Times is included and comprehended in Him. (And by the bye, I might observe that somewhat answerably to this in the Apocalypse, the *Chinois* when they would decypher their *Great God*, express him by the *First Letter* in their Alphabet.) He adds, to set forth this Attribute yet further, *I am the Beginning and the Ending*, † *the First and the Last*, *i. e.* I being the True God am from the *Beginning*, viz. *Eternity* (for so ἀρχὴ imports, *John* 1. 1. and it is from the *LXX Version* of the Old Testament, who put ἀρχὴ for *Eternity*, *Isa.* 44. 4.) and my Duration is *to all Eternity*: in this respect I am *the First*, and I am *the Last*: none is before or after me. And the complete Notion of *Eternity*, is thus delivered in the next Words, *which is, which was, and which is to come*, for Eternity though it consists not of, yet it comprehends in it all parts and circumstances of Time and Being, past, present and future.

* Ἐν πάσῃ φύσει ἀνθρώπου ὁμῶς θεὸν νομίζειν, καὶ παντάχοῦ τὸ αὐτὸ ἅμα ὅλον εἶναι. *Plotin.*

† *verse* 11

This is so clear a Notion that it hath been expressed by *Heathen* Men, in almost the same terms which we find it presented to us in the *Revelation*,

‖ Ζεὺς πρῶτος γένετο, Ζεὺς ὕστατος ἀρχικέραυνος,
Ζεὺς κεφαλή, Ζεὺς μέσσα, Διὸς δ' ἐκ πάντα τέτυκται.

‖ *Orpheus.*

Jupiter is First and Last: the Head, the Middle, and from him are all things. And *Plato* to the same purpose, † *God*, saith he, *contains the Beginning, End and Middle of all things*. This in the Language of the Inspired Apostle is, *The same yesterday, and to day, and for ever*, Heb. 13. 8. Thus he is *the Eternal God*, Deut. 33. 27. *the King Eternal, Immortal*, 1 Tim. 1. 17.

† Ὁ μὲν θεὸς ἀρχήν τε καὶ τελευτὴν, καὶ μέσα τῶν ὄντων ἁπάντων ἔχει. *De Legib. l.* 4.

Would you be acquainted with the true *Reason* and *Ground* of this? you must first know in general that God's *Eternity* arises from the Nature of the Divinity: for God is the most *Perfect* Being, and it is requisite to be *Eternal* that he may be such: for if he had a beginning of Being, he had his Original from another, which is an Argument of Imperfection. More particularly from God's *Simplicity* follows his Eternity, for what is void of all Composition and Mixture is Incorrupible, and not liable to decay, and so can never cease to be. And because it always was so (otherwise it would not be the same) it necessarily follows thence, that it had no Beginning. Again, the *necessity of God's Existence* proves his Eternity, for he cannot be conceived without a constant Being. As he is God he hath no Original of his Existence, but his very Being is inseparable from his Nature: and therefore he ever was, and must be ever. And it is necessarily included in the Notion of *God* that he always existed, because he is an *Independent* Being, and *subsists of himself*, and consequently is not beholding to another for his Being, and therefore had no Beginning of it, and therefore ever was.

Thus if any Man consider the very Nature of the thing itself, he will acknowledge that a Being which is of itself, and is Absolute, could not possibly have a

Beginning, neither can have an End. If you oppose the former, you must think of a *Not-being* before *a Being*, and so you must grant that the Godhead once was not: if you withstand the latter, you must conceive a *Not Being* after a *Being*, and then there will be a time when there shall be no God. And if you can suppose a *Succession* in *Eternity*, you may also fansie a *Being* together with a *Not Being*, *i. e.* God may be, and yet not be. But these are such ugly Absurdities and Contradictions, that they will affright any Man of common Sense and Understanding, and who hath any tolerable Apprehension of a Deity. Wherefore it is reasonable to assert that God's *Self-existence* proves his *Eternity*. This is the Natural result of his Essence, seeing it is of the very Essence of God to Exist. And as he is an Absolute and Perfect Being, he can't do otherwise. The very Nature and Idea of God import so much: it is contained in the very Conception of him, that he cannot fail to be.

Lastly, from God's being the *First Cause* of all things, it is infallibly demonstrated that he is Eternal: for the *First Cause* was without any Cause at all, and consequently had no Beginning, and therefore Eternal. This is as evident as any Proposition in *Euclid*, and the Men who talk so much of *Demonstrations*, are concerned to attend to it. If there be, I say, one *First Being* on which all the rest depend, that Being must be Eternal, for that which was First and the Cause of all, hath itself no Author or Cause, else it could not be First. And that there must be *some First*, may be absolutely inferred from the *Series* of *Causes*, and the impossibility of their proceeding to *Infinity*. If there were this, there could be no *Order* of *Causes*, no *Co-herence*: for if there were no First, then there is no Second, no Third, &c. And if this be true, then there is not one thing before or after another, then they must needs be together, then they are all First, and then those who scruple at or deny *God's Eternity*, must hold all other things Eternal. This they get by their absurd and groundless Notions, and their obstinate struggling against the Truth. Wherefore all Men of sound Minds, find it necessary to stop a progress *in Infinitum*, by asserting some First and Universal Cause, from whom all the rest are: and this Cause is *God*. When they trace things to the First Origin and Author, who had no Beginning at all, but gave Beginning to all things, they find that this is the *Eternal Godhead*. He alone is of himself, without all Causes, therefore he was from Everlasting, therefore he had Eternal existence: but that which had any thing before it is not Eternal.

From God's *Eternity* many things may be inferred, of great moment to us.

1. We are obliged to extoll and magnify this Transcendent Excellency of the Divine Being. Though we cannot sufficiently admire or fully comprehend it, let us with the deepest Reverence adore it. God alone is exempted from all measure of Time, he alone is without Beginning and End, and Succession, he alone is of infinite Duration and immense Continuance. The fond Worshippers of the *Heathen* Gods most falsly ascribed the Title of *Immortal* to them, and nothing but sottish Adulation moved some Court-parasites, to style their * Emperours *Eternal*: for this is that infinitely Glorious Attribute which is proper to God, and is not communicable to the most exalted Creatures. Wherefore † *unto the King Eternal be Glory and Honour for ever and ever.*

* *Ammian.* lib. 5.

† 1 *Tim.* 1. 17.

2. It becomes us to consider our mean Existence, our short Duration in respect of God. If we could far exceed the Longævity of the Persons of the first Ages of the World; if we could stretch out our lives to Thousands of Years, yet in comparison of that Perpetual and Endless duration of our Creator, the space of our Lives would be inconsiderable: for (as the Devout Man informs us) *a Thousand Years in God's sight, are but as yesterday*, *Psal.* 90. 4. There is a greater difference between Eternity and the vastest spaces of Time, than we can imagine there is between a Mathematical Point, and the whole Universe. How prodigiously wide then is the difference between Eternity and the contracted Life of Man? O let us not be forgetful of this our mortal State, but labour (with the Psalmist) *to know* (*i. e.* rightly to understand and weigh) *our End, and the measure of our Days, what it is, that we may know how frail we are*, *Psal.* 39. 4. Let us be humbled under the serious Thoughts of this, and demean our selves as Short lived Creatures. Let us be very sollicitous to improve this present time, this momentary Abode here on Earth, this short Sojourning in the World, which is nothing comparatively to Eternity: according to that of the same inspired Writer, *Our Days are as a Hands breadth, and our Age is as nothing before God*, (*Psal.* 39. 5.) who is from Everlasting to Everlasting.

3. If

3. If God be Eternal, it becomes us not to Murmur at his seeming delaying, to dispense Punishments or Rewards in this Life; the Time may seem long to us, but there is no such thing with the Father of Eternity. It was promised by our Saviour to the believing *Jews*, that *he would avenge them speedily*, *Luk.* 18. 8. but there was the space of Forty years, between this Promise and the Accomplishment of it, which was at the Destruction of *Jerusalem*, for then *the Son of Man came*, as 'tis said there. This was ἐν τάχει *in a short time*, because with the Eternal Majesty of Heaven, there is no time long. To answer the Cavil of those *Scoffers*, who disputed against the coming of Christ to Judgment; because *they saw all things continue as they were, from the beginning of the Creation* (as much as to say, if the Judge would come at all, he would have appeared before that time) St. *Peter* suggests this, *Be not ignorant of this one thing, that one Day is with the Lord as a Thousand Years, and a Thousand Years as one Day*, 2 *Pet.* 3. 8. Know this that the greatest dimensions of Time, are scanty and short in God's sight: no Years, or Ages, or largest divisions of Time, are considerable with him. Wherefore (as the Apostle adds) *the Lord is not slack:* though he seems to delay, yet we must not measure Him by our selves and our weak Apprehensions, but we are to consider that unto God who is Eternal, the space of Time which is thought long by us, is with Him but as one Day. This and a Thousand (yea Thousands of Thousands of Years) differ not with Him, for there is no Succession or parts in Eternity, no difference as to past, present and future. This is the reason why Good Men are not presently Rewarded and Crowned, and why there is not some severe Penalty and Doom inflicted forthwith on the Evil, by the just Judge of Heaven and Earth. This is the very Account which is given by one of the *Greek* Moralists, why Wicked Men are so *slowly punished*; * *The whole space*, saith he, *of the Life of Man, and much more the present Moment is nothing with God.* Since it is so, let us see the Reasonableness of God's Forbearance, and not wonder at the Continued Prosperity of Vitious Men. Why should we measure Eternity by our Span? why should we not rather remember that God is the Lord of all Times, and that, he being Eternal, all Things and Persons, though never so distant in themselves, are present to Him as in one Immoveable and Indivisible Moment? for the Infinite and Undivided Gulf of Eternity, swallows up all the processions and different spaces of Time.

* Τοῖς γὰρ θεοῖς πᾶν ἀνθρωπίνης βίου διάστημα τὸ μηδὲν ἐστι, καὶ τὸ νῦν. *Plutarch.* περὶ τῶν ὑπὸ τῆς θείας βραδέως τιμωρουμένων.

4. God is Eternal, therefore *trust in him at all times*, *Psal.* 62. 8. In all Ages let the *Everlasting Jehovah* be confided in: this you find to be the Inference from the Consideration of the Divine Perpetuity, together with the Brevity of Human Life, Psal. 39. 7. *Now Lord, what wait I for? my hope is in thee*, in Thee only who canst Comfort me in my short Stay in this valley of Tears: for ‖ *Thou hast been*, and art *our dwelling place in all Generations:* Thou art the Rock of Ages, and the Everlasting Refuge of Mankind. Thou art the Fountain that canst never be dried up. Thou art Eternal not only in thy Being, but in all thy Attributes, Excellencies and Perfections. Thou always wast, and ever wilt be, the most Powerfull, Righteous, Faithful, Merciful, Wise God. Thus holy Souls may solace themselves, in the *Eternity* of God: * *the Everlasting God fainteth not, neither is weary.* † *My Days are like a Shadow that declineth, but thou, O Lord, shalt endure for ever:* and again, ‖ *God is our God for ever.*

‖ *Psal.* 90. 1.

* *Isai.* 40. 28.

† *Ps.* 102. 12.

‖ *Psal.* 48. 14.

Lastly, fix it on your Minds that God is *Eternal*, and thence be excited to Serve and Honour him, and to perform entire Obedience to him. Stand not in Awe of Short-lived Men, whose breath is in their Nostrils, but fear and reverence Him, whose Love and Hatred are Eternal; *I say unto you fear Him*, Love Him, Worship Him, and in whatever you do strive to please Him, and make it your great business to approve your selves acceptable to Him.

Hitherto I have discoursed of the *Primary* and *Leading Attributes* of God: now I pass to those that result from them, and are founded on them, *viz.* OMNISCIENCE, which respects the Divine Understanding; OMNIPOTENCE, which relates to God's Actings; HOLINESS, which appertains to the Divine Will.

The first of these, *viz. Omniscience* comprehends in it Universal *Knowledge* and *Wisdom*, for these two terms give us an exact Notion of this Excellent Property of God. His KNOWLEDGE is that whereby he Sees and Understands all things, and is throughly acquainted with the Nature of them: his WISDOM is that whereby he orders

orders and disposes all things. These two are distinctly taken notice of (but not in the same order) by *Job*, 12. *ch.* 13. *v. with him is Wisdom, he hath Counsel and Understanding:* and by the Apostle when he uses that Language of Admiration and Astonishment, *O the depth of the Riches, both of the Wisdom and of the Knowledge of God!* Rom. 11. 33.

I begin with the latter, the Comprehensive *Understanding* or Universal *Knowledge* of God: and here, 1. I will give a full proof of the Reality of it. 2. I will enquire into the true Grounds and Reasons of it.

First, I am to evince the Truth and Reality of this Excellent Attribute; which will be effectually done by this Induction. First, God perfectly knows Himself, and all his Divine Perfections, and whatever belongs to his Infinite Nature. Which is meant by our Saviour's words, *Mat.* 11. 27. *The Father knoweth the Son, and the Son the Father.* And truly we cannot suppose a Perfect Understanding to be void of this Knowledge. If any one pretends to do so, his supposition is contradictory, because this Self-knowledge is part of the Divine Perfection: wherefore he that supposes God not to know himself, and his Divine Nature, imagines God to be an Imperfect Being, which Notion is utterly inconsistent with that of a God. Again he hath a compleate knowledge of all things without him, as well as within him. *The Eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the Evil and the Good*, Prov. 15. 3. *His Eyes are upon the ways of Man, and he seeth all his goings*, Job 34. 21. *The ways of Man are before the Eyes of the Lord, and he pondereth all his goings*, Prov. 5. 21. And he views not only those ways and doings which are open and in the Eye of the World, but even the very secretest Actions of Men; yea, the * inward tendencies and workings of their Minds. *He searcheth the Heart, and trieth the Reins*, Jer. 17. 10. - 20. 12. *The Righteous God trieth the Heart and Reins*, Psal. 7. 9. which we find repeated in sundry other places of Scripture. This knowledge both of Mens *Hearts* and *Actions* is admirably represented to us in *Psal.* 139. 1, 2, 3, 4, and *v.* 23. This also the New Testament assures us of, Heb. 4. 13. *All things are naked and open to the Eyes of him with whom we have to do. He knows the Hearts of all Men*, Acts 1. 24. and several other passages might be alledged to the same purpose.

* *A quo nihil secretum esse potest, tenebris interest, interest et cogitationibus nostris, quasi alteris tenebris.* Minut. Fel.

But all or most of these Texts referr chiefly to God's knowledge of *things past* or *present*. Wherefore to make good the Induction, I am to prove also that he knows all things *to come:* and this is called his *Foreknowledge*. I know there are some who are of opinion, that this is a very improper way of speaking, and can't be applied to God, but only to Men, to whom some things are past, others present, and others future. God, say they, can't be said to *foreknow* things, because as with him nothing is *Past*, so nothing is *Future*, for all things are present with him, and he knows them together and at once. But I conceive that *Foreknowledge* is truly and rightly Attributed unto God in Scripture; on this account that he hath an exact knowledge of all those things, which as to the measures which we go by, are really *to come*. He is therefore properly said to *foresee* or *foreknow*, because as he knows things past with us, as such; and things present with us, as present, so he sees things to come with us, as to come. And this last Knowledge is rightly called *Foreknowledge*, because 'tis the knowing of what is to come with us. Of this I am now to speak, and to shew that the Divine Knowledge extends to all Futurities. That one Text is a sufficient proof of it, Deut. 31. 21. *I know*, saith God, *their Imagination which they go about, even now before I have brought them into the Land which I sware.* Whence it is evident that God hath a full view of whatever shall afterwards happen, he foresees every Thought, Purpose and Design before they are conceived, much more before they pass into Act. He foreknows the very Motions and Tendencies, the Dispositions and Inclinations of Mens Hearts, and consequently all things that depend upon them, all their Enterprises and Actions, yea even those that are most Free and Voluntary: as is evident from Acts 2. 23. *Him, being delivered by the Determinate Counsel and Foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have Crucified and Slain.*

But this Doctrine is opposed by some Men that are great pretenders to *Reason*, who tell us that if Men act freely, especially if God leaves them wholly to themselves, he cannot foresee what they will do, because all such Actions are meerly Contingent. If so, they cannot be known, for this (say they) involves a Contradiction in it, and therefore cannot safely be Attributed to God. I answer there is here

here no Contradiction at all, because though Mens Actions are indifferent and contingent in some respect, *i. e.* if we regard the free Principle of Man's Will, whence they flow, as also the variety of Objects which they are conversant about, yet in respect of God, they cannot be said to be contingent or casual, because nothing (of what nature soever) happens without his Disposal and Providence, and consequently, there is nothing hid from him: yea, all Futurities are fix'd and certain as to him, because of his Decree, and so are known: for the reason why the *Socinians* and some *Remonstrants* deny God's Knowledge of future Contingencies, is, because (say they) of Uncertainties there can be no certain Knowledge. This Cavil therefore is removed, because all things are certain with God, be they never so free, arbitrary and contingent, as to Men, for they were pre-determin'd by him. But this his Pre-determination, and his Prescience, hath no influx upon Man's Will: there is no force put upon Man by God's eternal Decree and Foresight. These are not the cause why things are done: but yet nothing that is done comes to pass without them.

As to God's Foreknowledge, we pretend not to shew the *manner of it*, but we are sure of the thing, and we are able to demonstrate it. For I argue thus, God *foretells* future Contingencies, therefore he *foreknew* them. *Behold, the former things are come to pass*, (i. e. I foresaw and foretold several future Occurrences, and they are accordingly come to pass) *and new things do I declare, before they spring forth I tell you of them*, Isai. 42. 9. That is, there are other fresh Events, which depend on the *free* and *arbitrary Actings* of Men, (for of such that Chapter speaks) and I foresee them likewise, and give you notice of them, long before any thing of their Causality *springs forth*, before it shews it self in the least. Thus he foretold, that *Abraham's Seed* (i. e. the *Israelites*) *should be Strangers in a Land that was not theirs, and should serve them, and they* (i. e. the *Egyptians*) *should afflict them* 400 *Years*; *and that afterwards they* (i. e. the *Israelites*) *should come out with great abundance*, Gen. 15. 13, 14. The Prophets, inspired by God, predicted the just time of the Captivity in *Babylon*; the Birth, Sufferings, Death and Resurrection of our Saviour, and several other Events which afterwards happened: which undeniably proves, that the Events were foreknown by God. So true is that of an ancient *Father*, * As many *Predictions* as there are in Scripture, so many evident Arguments are there, that God certainly *foresees future Contingencies.*

* *Præsentia Dei tot habet testes quot Deus fecit prophetas.* Tertul.

Nay, further, God not only knows those things that *shall* come to pass, but those that *might*, though they never will. Whereupon are grounded several remarkable Acts of the divine Dispensation in the World: Hence God suffers his Servants to be tempted, he lets them fall into such and such Circumstances, to prevent those Evils which he foresaw would overtake them if such things did not befall them. Thus, for example, God sees that if Riches and Plenty should be indulged to some Persons, they would prove very hurtful to them, and therefore he exercises them with Poverty, *&c.* So as to some bad Men, he knows what horrid Exploits they would be disposed to undertake, what Mischief they would be inclined to do in the World, if their Lives were continued to them; therefore he thinks fit to deprive them of them, and he cuts off these mischievous Contrivers, before they have an opportunity of perpetrating what they designed. And several other things of this nature might be mentioned, which are founded upon this, That God sees those things which would come to pass if such and such things accompanied them; but withall, he knows that they shall not actually come to pass, and this his Knowledge is certain. Thus I have briefly demonstrated God's *Omniscience*; I have shew'd, that *the Lord is a God of Knowledge*, or (as it is in the *Hebrew* and *Septuagint*) of *Knowledges*, in the plural, 1 *Sam.* 2. 23. He knows *all* Persons and Things; he sees, apprehends, understands, and penetrates into every Being. † *Known unto him are all his Works*, and all the Works of his Creatures, *from the foundation of the World* to this very instant. He beholds, not only what is past and present, but whatever is future. He certainly knows what all Mens Words, Thoughts and Actions will be. He hath a fix'd and determinate Prescience, even of those things which are in themselves free and undetermined. I will conclude this first Head of my Discourse with those excellent Words of a primitive Christian, (in answer to that Objection of the *Pagans*; God is in Heaven, and how can he see and know all things here below?) * "All things, saith he, are full of God: he is not only most near to us, but infus'd as it were into us. Nothing is secret to him, he sees the dark. We not "only

† Acts 15. 18.

* *Minut. Felix in Octavio.*

"only act under him, but (as in a manner I may say) we live with him. We are "not only always in his Eye, but we are in his very Bosom. Thus he expresses God's intimate Knowledge of us, and of the privatest Recesses of our Hearts.

Secondly, I am to shew on what *Grounds* this Universal Knowledge of God is founded. And at the same time I shall make it appear, that this Attribute is so transcendent an Excellency that it is peculiar to God alone, and not communicable to any other.

1. God understandeth things *Originally* and of *Himself*, and this is the fundamental Basis of his *Omniscience*. Our Knowledge is acquired by Sense, Hearing and Seeing especially, or by certain Images and Species taken in by the Senses, and imprinted on the Fancy; or more immediately in some cases, our Knowledge arises from innate Notions of Truth implanted in us: or we arrive to the understanding of things by Ratiocination and Argument. But yet still what we know is by Participation and Derivation, and therefore we know imperfectly. And this is † *a badge of our Creaturely State*, as a learned Man expresses it. But God knows all things, in and from himself, and is not beholding to any thing for his Knowledge. He bears in his own Essence the Exemplars of all things that ever were or shall be, and therefore he needs but to look upon himself, and he sees all things. And as for Evil, he knows it by knowing the Good, which is the Rule of it self and of its contrary. Thus God's Knowledge is an essential Attribute, and inseparable from his Being. The divine Mind hath a perfect understanding of it self, and thereby knows all other things: thus 'tis an Excellency peculiar to God alone. And it is most rational to think and believe, that He who hath the Preeminence of all other Beings, hath some singular Properties and Excellencies above all others.

†Dr. Cudworth. *Intellect. Syst.*

2. His *Omniscience* flows naturally from his *Immensity* and *Omnipresence*. There is nothing hid from him who is every where, for by pervading all things he penetrates into the nature of them. To which purpose may be applied what I alledged before, *Am I a God at hand, saith the Lord, and not a God afar off?* Jer. 23. 23. As much as to say, Because I am in Heaven, do you think that I know not the things that are done on Earth? Is my Knowledge confined and determined to a certain place? No: no more than I am. And thence it is that my Knowledge is infinite, because that is like my Nature, immeasurable and unconfined. Thus the Universality of the divine Knowledge is grounded on God's Infiniteness; which is the meaning of those Words in *Jer.* 23. 24. *Can any hide himself in secret places that I shall not see him, saith the Lord? Do not I fill Heaven and Earth, saith the Lord?* That is, none is capable of this universal Knowledge of Persons and Things but my self, because I am infinite in Essence, and cannot be bounded. Thence it is, that I foreknow those things which no finite Understanding can reach: Thence it is, that I know even future Contingencies, even the most casual Events. This is the great Truth which God himself here uttereth, and if there be some difficulty in maintaining it, yet I see no reason why it should be exploded: for it becomes us not to limit God's Knowledge, and to deny that he hath a foresight of Futurities, because we cannot tell *how* he knows them. This may satisfie us, that the divine Knowledge being infinite, it is no wonder that it surpasses our Conceptions, as to the manner of it.

3. The transcendent Knowledge of God is founded on his *Eternity*. Which is a Notion that the wise Men among the Heathens had attain'd to; for *Cambyses*, in his Speech to his Son *Cyrus*, tells him, that * *the Gods being Eternal, cannot but know all things, not only what is past, and what is present, but what shall be the future Event of every thing.* And the reason is plain, because in Eternity nothing is really past or future, but all present: nothing is ancienter or later than another, because all is together. Wherefore God being *Eternal*, all things are present with him, and all things are at once. He sees not things after one another, and consequently all are known with one View. We finite Creatures apprehend things successively, because we collect one thing from another: yea, oftentimes we lose the knowledge of one Object whilst we are busily entertained with another. It is common with us to learn, and then forget, which is one reason why we have such a mean stock of Notions, why our Knowledge is shallow and imperfect. But it is otherwise with the eternal Being: he knows things not by Succession, not by discoursing or gathering one thing from another, but with one Act, *simul & semel*, together and at once: and therefore it is, that he hath a perfect Knowledge of all that shall be hereafter. As he is *Eternal* he cannot but have such a Foresight. And thence we may understand St. *Augustine's*

* Θεοὶ ἀεὶ ὄντες πάντα ἴσασι τὰ γεγενημένα καὶ τὰ ὄντα, καὶ ὃν ἐξ ἑκάστου αὐτῶν ἀποβήσεται. Xenoph. *de Instit. Cyri.*

Austine's meaning when he declares, that † it is plain madness to acknowledge a God, and yet to deny that he hath the Knowledge of Futurity; for this learned and religious Father, knew that it was included in the very Nature of the Deity, to have an insight into all things to come. It is his peculiar, that he sees all things past and future, as if they were present: and indeed they are really so to him. Yet, though he knows not things by difference of Times, because he is above all the measures of Time; (otherwise he could not be *Eternal*) yet, I say, he knows at once all things in their several distinctions of Time, either past, present or to come: for he hath a clear and distinct Knowledge of things as they happen. All things being present to him together, he hath the more perfect View of them: he is acquainted with their particular Qualities and Circumstances: yea, he knows all things that *might be*, though they *never shall be*, as was said before.

† *Confiteri Deum esse, & negare præscium futurorum apertissima insania est.* De Civ. Dei, l. 5. c. 9.

4. God, as the universal * *Author* and *Creator*, must needs on that account *know* all things and their Operations. *He that planteth the Ear, shall not he hear; he that formed the Eye, shall not he see?* Ps. 94. 9. as was replied to those blasphemous Opposers of God's Omniscience and Providence, who said, *The Lord shall not see, neither shall the God of* Jacob *regard*, ver. 7. And observe what was the Answer to those vile Wretches, who *sought deep to hide their Counsel from the Lord*, and imagin'd their Works were so in the dark, that he could not take notice of them, and accordingly said, *Who seeth us, and who knoweth us?* Observe, I say, the Answer, *Shall the Work say of him that made it, He made me not? or shall the Thing framed say of him that framed it, He hath no Understanding?* Isai. 29. 15, 16. Which Words bear this plain meaning, He that made all Things and Persons must needs be acquainted with them. He knows them as the efficient Cause of them. His Omniscience arises naturally from his being the Maker and Creator of all.

* *Deus autor omnium & speculator omnium.* Minut. Fil.

I might add likewise, that he knows all things, because he hath from Eternity *decreed* and *determined*, that such and such things shall come to pass; he hath positively decreed concerning those that are Good, and he hath determin'd to *permit* those that he foreknew were Evil. This makes the Events which flow from the uncertain Wills of Free-Agents, to be certainly knowable to God. He must needs have a Foresight of all Occurrences, because he decreed them.

5. He that preserves and upholds, rules and manages all, cannot but be well acquainted with the State and Nature, the Effects and Consequences of them. It is necessary that he who governs the World, which cannot possibly be done without viewing all things in all places of it, should understand what ever is done in it. Thus the Apostle proves, that *God is not far from every one of us*; which is the same as if he had said, *He is near to every one of us*, and hath a perfect Knowledge of us, *because in him we live and move and have our Being*, Acts 17. 27, 28. His universal Providence is an undeniable Argument of his Omniscience.

6. God must be owned to have an universal Knowledge, not only that he may govern the World now, but that he may judge it hereafter. This is necessary, in order to the distributing of Punishment and Reward, as is manifest from *Jer.* 17. 10. *I, the Lord, search the Hearts, I try the Reins, even to give to every Man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings.* The Proceedings of the last Day extend to all kinds of Actions whatsoever, that were done in the Flesh, whether they were good or whether they were evil: yea, the very Thoughts, Desires, and Inclinations of Mens Hearts shall be then examined. Now, it is impossible that there should be any such thing as this, unless we assert that Catholick Knowledge which I have been speaking of. To this perhaps the Apostle referrs in that forecited place, where he saith, *All things are naked and open to the Eyes of him to whom we must give an account*, for so the latter Clause may be rendred, according to the import of the *Greek*. The great and general Audit of the World, cannot be carried on without an universal Inspection into whatever hath happen'd, whatever hath been done or design'd to be done among the Sons of Men. We must then be forced to grant, that nothing is conceal'd from the Eye of Heaven; that God's Knowledge is unlimited; that *there is no searching of his Understanding*, Isai. 40. 28. that *there is no Number of it*, as the Psalmist speaks, *Psal.* 147. 5.

And thus we see on what *Grounds* and *Reasons* the *Omniscience* of God is built: and withall, we cannot but be convinced; that it is the singular Property of the divine Nature, and is not, cannot be the attainment of any Creature. Especially the insight into Mens Hearts, and a certain foresight of what is to come, are peculiar

to

to God. *Thou, even thou, only knowest the Hearts of all the Children of Men*, 1 Kings 8. 39. Thence God himself makes his Prescience of Future Events, a *Criterion* of his Divinity, *Isai.* 41. 22. and again, *ch.* 44. *v.* 7. he makes it an infallible test of his Godhead. And then as to the way of God's knowing things, this (as appears from what hath been before Suggested) is proper to himself: which is the Reason why his Knowledge is Exact and Adequate, full and perfect, whereas that of the most Intelligent Creatures is short and deficient; and sometimes scarcely deserves the name of Knowledge.

The *Usefulness* and *Efficacy* of this Grand Truth which I have established, appear in these following Instances.

1. This discovers the egregious Folly of Sinners, who generally doubt of or deny God's Omniscience. *Adam* the first Offender was so in this kind likewise, hearing God's Voice in the Garden, *he hid himself from the presence of the Lord God*, Gen. 3. 8. Which signifies that he had this Groundless and Irrational Apprehension, that he could conceal himself from God. So it is with most Sinners, especially with the worst of them, *the Eye of the Adulterer waiteth for the Twilight, saying, no Eye* (no not the Divine one) *shall see me*, Job 24. 15. And it is implied in the 14 and 15 v. that the same is said by *Thieves* and *Murderers*, who commit their Villainous Actions under shelter of the Night: and because they are not seen of Men, conclude that God sees them not. Such was the Language of this sort of Persons in *David*'s time, *He hath said in his Heart, God hath forgotten: he hideth his Face, and will never see it*, Psal. 10. 11. And again, *They say, how doth God know? and is there Knowledge in the most High?* Psal. 73. 11. We hear them speaking after the same rate in Psal. 94. 7. *The Lord shall not see, neither shall the God of* Jacob *regard.* Such Insolent and Atheistical wretches were those in *Ezekiel*'s days, who said, *the Lord hath forsaken the Earth, the Lord seeth not*, Ezek. 9. 9. These seem to be of the Kindred of *Epicurus*, who shut up God in Heaven, and would not allow him to have any thing to do with the Affairs below, and consequently knew nothing of what is done here. But the very *Pagans* themselves derided this folly,

Ἐι δ' ἐθεὸν ἀνὴρ τις ἔλαθεται
Τι λαθέωψ, ἔρδων ἁμαρτάνει.

He is grosly mistaken that hopes to hid any thing from God, saith that Ancient Poet. Nay, *Thales* goes further, and is somewhat Singular in his Opinion, as to this matter, for it being demanded of him whether a Man doing Unjustly and Wickedly, could escape the Eye, and Observance of the Deity, his reply was, † *He could not so much as think such a thing*, i. e. such an Apprehension was hard, if not impossible, to be framed in his Mind. But though I have produced some Instances that Confute this, yet so far he is in the right, that it is a Clear and Rational Principle, That God takes Cognizance of all Affairs in the World, and that nothing can be concealed from him: and moreover, that a Man must offer great violence to his Reason, before he can bring himself to deny this.

† Ἀλλ' οὐδὲ διανοήμενον. *Laert. in Thalete.*

This lays open the damnable Folly and Sottishness of Prophane Men, who live ungodly Lives, and yet flatter themselves in their open Impieties, with a Conceit of God's not seeing what they do. This cursed Notion which hath taken place in Mens minds, hath done an infinite deal of Mischief in the World. Being once perswaded that God views not what they do, they become secure in their evil Courses, and harden themselves in their Sins, and will not turn from them. But their Case is exactly represented in Psal. 50. 21, 22. *These things hast thou done*, saith God, *and I kept silence, and thou thoughtest I was altogether such a one as thy self. But I will reprove thee, and set them in order before thine Eyes. Now consider this ye that forget God, lest I tear you in pieces, and there be none to deliver you.* As much as to say, notwithstanding thy fond conceit of God's being a Stranger to thy Vitious and Ungodly practices, he beholds them all distinctly, and so beholds them, as to be avenged on them: and then at length thy gross Folly and Presumption will be manifest to the World.

2. Banish all Hypocrisy and Dissimulation. The Belief of this Attribute which I have been discoursing of, engages us to be Sincere. If ‖ *the Eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding both the Evil and the Good*: if * *all the works of Men are as the Sun before him, and his Eyes are continually upon their ways*, then dare not to dissemble in his sight. Where-ever you are, at Home or Abroad, in your Chambers

‖ *Prov.* 15. 3.
* *Eccles.* 17. 19.

or

or in the Streets, in your Closets or in the publick Assemblies, act not Hypocritically, for in all places you are seen. It was a frequent saying of the *Jews*, and written on the Walls of their Synagogues, *Consider before whom thou standest.* The meaning of which is, Perswade your selves that God's Eye is always upon you: remember that you cannot hide your selves from him. This nearly touches those who make no Conscience of performing the Duties of Religion, with sincerity of Mind, who (as the Prophet speaks) *draw near to God with their Mouths, and with their Lips do Honour him, but remove their Hearts far from him*, Isai. 29. 13. They Pray, Hear, Read, Receive the Sacrament, &c. but they are not careful to do any of these with Sincere Intention and Fervency. Why? because they have no firm Belief of the Doctrine I have insisted upon; they are not throughly convinced of the All-seeing Eye of God; they are not fully perswaded that he knows their Hearts.

And here I will add, that this is to be remembred by those who are desirous to give proof of the Sincerity and Heartiness of their Repentance: following herein the Example of *David, against Thee*, (saith he) *thee only have I sinned, and done this Evil in thy Sight*, Psal. 51. 4. Thou, O Lord, knowest all the methods of my Sinning, for the Darkness could not hide them from thee, but (Fool that I was) I feared the Face of Men, more than Thy presence. I laboured to conceal my fault from the World, but I considered not that Thou sawest me, in my most private Retirements, and that the Evil which I did was *in thy Sight.* The consideration of this, is that which now so deeply wounds this Penitent King; this is it which pierces him so deeply; this like a Poinant Dagger goes to his Heart, that he should be guilty of such Folly as this, *viz.* to be less Afraid and Ashamed to sin before God, than before Men.

3. Then I may justly make this my next Inference, let not the Thoughts of Secrecy tempt us to Sin. I have shewed before how inclinable Men are to disbelieve and deny God's Omniscience. They really speak that Language which one of *Job*'s Acquaintance charged him with, but without cause, * *How doth God know? can he judge through the dark Cloud? Thick Clouds are a covering to him that he seeth not.* And thus they encourage themselves in Sin, like the Adulterous Woman whom *Solomon* speaks of, † who *eateth and wipeth her Mouth*, and saith, *I have done no wickedness.* But especially, if they be retired from the sight and observation of the World, they think all is well; when Men behold them not, they fancie God doth not. But let none of us indulge this Childish and Ridiculous conceit, but press this ever upon our Minds, that we cannot possibly be hid from God's Eyes; that how secretly soever Sin be committed, we cannot shut out our Creator, we cannot escape his knowledge. You must constantly remember this, that you cannot be Invisible to him that is All-Eye. You must not so much as imagine that God beholds you not whilst you are Sinning, but the contrary ought always to be urged upon your Thoughts, that you may not be prompted by Privacy, to do a vitious Act. Firmly believe this weighty Truth, that God observes all you do: and then you will not venture on the Commission of any Sin, though you are sure it will be wholly kept from the Cognizance of the World: you will not take liberty to do an unlawful Act, even then when you are most retired. And indeed what will it avail us to hide our Sins from the Worlds Eye, when the Omniscient God takes notice of them? To what purpose will it be to retreat from the presence of Men, when he that is infinitely Greater beholds all we do, hears all we Speak, and knows all we Think and Intend?

* *Job* 22. 13, 14.

† *Prov.* 30. 20.

4. Let the Apprehension of God's Omniscience prevail with us, not only to abstain from secret Sins, but all others of what Nature soever, and to perfect Holiness in the Fear of God. There is not a wider door opened by Satan to all manner of Vice, than when he perswades Men, that God sees not their Actions. Then Men run into all Prophaneness, and act it with Greediness. But on the contrary, if we would seriously consider that God views all we do; if we would live in a continual Sense of this Heavenly Inspector, we should find the virtue of it in correcting and curbing all Vice. This God himself propounds to us in the First Commandment, *Thou shalt have no other Gods before me*, in my Sight, in my Presence: for I know all things that you do, wherefore think not to hide your *Idolatry* from me: but Serve and Worship me in a due manner; take me for your only God and Lord. The Patriarch *Joseph* made use of this Motive, Gen. 39. 9. *How can I*, saith he

to his unchast and importunate Mistress, *do this great Wickedness, and Sin against God?* It is true, I am a Servant, sold to my Master, but I will not be a Slave to Lust. Besides, I have another Master, whom I must please, and who now hears and sees both you and me: therefore I will by no means yield to your Sollicitation; I will not gratify your unlawful and lewd demands: you see not him whom I see; I have that God before my Eyes who knows all things, and therefore notwithstanding the Absence of your Husband, and the privacy of this Place, I dare not comply with your desires, I dare not commit this great Sin which you tempt me to. This prevailed with the *Primitive Christians*, as an Ancient Writer testifies of them, who when they were charged by the *Pagans* with the guilt of Murder and Incest, and such horrid practices at their Night-meetings, Apoligizes for them thus, * *They knew very well that God was present every where, and stood by them, and presided over them, both when they thought and when they spoke* (much more when they acted) *and that Night and Day.* And this was an effectual Preservative to them against all such vile and flagitious behaviour, which was objected to them by the *Pagans.* And the same Consideration should prevail with us: this should startle and restrain us that God looks on whatsoever we are Enterprizing or Acting.

Ἐφοιτᾶτε μὲν οἷς ἐν οὔμεν, ὅτι λαλοῦμεν καὶ νύκτωρ καὶ μεθ' ἡμέραν τὸν θεὸν οἴδαμεν. Athenag. Legat. pro Christian.

And this likewise should effectually push us on, to an actual Holiness of Life, and Serving of God with great Vigour and Zeal. Servants are wont to perform their duty with Officious diligence in their Master's sight: and shall not we who acknowledge God for our Master, behave our selves as in his presence, and Act as those who are continually observed by him? There is great force of Argument in those words of God to *Abraham, Walk before me, and be thou Perfect,* Gen. 17. 1. Walk and Act as in my sight, have a perpetual Sense of my Omniscience, and thereby thou wilt be enabled to live Uprightly, to walk Exactly, and in whatever thou dost to please me. We read that *Job* was invited to *make a Covenant with his Eyes,* and to be very strict and cautious in his Actions, from the Consideration of *God's seeing his Ways, and counting all his Steps,* Job 31. 1, 4. *David* was an Example of this, Psal. 119. 168. *I have kept thy Precepts and thy Testimonies,* saith he, *for all my ways are before thee.* And he exhorts his Son *Solomon* to be faithfull in the discharge of his Duty towards God, on this Consideration, that *the Lord searcheth all Hearts, and understandeth all the imaginations of the Thoughts:* therefore, saith he, *Serve him with a perfect Heart, and with a willing Mind;* 1 Chron. 28. 9. The thoughts of God's seeing us, and all our doings, are a powerful incentive to a Religious and Holy Life. If we knew that some Grave and Prudent Person was conscious to our Thoughts, this certainly would be a great restraint to us, and we should not think so Vainly and Idly as otherwise we would. If an Inquisitive Person stood by us, and writ down all that we say, the Apprehension of this would make us very Cautious in our Words. If we were in the presence of some Prince or Great Man, with what Awe and Circumspection should we behave our selves? What greater Reason then is there to be exceeding careful of what we think, speak and do, when we are sure that there is a Divine and All-seeing Witness of our Thoughts, Words and Deportment? We are always in the Royal Presence; the King of Kings takes notice of what we do.

† *Seneca* would have his Friend *Lucilius,* represent to his Mind and Thoughts *Socrates,* or *Aristides,* or *Cato,* or some other Excellent and Worthy Man, as a constant Observer and Examiner of his Actions: and he recommends this as a good Expedient towards the reforming of a Man's Life, and rendring him very Vertuous in his Conversation. We are told by late Writers that the People of *China,* have a mighty inducement to be Wary and Circumspect in all their Actions, from an Opinion universally received among them, that the Souls of their deceased Friends are present with them, and take special notice of their Behaviour. This is a false Surmise, but that which I am speaking of is a real Truth. There is, be it known to us, a Constant Observer and Inspector of our Lives, whom we are always to bear in our Minds. He is ever present with us, and we are never alone. He hath an Eye upon us, whatever we are doing or undertaking. This, this alone, if duly weighed, will inspire us with steady Resolutions of living well, and walking Circumspectly, and endeavouring to please God above all. This only can induce us to be truly Godly, and to discharge our Duty with Integrity, even when no mortal Eye beholds us, this only can make us Pious and Religious in the dark.

† *Epist.* 11. *and* 25.

5. And

5. And lastly, We are not to forget, that this Attribute administers abundant Solace to the Afflicted. What can be more refreshing than this, that nothing befalls us without the Knowledge of our heavenly Father? This chears us in all the Changes of our Life, that we are always under his Eye, that he is ever near to us, and observes us, that *he considers our trouble, and knows our Souls in adversity*, Psal. 31. 7. *The Eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole Earth, to shew himself strong in the behalf of them whose Heart is perfect towards him*, 2 Chron. 16. 9. And we cannot have a more eminent Instance of this, than what is recorded in *Exod.* 3. 7. *The Lord said, I have surely seen the Affliction of my People which are in* Egypt, *and have heard their Cry, by reason of their Task-Masters; for I know their Sorrows.* Though we are in great Streights and Difficulties, and are forsaken by those whose Help we justly expected, yet our best Friend doth not abandon us: he *sees* and *knows* all the Circumstances of our Condition, he takes notice of us when all others turn their backs upon us. Besides, this is no mean Comfort to a good and holy Man, that the Integrity of his Heart is known to God, and that he can appeal to him as *Hezekiah* did, *Remember, O Lord, I beseech thee, how I have walked before thee in truth, and with a perfect Heart, and have done that which is good in thy Sight*, Isai. 38. 3. This is ground of unspeakable rejoycing, that God beholds his Behaviour in the time of Distress and Calamity, that he sees his Submission to the divine Will and Pleasure, and knows how entirely he resigns himself to him, *I know thy Works, and thy Labour, and thy Patience*, Rev. 2. 2. And again, *ver.* 3. *I know how thou hast born, and hast Patience, and for my Names sake hast labour'd, and hast not fainted.* Whence I inferr, that God takes notice of the Sufferings of his Servants, and he observes their Patience under those Sufferings. Thus the Doctrine of God's *Omniscience* is fraught with the most solid Joy and Peace, and such as is the forerunner of everlasting Rest and Happiness.

I proceed to the other Member or Part of this Attribute: for I premised this before, that this divine Excellency consists not only in *Knowledge* but *Wisdom*. Therefore the second Part of the divine *Omniscience*, is to dispose and order all things with the greatest depth of Prudence and Wisdom. First, God shews himself infinitely Wise in his Decrees and Purposes. *God hath abounded toward us in all Wisdom and Prudence, having made known unto us the Mystery of his Will, according to his good pleasure, which he hath purposed in himself*, Eph. 1. 8, 9. As much as to say, all the Discoveries of his Will in the World, relating either to Men or Angels, or any other Beings, are the Result of his eternal Decrees and Purposes, and these Decrees and Purposes are the Product of amazing Wisdom.

Again, This divine Wisdom is display'd in the Creation of the World. We may render *Gen.* 1. 1. as the *Jerusalem Targum* doth, *In Wisdom God created the Heaven and the Earth*, for in the admirable Formation of these, we may discern the plain Characters of that divine Attribute. *He hath established the World by his Wisdom, and hath stretched out the Heavens by his Discretion*, Jer. 10. 12. of which there is a manifest Eviction in the exact *Connexion* and *mutual Dependence* of all these things, and in the *excellent Ends* and *Designs* for which they were made, one of the chief of which is to be serviceable to Man. We have particular Proofs of the divine Wisdom in the *heavenly Bodies*, the Sun, Moon, and other Luminaries, whether planetary or fixed. The things which are remarkable in the Space between the Heavens and the Earth, administer clear Arguments of it, as the Air, the Winds, the Clouds, with the wonderful Balancing of these latter, and their gentle falling down by degrees in useful Rain and Showers. The Frame of the *Earth* argues the same, and so doth the subterraneous World, where are reposited Waters, Fires, Metals, Minerals, Earths, Salts, Sulphurs, Stones, both common and precious. The *Sea* with all its Treasures and Riches, is another Evidence of an All-wise Being. The Rank of *Vegetables*, and their different Parts and Virtues, are other Arguments of a divine Contriver. So are all *Animals* more especially, if we take pains to look into their elegant Form and Composition. Yea, even creeping and groveling Creatures, as well as those that walk on all four, own a wise Creator. *Fishes* shew the distinguishing Contrivance of Heaven, in the peculiar Structure of their Bodies. *Fowls* are purposely shaped for the particular use they were designed for. And in a word, both animate and inanimate Creatures, conspire in the acknowledgment of the infinite Wisdom of the most High.

In the next place, the divine Conduct is discover'd in the constant Provision which is made for this great Family of the World; or rather I may say, in the constant and steady governing of this vast Kingdom. *He maketh every thing beautiful in its time*, Eccl. 3. 11. bringing every thing to pass in its proper Season, *i. e.* at that very time which he knows to be best. He makes Contrarieties conspire in the common Good, and he disposes of all things so as to bring about his own wise Ends.

Moreover, This Wisdom is signally and superlatively manifested in the *Redemption* of lost Man, and the whole Method of his Salvation. *We have Redemption through his Blood* (saith the Apostle) *the forgiveness of Sins, according to the Riches of his Grace, wherein he hath abounded towards us in all Wisdom and Prudence*, Eph. 1. 7, 8. For these latter Words referr as well to Christ's redeeming us, as to the eternal Decrees, (of which I spoke before) as you may satisfy your selves from the Context. Of this *Wisdom* the Apostle speaks in 1 *Cor.* 2. 7. and justly styles it, *the manifold Wisdom of God*, Eph. 3. 10. because it displays it self in sundry Ways and Methods. If all the Wisdom of the World had been united in one Man, he could never have thought of, or found out such a way of *Salvation* as the Scripture hath set before us; such a way as is consistent with, and suitable to all the divine Attributes and Perfections: but more especially, the *Mercy* and *Justice* of Heaven are happily reconciled in this wise Transaction. For Mercy is exalted in the forgiveness of Sin, for the Merits of Jesus; and yet Justice is satisfied in the punishing of Sin in his Person. The Offenders are graciously pardon'd, but the Offences are publickly condemned. At the same time that Sinners are saved, they are also convinced of the odiousness and demerit of Sin, by the Punishment that is inflicted on another for it. Thus in Man's Redemption and Restauration, the heighth of divine *Wisdom* is display'd; and by this happy way of Restitution we have intimate Communion with him, *in whom are hid all the Treasures of Wisdom and Knowledge*, Col. 2. 3.

Lastly, This Attribute of God is abundantly evidenced in his *Word* and *Laws*: Wise Men are known by their prudent Speeches and Dictates; and accordingly these are recorded as one Testimony of *Solomon's* extraordinary *Wisdom*; 1 King. 4. 32. Eccl. 12. 9. And among the most improved *Gentiles*, their Sages were known by their wise Aphorisms and Apophthegms. Much more is the matchless Wisdom of God discovered in his Word, in the Doctrines, Laws and Precepts which he hath delivered, which instruct us in the true Notions of Things, and furnish us with right Principles of Knowledge, and likewise regulate our Actions in that manner which is most congruous to Reason. Nay, the sacred Volume of the Scriptures contains such Maxims and Rules, as convey to us supernatural Knowledge, such as humane Reason could not reach to. It is certain that these holy Writings enrich us with the best and choicest Wisdom, for * *they are able to make us wise unto Salvation.* Thus from these brief hints it appears, that God is *infinitely Wise*. And he is peculiarly so, in so much that in † three places of the *New Testament* he is styled *the only wise God*.

* 2 *Tim.* 3. 15.
† *Rom.* 16. 27. 1 *Tim.* 1. 17. *Jude*, ver.

The proper Inferences from which undeniable Verity are such as these;

First, Admire and stand amazed at the stupendous Wisdom of God, whereby he disposes of, manages and governs all things both in Heaven and in the Earth, and that with the greatest Accuracy imaginable. But there is no such thing among the Sons of Men: it is observable, that some of the *wisest* of them do in some things betray the greatest *Folly*. I could (were it not so great a Reproach to humane Nature) give abundant Instances of this, in Persons that we find mentioned both in sacred and prophane History. And we can't but take notice, that even in those Things and Actions where the greatest Prudence and Caution are to be used, there some of the greatest Repute for *Wisdom* commonly fail, and palpably miscarry, as in their own Marriages, and those of their Children, in the Government of their Families, in their last Wills, and disposing of their Estates: and in several other matters it is too evident, that there is no *exact Prudence* or *Discretion* in the World, no not in Persons who are thought to be most eminent for these Qualities. These are the Excellencies of Him only who erected the World, and alone knows how to govern it with unerring Wisdom. And even amidst the greatest variety of Dispensations, it is impossible (whatever some atheistical Spirits suggest) to find any Flaw, any Defect in his Administration of Things. It is true, we have often occasion to cry out with the Apostle, *O the depth of the Wisdom of God!* Rom. 11. 33. There are unsearchable Mysteries in his Transactions of the Affairs of the World, there are some Absurdi-

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ties and Difficulties, both in what he hath said, and in what he hath done, and is yet doing on the Stage of the World; but this must be imputed to the shallowness of our Understandings. And truly, if we could *comprehend* the deep Things of God, they would not be so Great and so Worthy as they are. In that they surpass our finite Intellects we are assured of the transcendent Excellency of them. Though we cannot fathom this Abyss, yet we know full well that it is our Duty to revere it.

Secondly, We know hence whither to go for Wisdom, even to the God of infinite Wisdom. *If any of you lack Wisdom, let him ask of God*, Jam. 1. 5. Let him repair to this Fountain, let him seek to *this Father of Lights*, as he is call'd in that Chapter afterwards. Our Addresses are directly to be made to this Parent of divine Knowledge, and to Him, who by the appointment of Heaven, *is made unto us Wisdom*, 1 Cor. 1. 30. Whose Office it is to reveal the Will of the *Father* to us, and thereby to make us truly Knowing and Wise. Wherefore it is said, *Ye have an Unction* (viz. that of the Spirit) *from the holy One*, (Christ Jesus) *and ye know all things*, 1 John 2. 20. Thus the whole sacred Trinity conspire to give us a right *Understanding* of divine and heavenly Things: Wherefore let us with great earnestness apply our selves to this Fountain of sacred Wisdom.

Thirdly, This Attribute is the great Support and Relief of distressed Souls. They cannot have a more solid ground of Patience and Contentment than this, that God is *infinitely Wise*: for first, in all temporal and bodily Afflictions they may reckon themselves safe and secure. When they know not what to do, and which way to dispose of themselves, they may make their Condition easy by calling to mind that of the Apostle, * *The Lord knoweth how to deliver the Godly out of Temptations*, out of all Troubles and Distresses, he is *skilful* to effect it, though they are ignorant of the Way and Method of it. And therefore they have no reason to be dismay'd and dejected, to be dissatisfied and discontented. No; though their Adversaries shew themselves to be Masters of great Cunning and Policy. For we are assured by the Apostle, (who alledges it from the inspired *Prophets* of the *Old Testament*) that *God destroys the Wisdom of the Wise, and brings to nothing the Understanding of the Prudent*, 1 Cor. 1. 19. And again, *He taketh the Wise in their own Craftiness*, chap. 3. ver. 19. So that how ill soever our Circumstances seem to be, we may chear our selves with this, that God is wise, and that as he is thoroughly acquainted with our particular State, so he knows that of our Enemies, and hath Skill to defeat their most subtle Contrivances against us.

* 2 Pet. 2. 9.

Again, In all spiritual Streights and Difficulties we are encouraged to take heart, and to resign our selves to God's disposal, and wholly to submit our Wills to his, seeing all his Dispensations towards us are wise us well as just. Nor should our own Ignorance and Weakness discourage us, seeing the unbounded Wisdom of the sacred Trinity is engaged for our Wellfare. We have finite Understandings, and know but few things; but God's *universal Knowledge* is concern'd for us. Although *Satan* be crafty and subtle, yet by the guidance of him who is All-wise, we shall be taught how to discover and disappoint all the Wiles and Methods of that Evil Spirit. We have sufficient reason then to trust in the divine Wisdom, and to rely on that as our greatest Security. I will shut up this part of my Discourse with the *Doxology* wherewith the Apostle concludes his Epistle to the *Romans*, *To God only Wise be Glory, through Jesus Christ for ever.*

God's OMNIPOTENCE is the next Attribute we are to treat of, by which we are to understand that Almighty Power, whereby God is able to effect whatever he pleaseth: whereby he can do all things that are not contrary to his perfect Nature, or imply a Contradiction. These two things are to be taken notice of before we go any farther, in order to the right understanding of the Nature of God's Omnipotence There are two things which he cannot do; first, those that are repugnant to his divine Nature: thus 'tis expressly said in Scripture, that *he cannot deny himself*, 2 Tim. 2. 13. *It is impossible for God to lye*, Heb. 16. 18. for these things are absolutely opposed to that excellent Nature which we acknowledge to be in the supreme and perfectest Being. Hence that of *Origen* is a very solid Truth, * *The Power to do evil is contrary to his Deity, and to all that Power which is consistent with it.* To do unjustly must needs be utterly inconsistent with that *Power* which we own

* Ἐναντίον ἐστὶν αὐτῷ τῇ θεότητι καὶ τῇ καθ' αὐτὸν πάσῃ δυνάμει τὸ ἀδικεῖν δύναμις. Conc. Cels. l. 3.

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to be in God, because this is ever joyned with Holiness, else 'tis no *Divine Power*. God is *Optimus Maximus*, and you cannot separate his Goodness from his Greatness: you cannot imagine the Deity without both. Besides, we are to consider this, that to be able * *to do Evil* is no *Power*, but *Weakness*; properly speaking it is an Absolute sign of Deficiency and Infirmity, which are wholly repugnant to the Nature of God. That he cannot do what is Vicious, is no infringent of his Omnipotency, because if we could suppose him to do it, he would be upon that very account not Almighty, for he that commits the least unjust or undue Action shews himself to be imperfect, weak and crazy in the very committing it. In brief, God cannot lye or deceive, or do any thing of that Nature, although he be Omnipotent, because though he can do all things, that are reconcileable with his Deity, especially with his Holiness, yet he cannot Act contrary to these: for that were to destroy his Godhead, to use St. *Augustin*'s words, † *Therefore there are some things which he cannot do, because he is Omnipotent.*

* Ἀδύνατα χωρὶς ἢ τῶν κακῶν πρᾶξις. *Isidor. Pelus. Ep. lib.* 2.

† *Propterea quædam non potest quia Omnipotens est.* De Civ. Dei, l. 5. c. 10.

Again, when we say God can do all things, those are excepted which involve in them a flat Contradiction: thus he cannot cause the same thing to be, and not to be at the same time: he cannot make things past to be present. Not because there is any restraint of his Power, but because those things cannot be done. So God cannot make Truth to be Falshood, because it is Contradictious, and therefore impossible: for Contradictions are impossible to God, because they are so in their own Nature; they cannot be done in themselves. And so (to reduce the former Head under this) the Deity is utterly incapable of doing any sinful Act, as to Lye, to Deceive, or the like, because 'tis a palpable Contradiction to be God, and to do these things. He would be no God if he could do Evil: therefore it is Simply impossible that he should do it. Thus we see what those things are which God, although he be Omnipotent, cannot do.

But now cast your Eyes where you will else, name any thing in all the World besides Sin and Flat Contradiction, and God can do it. Men and other Creatures (whether of a higher or lower rank) are weak in comparison of Him, their strength reacheth but to a few things, but nothing is too difficult for Him to effect. So that the *Rabbinical Jews*, had Reason to use *Gebburah*, *Strength* for the *Name* of God, for he is eminently and transcendently Strong and Powerful. This is a certain and infallible Truth, and to be known and acknowledged by us, that nothing is hard and impossible to the Creator of all things. His Power and Strength extend to all those things, which are beyond the Ability of his Creatures. The *Schoolmen* have distinguished (and not amiss) between the *Absolute* and *Actual Power* of God. The former is that whereby he *can do* more than he *doth*, or *will do*; that whereby he is able to do whatever may be done, for *with God all things are Possible*, Mat. 10. 27. yea, even those things which he will never do. As for Example, * *He can out of Stones raise up Children unto* Abraham, but he is pleased not to do it. He could have assisted our *Saviour* † with whole *Legions of Angels*, to vanquish his Enemies, and to rescue him out of their Hands, but he would not. God can destroy all Tyrants, Oppressors and Persecutors, &c. and rid the Earth of them in a moment, but it is not his Pleasure to do so. But the *Actual Power* of God is that whereby he causeth those things to be Actually accomplished, which he willeth shall be. It is that whereby he doth all things, that he hath determined to do, whereby he really Performs and Effects *whatsoever he pleaseth*, Psal. 115. 3. Of this latter it is that I shall chiefly treat, for it is *this* Power, Strength, Force and Might, which he is so eminent for. In discussing of this Important Subject I will, 1. prove and confirm it by Holy Scripture. 2. I will produce the most signal Instances of it. 3. I will shew on what Reasons it is grounded. 4. I will apply all.

* *Mat.* 3. 9.

† *Mat.* 26. 53.

The first of these Undertakings I will accomplish two ways, *viz.* by mentioning those *Names* and *Epithets* which are given to God in Scripture, whereby his Almighty Power is set forth to us. 2. By those direct and positive Texts, wherein this Divine Power is asserted. To begin with the first, as there are Names that denote God's Essence (as we have heard) so there are others that express his Power and Sovereignty, as *El*, *Gen.* 14. 18. *Exod.* 6. 4. *Numb.* 12. 13. *Psal.* 5. 4. which is rendred Κύριος, ἰσχυρὸς, δυνάστης, by the *Greek Interpreters*, and *fortis* by the *V. Latin*, and is voted by all the Learned *Jews*, to be a Title of *Dominion* and *Power*, and therefore is justly given to God. Hence Δύναμις *Power* is the same with *God*, Mat. 26. 64. *Sitting at the Right-hand of Power*, i. e. of God. And both *Eloah* and

and *Elohim*, are of the same Original and Signification according to *Abarbanel*, and are but the Name *El* prolonged. The next Name of God denoting his Power is *Adonai*, which was first used by *Abraham*, *Gen.* 15. 2. It is the same with *Adon*, *Lord*, as in *Psal.* 95. 7. God is styled *Adon, the Lord of the Earth:* which word is derived from *Eden*, the *Basis* of a Pillar, for God *sustains* and *keeps up* the World by his Almighty *Power*. *Shaddai* is another Name given to God, and him only in Scripture, *Gen.* 17. 1. -37. 11. *Job* 6. 4. And it well expresses this Divine Attribute, for the *Hebrew* word *Dai* is *Sufficientia*, and *Shin* is in the place of *Asher*, *qui*, so that *Shaddai* is the same with *Qui sufficit*. Thus it answers to the *Greek* αὐτάρκης *Self sufficient*, who hath all things in himself, and from himself; and it is justly applied to God who is the First Cause, and absolutely Independent on all things in his Being, Perfections and Operations; and who is not only sufficient in Himself, but hath in him that which is Sufficient for all his Creatures; whence this word *Shaddai* is rendred by the *Septuagint*, παντοκράτωρ, *Omnipotent*, Job 5. 17. - 8. 5.

Again, *Jehovah Sabbaoth*, the *Lord of Hosts*, is another Title often made use of to set forth this Property of God, for *the Hosts* or *Armies* which belong to him (whether *above*, as the Angelick Spirits, the Sun, Moon and Stars, and all the Heavenly Bodies, called *the Host of Heaven*, Acts 7. 42. or *Below*, as *Fire*, *Water*, *Earth*, *Air*, the Animals and all other Creatures of what kind soever) are undeniable Testimonies of his Absolute Authority and Power, and accordingly *Sabbaoth* in this *Title* is rendred by the *Seventy*, δυνάμεις *Powers*.

In respect of all these Names and Attributes, God is frequently styled *Gneljon*, *the most High*, in several places of the Old Testament, but especially in the *Psalms*: whence ὕψιστος, (which is the word used by the *Septuagint*) is the Epithet made use of in *Luke* 1. 32. And I might further observe that he is not only called *the Mighty*, as in *v.* 49. of this first Chapter of St. *Luke*, but the *only Potentate*, 1 *Tim.* 6. 15. Yea, *Power* is a word for God Himself, *Mark* 14. 62. where *Sitting at the Right Hand of Power*, is (as was observed before) the same with *Sitting at the Right-hand of God*, as appears from comparing this place with *Mark* 16. 19. *Heb.* 1. 3. And still further I might remark that Power and Might are so peculiar to God, that when the *Hebrews* would express any thing to be very Great and Powerful, they join the *Name of God* to it. By which we are taught *to give unto the Lord Power and Strength, to give unto the Lord the Honour due unto his Name.* In short, it is plain that all these Epithets, Phrases and Terms, are made use of by the inspired Writers, to signifie God's *Omnipotency*, to acquaint us that his Dominion and Authority are over all Persons and Things, that that of the Psalmist is true, *Power belongeth unto God*, Psal. 62. 1. ver.

And so I pass in the next place to the Positive Assertions in Scripture of God's Almighty Power, *Our God is in the Heavens*, saith the Psalmist, *he hath done*, or *doth whatsoever he pleaseth*, Psal. 115. 3. Though his chief residence be in the *Heavens*, yet he is no Idle Spectator of the other parts of the Universe, he continually Governs and Orders both the superior and the lower World, and gives demonstrations of his boundless Power and Sovereignty here. Wherefore this Holy Writer saith in another place, *whatsoever the Lord pleaseth, that doth he in Heaven and in Earth, in the Seas and all deep places*, Psal. 135. 6. All Regions of the Universe are concerned in his Almighty Sway and Dominion. What *Solomon* saith of an Absolute Monarch, is true only in the highest sense of this King of Kings, and Lord of Lords. *He doth whatever pleaseth him: where the word of a King is, there is Power, and who may say unto him what dost thou?* It is his inseparable Prerogative to controul all things without dispute. *I know that Thou canst do every thing*, saith that pious Man, who had had Experience as much as any one upon Earth, of the Uncontrolable Soveraign Power of God, *Job* 42. 2. The voice of an Angel from Heaven gave Suffrage to this Truth, Luk. 1. 37. *With God nothing is impossible.* And it is the determination of our Blessed Lord himself, *With God all things are possible*, Mat. 19. 26. and again, *Mark* 14. 36. And almost innumerable are the Testimonies in Scripture of the Almighty Power of God, which I shall have occasion farther to quote under the next Head of my Discourse, which I now proceed to.

For according to my propounded Method, I am in the second place to present you with some signal *Proofs* and *Instances* of this Unlimited Power, together with the wonderful manner of Gods exerting it. The first Great instance of an Omnipotent

potent Virtue was the Production of the World. As it is an evident Argument of the divine *Wisdom*, (as hath been said before) so it is no less a palpable Evidence of the *Power* of the divine Being. *He hath made the Earth by his Power*, Jer. 10. 12. And to express the Excellency and Transcendency of this Power, the *Jewish* Masters tell us, that God created the World with Ten Words, for so often we read it repeated, that *God said, let there be* this, or *let there be* that produced. He produced them all by speaking only: he made all things out of nothing with a Word. *He commanded, and they were created*, Psal. 148. 5. And so God is said to *command Strength*, to *command a Blessing*, and to *command Deliverance*. God acteth and bringeth to pass the greatest things with as much ease as if he only *commanded* them to be done. Some have conjectured this to be the reason why 'tis said in Scripture, *God spake, and it was done*, Psal. 33. 9. and why he is said, by his bare *Word* to effect things, namely, because hereby the greatest Works of God are represented to us to be as facile to Him as Words are among Men. *Luther* used to say, *The Words of God are Things*. God's Speaking is Doing. The first Chapter of *Genesis* is a Demonstration of this, and at the same time of the Almighty Power of God. The Creation of the World, the educing of all things out of no preceding Matter, and the constituting the several Species of Beings, out of that first Matter which was created, evinces the Maker to be Omnipotent. None but an Almighty Architect could frame the World at first without Materials, and bring it to perfection without the help of Instruments. In the front of our *Creed* we justly joyn these together, *God Almighty*, and *Maker of Heaven and Earth*, for he being this latter, we cannot but acknowledge him to be the former; because his Almighty Power is seen and expressed by his making the World.

Again, He gives constant *Proof* of this Attribute in the Events and Transactions that are seen in the World. The whole Scene of Things before our Eyes proclaims this Truth aloud. Where-ever we look we find the apparent Footsteps of God's unbounded Power. This is to be seen in the strange and wonderful Occurrences, the prodigious and miraculous Accidents that are in all Ages of the World. And in sundry other Matters, which are not portentous and miraculous, the immediate *Power* of God exerts it self. Even in the common Operations of Nature, which Philosophers are wont to ascribe to Second Causes, this is every day discovered: as in the regular Motion and Course of the heavenly Bodies, or (as some think) of the Earth; in the attractive Force of the Loadstone, in the Gravity of Bodies, in the Ebbing and Flowing of the Sea, in the Circulation of the Blood, in the Concoction perform'd in the Stomach, and some other wonderful Phænomena of Nature, which are the mere Products of an Almighty Efficient. And the ground of my Assertion is this, Though there have been great Endeavours of the wisest Heads in all Ages to solve these things, yet none have been able to do it: all their Accounts are lame and imperfect, and contradict one another; which induces me to believe, and that with great assurance, that all these (and several other) Phænomena are a Divine Work, and the result of Almighty Power.

But more signally and visibly this Power is to be discern'd in these two things, 1. In God's effecting the greatest Matters, by small, inconsiderable and contemptible Means. *It is nothing with thee to help, whether with many, or with them that have no Power*, said the pious King *Asa*, 2 Chron. 14. 11. *David* a feeble Stripling, who could manage his Sling with no great force, yet with one single Stone pierc'd the great Giant's Skull. And from many other remarkable Instances, scattered up and down the Bible, it appears, that God brings to pass the most wonderful Things by improbable Means. He delights to shew his Power in the weakness of the Instruments which he useth. *Out of the mouths of Babes and Sucklings he ordaineth Strength*, Psal. 8. 2. 2. He is pleased to effect the greatest Things without any Means at all. As in the erecting and building of this great Fabrick of the World there was no need of Tools, (as was observed before) so he is pleased afterwards to shew, that he is not necessitated to use the assistance of any Instrumentals. The Lord of Hosts needs not any auxiliary Forces to fight his Battles. The three *Hebrew Captives* were preserv'd in the fiery Furnace, and came forth safe without the interposing of any Second Causes. *Antiochus*, that execrable Tyrant and Persecutor *was broken without hand*, Dan. 8. 25. *i. e.* without humane Force and Violence. And long before this, a pious Observer of God's Actings in the World took notice, that sometimes *the Mighty are taken away without hand*, Job 34. 20. The sum is, that God can effect what he pleases in the Affairs of the World, and in what way and manner he pleases: for to Omnipotency every thing is alike, one thing is not harder than another. But

But if we turn our Discourse towards things of a higher and nobler Nature; if we take a short View of those Events which respect Religion and our Salvation, we shall find more abundant *Proofs* of the Transcendency and Infinity of God's Power. This is more signally seen and discover'd in the *Gospel* than in any Occurrences whatsoever. First, The whole Mystery of the accomplishing of our Redemption by Christ Jesus, is a singular Assurance to us of the divine Omnipotence. *The Power of the Highest overshadowing* the Virgin *Mary*, is spoken with reference to Christ's Conception and Incarnation, *Luke* 1. 35. And such infinite Vertue attended his whole Ministry here on Earth: his Word, his Preaching *was with Power*, Luke 4. 32. his Miracles were all of them most eminent Acts and Exertments of divine Might, and therefore are emphatically, and by way of Excellency, call'd *Power*, Mat. 9. 8.—10. 1. and *the Power of God*, 2 Cor. 6. 7. It was an Almighty Arm that supported him in his unparallell'd Agonies and Sufferings; it was no less than this that raised him from the Dead; for, as the Apostle assures us, *He was declared to be the Son of God with Power by the Resurrection from the Dead*, Rom. 1. 4

Next, in the wonderful Success of the Gospel the *Omnipotence* of God was in a visible manner display'd. The strange and sudden spreading of Christianity argues an infinite Strength and Force. The meanest and most ignorant were on a sudden enlightned and instructed, and embraced the Gospel. To which perhaps those Words of Christ referr in *Mat.* 11. 12. *The Kingdom of Heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force*, that is, the ignorant Multitude and baser Sort, and the vilest of Sinners were baptized by *John*, and afterwards followed Christ; for these were thought by the better sort of *Jews* to have no right to the Messias, and so are called here *violent* Persons, that is, *Intruders* and *Invaders*. The poor and simple robbed the wealthy Rulers, and the learned Doctors of the Gospel. Christ was received by the Vulgar, Christianity was entertained by the Illiterate. Here is plainly seen the omnipotent Arm of Heaven. How else could this Religion be promoted by poor mean Persons; how could this holy Institution be effectually propagated by rude and illiterate Men? How otherwise could silly ignorant Fishermen and Mechanicks baffle the subtilest Philosophers? How could the Wisdom of *Athens* be puzled by the *Foolishness of Preaching*? I could give in a large List of *Converted Philosophers*, who abandoned their false and erroneous Principles, which they had so stiffly adhered to, and with great Zeal and Earnestness embraced Christianity. And I could shew that it prevail'd not only against the Wise and Learned, against the Philosophy of the most Inquisitive, against the Prudence of the most sage Politicians, against the Eloquence of the most charming Orators, but also against the united Force and Power of the greatest Potentates, Monarchs and Emperors: and at last (after all the joint Attempts of the most enraged Tyrants and Persecutors against it) it became the professed Religion of the *Roman* Empire: and the most stubborn Enemies of this most blessed Cause submitted to the Laws of Jesus. This is an undeniable Proof, that it was the Work of the *Almighty*. That marvellous and unexpected shaking, yea throwing down of *Satan*'s Kingdom, which was so strongly rooted and founded, is such a clear Evidence of it, that no Man, unless he be after a strange manner prejudiced, can in the least doubt of it.

Martyrs and Confessors proclaim aloud this glorious *Attribute* of God, for these found themselves kept up and supported by an extraordinary Strength: The implacable Malice of their Adversaries could not disturb their Courage, or daunt their Faith: Their Graces shone and grew glorious in the highest Flames of Persecution: they were not consumed, but purified by those Fires: God, who endowed them with so marvellous Patience, was magnified and extoll'd by those who beheld their Persecutions, and took notice of their Behaviour under their Torments, *viz.* by the *Pagans* themselves, who were heard to cry out, *The God of the Christians is indeed exceeding great and powerful.*

Lastly, The whole Work of *Conversion* and *Regeneration*, as well in our Saviour's and the Apostle's times as before, and ever since, is a continued Proof of the Reality of this divine Attribute. That obstinate Sinners are turned from Darkness to Light, and from the Power of *Satan* unto God; that professed despisers and haters of Religion and Holiness, and all that is good and vertuous, are reclaim'd from this settled Averseness and Antipathy, and have their Hearts and Lives wholly changed and transformed, is the Result of no humane and finite Power, but of that which is divine and infinite. *Pelagius*'s *Grace of Nature*, (as he calls it) which

he tells us will enable us to perform all that is to be done, as to Faith and good Works and our eternal Salvation, is a pernicious Cheat, and a horrid Blasphemy. And those make near approaches to it, who maintain that the Strength of our free Will and natural Faculties is such, that by it alone we effectually give a Repulse to all the Sollicitations of the evil Spirit, and turn from our Sins unto God, and keep all his Commandments, and attain to Heaven and Happiness. There can be nothing asserted that is more opposite to the Tenour of the Gospel than this; there is nothing more repugnant to the evangelical Writings, where we are informed, that our Conversion and Salvation, are to be attributed to a divine and supernatural Efficacy. From the *New Testament* we are acquainted, that we are saved by *divine Power* as well as by *divine Mercy*. God doth all for us and in us in order to our being saved, and nothing is done without him. *No Man can come unto me unless the Father, who hath sent me, draw him*, John 6. 44. *We are not sufficient of our selves to think any thing, as of our selves, but our Sufficiency is of God*, 2 Cor. 3. 5. *It is God that worketh in you to will and to do, according to his good pleasure*, Phil. 2. 13. It is true, we must exert our Faculties, and they were given us for that purpose: we must strive and endeavour, and act with great vigour; but we must ever have regard to the Apostle's Advice, *Eph.* 6. 10. *Be strong in the Lord, and in the Power of his Might*, where you have two Words of the same Signification, to intimate the superlative Strength, the transcendent Power of God. And of this the Apostle speaks when he saith, *the Work of Faith* (and consequently of all other Graces) *is fulfilled with Power*, 2 Thes. 1. 11.

Which is thus expressed by the same Apostle, in most ample and pregnant Terms, *Eph.* 1. 19, 20. *The exceeding greatness of his Power to us ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty Power, which he wrought in Christ when he rais'd him from the Dead, and set him at his own right Hand in heavenly Places.* Observe here, how *many Words* are heaped up together to set forth this divine Omnipotence in the Converting of Sinners: first it is called *Power*, then *greatness of Power*, then that *Greatness* is said to be *exceeding*, abundant, excellent, *supereminent*, (as the Word ὑπερβάλλον imports) but this is not all; this divine Orator adds, That this is such a Power as is parallel to that whereby God the Father *raised Christ from the Dead*, and advanced him to the Seat of Glory in the highest Heavens: and this is expressed further by the Word ἰσχύς, as something more than δύναμις, mentioned before; and moreover, 'tis call'd, κράτος τῆς ἰσχύος, the *Might of his Force*, or (as we translate it) his mighty Power: And lastly, There is a Word used that surmounts all these, and that is ἐνέργεια, which we faintly render *working*, but it signifies no less than *the strong exerting*, and *actual executing* of all these, the *powerful* and *irresistible effecting* or *accomplishing of the whole Work*. To raise the Dead and to convert Sinners, are alike; which shews the transcendent Vertue of that Power, whereby God changes the Hearts, and reforms the Lives of those that are dead in Sin.

This had been before expressed to us by our blessed Saviour himself in *John* 3. 8. *The Wind bloweth where it listeth (where it willeth,* for so 'tis according to the Greek,) *and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit.* In which Words are contain'd these two things, 1. The Freeness and Arbitrariness of the Spirit's Operation. As the Wind bloweth, so the Spirit moveth and [illegible]eth where he listeth, where he wills, where he pleases. Regeneration is wrough[illegible] those Persons, whom the Spirit thinks good to regenerate, and in none else. Thus the Spirit is arbitrary in his Actings. 2. The inestimable Power of the Spirit: for if he moves and operates *where he willeth*, then there can be no Resistance where he operates; for if there were any such thing, it could not be said, that *he bloweth where he willeth*, because there would then be an Obstacle to his Power and Will, and he would be hindred from doing what it was his pleasure to do. Wherefore, when 'tis affirmed that the Spirit bloweth where it willeth, it undeniably follows, that he acts with an unrestrained Power, and such as it is impossible to resist. Therefore at other times this is compared to the *creating* of the World out of nothing, *Eph.* 2. 10.—4. 24. to let us know, that as in the first *Creation*, so in the New and Spiritual one, there is Power and Energy more than finite and humane, and that that Power cannot be baffled. A *new Creature*, i. e. a sincere Convert, is an eminent and illustrious Instance of the omnipotent Working of God. Here, as in the first Production of all things, the dark Abyss, the formless Chaos is chang'd into Light and Beauty: the Almighty Architect erects a fair

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and noble Structure out of Confusion and Disorder. To cause a Sinner to forsake his Evil ways, and to Hate and Abhor what he Loved and Embraced before, is a work of unspeakable Power and Might. Therefore if we would fix our Thoughts on one of the most Signal Arguments of Divine Omnipotency, let us meditate on the Wonderful and Amazing Conversion of Sinners, and that by the Ministry of the Word, which is therefore called, *the Power of God unto Salvation*, 1 Cor. 1. 18. And this inspired Writer acquaints us further that *this Treasure is in Earthen Vessels, that the Excellency of this Power may be of God*, i. e. that it may be discovered to be from Him, 2 *Cor.* 4. 7. For his Exceeding Power is more abundantly manifested in the weakness of the Instruments, which he is pleased to make use of. Here then stand, and Contemplate this Remarkable Example of God's Almighty Power; namely, in Mans Salvation, and all things relating to it; not only in his first Conversion, but in his progress of a Holy Life, and in his final Perseverance, for *he is kept by the Power of God unto Salvation*, 1 Pet. 1. 5.

Thirdly, I am to assign the *Reasons* on which this Attribute is grounded; and they are these two especially, 1. It arises from God's *Infinity*. All other Beings are limited and bounded: but God is Infinite, and therefore unconfined, and consequently can act without any Limitation and Controul, and he that can do so can effect all things. God's Power then is answerable to his Nature which is Infinite. It cannot be, but that he must be able to do every thing, because Omnipotence doth necessarily accompany his Unlimited Essence. 2. God is an *Absolute* Being, Existing of himself, and depending on none, but all Exist and depend on him: wherefore his Power must needs be (as Himself) Absolute and Soveraign. He that gives Being to all must have an uncontrolable Dominion over them, he must have a Right and Authority to do what he will with you, to dispose of them as he pleaseth. Which is the Consequence made by the Psalmist, *Thou whose Name alone is* Jehovah, *art the most High over all the Earth*: Thou who Existest of thy self, and art the Author of all Beings, hast Supreme Power over all things. Thence *Jehovah* is rendred by the *Septuagint* Κύριος, which is confess'd to be a Name of *Power* and *Authority*: and that is founded on an Absolute *Being* or *Existence*, for κύειν is as much as *Existere* in the Ancientest Greek Writers: and so Κύριος answers exactly to *Jehovah*, a Title both of *Existence* and *Power*. God's Omnipotence then flows from his Essence: his Power is of a resembling Nature with Himself, *i. e.* it is Absolute and Independant. He is the First Cause, and thence it follows that all depend on, and hold of him; and this being granted, it cannot be denied that his Power over all things is Soveraign and Unlimited. Besides, the first Cause is Perfect, and that Being that is so cannot but be Omnipotent. This is a Rational account of this Excellent Property of the Divine Being.

And indeed the Reason of Mankind dictates to them that this is included, and that necessarily in the Notion of a Deity. Thence you find this commonly asserted by * Pagan Writers, † *All things are easy to God, and nothing can be said to be difficult to him*, saith one of the Ancientest Poets. ‖ Θεοὶ δέ τε πάντα δύνανται, saith another of the first rank. And it was rightly said by *Callimachus* in *Plutarch*, * *If you know God, you know this, that he can do all things.* And thence δυνατὸν, is as much as *Numen* in *Hippocrates*.

* Pater Omnipotens *is the Epithet for* God. *Virg. En.* 1 *&* Omnipotens *absolutely and alone*, Æn 4.

† Ῥᾴδια πάντα θεῷ τέλεται, καὶ ἀνήνυτον οὐδέν. *Linus.*

‖ *Homer. Et. Od.* δ.— δύνανται δ' ἅπαντα.

* Εἰ θεὸν οἶδα, ἴσθι ὅτι καὶ δαίμονι ῥέξαι πᾶν δυνατόν. *De Plac. Philos. c.* 7.

I come now in the last place to enquire how serviceable the Premises are to our Practice. First, seeing God is Omnipotent, let us banish all Pride and Vaunting, all Self-confidence and Presumption, and let us with Fear and Trembling fall down before this Great and Almighty Sovereign of the World. First, let us more especially in all Spiritual and Divine matters, acknowledge the Power of the most High, and owne our own Natural Weakness, Inability and Impotency. Let us rather be careful of this, because we find there is such a proneness in Mankind to extoll their Power and Ability to do Good, and to act as they should. The Stoicks were wont most lavishly to magnifie their own Prowess, even to the depressing of God's. They had the confidence to tell the World, that their Wise and Vertuous Man was not beholding to him. And there have been and are some who go under the Name of Christians, that approach to this Prophaneness. Such are some *Papists*, *Socinians*, and *Remonstrants*, who exalt their Natural Power above the Invincible Strength of the Almighty. This is a Relique of the old Blasphemous

Stoicism. These men fall in with Sower's Divinity; It is God's gift that we live but our own that we live Well and Vertuously. But let us abhorr such Apprehensions, and such Language, and freely confess that it is not in the Power of Nature to do any Spiritual Good, but that it must be done by the special assistance of God's grace, and the powerful operation of his Spirit.

Let us also, with respect to all other things, acknowledge his Absolute and Determinate Power, whereby he doth whatsoever he pleases among the Children of Men. He is wont especially to baffle those who presume to usurp this his Prerogative, or would seem to imitate it. He is pleased to pull down the Highest, to shew that he is above them all, and that they are mere Intruders and Usurpers. *There is none that can deliver out of my Hand*, saith this Almighty Sovereign. *I will work, and who shall let it?* Isai. 43. 13. Here is a Challenge given to all the World, where is the Man that dares make resistance against God? who is so bold as to encounter Omnipotency? what Creature is so hardy as to strive with the Almighty? Is there Man or Devil that can withstand the Purposes and Efforts of this Sovereign Being? Wherefore think that Advice of St. *Peter* very seasonable, *Humble your selves under the mighty Hand of God*, 1 Pet. 5. 6. Submit your selves with all Reverence to his Infinite Power; Stand in Awe of him who by Vertue of his Infinite Sovereignty can do all things. Fear him who alone is able to destroy Body and Soul in Hell: I say unto you, fear him.

In the next place, if we meditate on this Divine Excellency, we shall be enabled to trust and rely on God with a firm and unshaken Confidence. It was the great Sin of the *Israelites*, whom God had brought out of *Egypt*, with a high Hand, and to whom he had given such assurances of his Omnipotence, that nevertheless they distrusted him, *Can God prepare a Table in the Wilderness?* say they. So we are apt to complain, Can God provide for us in those Streights that we are in? Is he able to rescue us out of these Troubles and Distresses, that we labour under? But let us be ashamed of such Atheistical Language as this, (for it is no other, because he that questions God's Power, questions his Being) and let us reflect upon what hath been suggested concerning his Omnipotency, of which I hope I have given very convincing Arguments and Proofs, and let this produce in us a firm Faith and Reliance on God. This was it which supported *Abraham*'s Faith, *Rom.* 4. 20, 21. *He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief, but was strong in Faith, giving Glory to God, And being fully persuaded that what he had promised he was able also to perform.* The belief of this Divine *Ability* conquers all diffidence, expells all fear and distrust. Never trouble thy self, and busy thy thoughts about the success of any event, this is sufficient to satisfie all our Scruples, *viz.* That the Power of the most High is engaged, and his Almighty Arm can defeat all opposition. We read in *Gen.* 18. that *Sarah laughed* at the message of the Angel; instead of firmly believing it she demeaned her self, as if it were a thing ridiculous and utterly impossible. But observe what follows in the forenamed Chapter, *The Lord said unto Abraham, wherefore did Sarah laugh? Is there any thing too hard for the Lord?* v. 13, 14. Creatures indeed may be non-pluss'd, they are heard to complain often that things are too hard for them to accomplish, but God's Power is boundless and unlimited, and therefore it is highly reasonable that we should Trust and Confide in him. Moreover, as to what concerns our Salvation, let us fortifie our selves with a lively and vigorous Faith. Let nothing that appertains to our Christian Profession seem harsh and incredible to us, let us give a firm assent to all that God hath said. Let the first Article of our Belief, *I believe in God the Father Almighty*, animate all the rest: let this influence on the other parts and branches of the Evangelical Faith. Being assured that God is of Infinite Power and Might, let us not distrust him either as to what he hath said, or to what we expect shall be done in the World. *Trust ye in the Lord for ever, for in the Lord* Jehovah *is everlasting Strength.* Isai. 26. 4.

Further, Let the consideration of God's Omnipotence, induce us to the practice of Patience and Contentment, whatever our condition and allotment are: and that upon this twofold account, 1. Because the Almighty cannot be resisted. It is fond and absurd to imagine that we can put by and baffle his Hand. *He is mighty in Strength, who hath hardened himself against him, and hath prospered?* Job 9. 4. which is indeed the substance of the greatest part of that Chapter, wherein the Holy man and Sufferer acknowledges the Divine Power, and thereupon inferrs that it is in vain to contend with the Omnipotent Sovereign of the World: and thence let us

inferr

infer, that we ought quietly to entertain the Crosses and Afflictions, which God is pleased to exercise us with at present, or which afterwards he shall think fit to try us with. 2. This Consideration may be effectual to work Contentment in us, because God being Omnipotent is able to rescue and relieve us; not only to remove the Calamities we groan under, but to render our State prosperous and successful; and to bestow very eminent Marks of favour on us. We may observe, that God appeared to *Jacob*, saying to him, *I am God Almighty*, Gen. 35. 11. and thereupon founds his Promise, (which follows in the next Words) of the wonderful Increase and Prosperity of *Jacob*'s Race, *The Earth is the Lords, and the fullness thereof*; he can out of that vast Treasury supply the Wants of all his Servants. Consider we this when we are inclined to Discontent and Murmuring; let us remember that his Arm is not shortned, his Power is not diminish'd or impair'd. And this also is to be thought of, that what cannot be effected by a Creature, may be by God. When we are reduced to the greatest Extremities and Exigencies, when Calamities flow in upon us with an extraordinary force, when all the Sluces are open'd, and the Floodgates broke up, so that we expect nothing but to be overwhelmed, God can even then preserve and protect us, he can raise up such Banks and Ramparts as shall keep out the raging Waters, and restrain their Violence. He can deliver us by ways which we have no thoughts or hopes of. He that is Omnipotent can do more than we are able to comprehend, or in a way of humane Reason and Probability expect. Therefore let us not be impatient, and repine at the Dealings of Heaven with us, though they seem never so severe. Let that of the Psalmist be ever imprinted on our Minds, that *God ruleth by his Power*, Psal. 66. 7. Thus *out of the Strong comes forth Sweetness*: from the Consideration of the Nature of the *Mighty* God issues forth abundant *Solace* to us, in whatsoever State we are: God is able to deliver in six Troubles, and in seven no Evil shall come near to hurt us. There is no reason then to droop and despair. And so as to the Concerns of our Better-part, our Souls, let us not be dejected and dismayed, seeing we are in the Hands of God who is infinitely Powerful. *He works all our Works in us*, and for us: *He giveth Power to the faint*, Isai. 40. 29. He strengthneth the weak and feeble Graces of his Servants. The Lord our Redeemer is styled, *the mighty God*, Isai. 9. 6. *He is able to save to the uttermost*, Heb. 7. 25. And why then do we despond?

Moreover, here is a good Foundation for our Prayers. If * *with God nothing is impossible*, if he be of infinite and irresistible Strength, there cannot be a greater Encouragement to us to make our fervent Addresses to him. Whatever our Distresses and Necessities are, we may assure our selves, that if we apply our selves to him with a firm and resolute Faith, nothing doubting of his unlimited Power, we shall not fail of what we ask of Him. This therefore we are to perswade our selves of thoroughly, and to remember that all things are alike as to God's Power. The least and the greatest are effected with equal facility. The reason is (as a pious Father expresses it) † because in all wonderful Events and Transactions, the only account that can be given of them, is the Power of the Agent. Now, God being an Infinite and Almighty Agent, it necessarily follows, that all his Works are done with the like Easiness. It is our Ignorance, and the shallowness of our Conceptions, which suggest to us, that one thing is greater and more difficult with God than another; whereas, if we respect his Omnipotency, one thing is as easily effected as an other. For, as another of the Ancients saith well, * *How can any thing be hard to Him, with whom Willing and Doing are the same?* It is his Will and Pleasure that such things should be effected, and accordingly they are so. Hence that of a wise Pagan, † *There is nothing that God cannot bring to pass, and that without any Labour*. He can level Mountains, remove the strongest Oppositions. Omnipotent Vertue is always the same, and can never fail; and all Difficulties (*i. e.* such as seem to be so in our Eye and Apprehension) are alike with the most facile Enterprizes. Yea, *The things that are utterly impossible with Men, are possible with God*, Luke 18. 27. Therefore let us not be backward to repair unto him in whatsoever State or Circumstances we are; let us offer up our Petitions to him, who we know is *able* to relieve us, who hath enjoyn'd us to call upon him, in order to the receiving of Relief and Succour from him, and who *is able* (as the Apostle speaks) *to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think*, Eph. 3. 20.

* *Luke 1. 37.*

† *In rebus mirabiliter factis tota ratio facti est Potentia facientis.* S. Augustin. *Epist.* 3. *ad Volusian.*

* *Quid difficile ei cui velle fecisse est?* Ambros. Hexaim. lib. 2.

† *Nihil est quod Deus efficere non possit, & quidem sine ullo labore.* Cic. de nat. deor.

Lastly,

Lastly, This is an effectual Motive to Living well. *I am the Almighty God*, said the Lord to *Abraham*; wherefore *walk before me, and be thou perfect*, Gen. 17. 1. I who am Almighty and All-sufficient will help and assist thee, I will strengthen thee amidst thy Weaknesses and Failings, I will enable thee to perform thy Duty aright, and therefore be incouraged to discharge it with all faithfulness. Whenever God requires of us that which is very difficult, the Consideration of this will render it easie. Thus it was with the religious Patriarch before named, when that hard Task of sacrificing his only Son was enjoin'd him, he *accounted that God was able to raise him up even from the Dead*, Heb. 11. 19. He reasoned and argued the Case, (as the Word λογιζόμενος imports) and at length concluded, That there was sufficient ground for his Obedience. The Topick which he argued from was, that *God was Powerful*; that *he was Able* to do whatever he pleased; that though *Isaac* were slain, yet the Omnipotent Hand could raise him from the Dead: and therefore this holy Man most willingly complied with the divine Command. When we undertake the hardest and most uneasy part of Religion, the sacrificing of our beloved Lusts, the mortifying of those vitious Appetites and Inclinations which we are most addicted to; the laying aside the Sin which doth so easily beset us, and hath a long time prevail'd over us, let us undertake this in the Strength of the Almighty, depending on him for his especial Grace and Assistance; without which we are wholly unable to effect so great things, but with it *we can do all things*, Phil. 4. 13. Let this be urged upon our Thoughts, that whatever Impediments we meet with, God will exert his infinite Power in our behalf, he will defend and protect us: he will bless and prosper us whilst we are about that Employment which he hath enjoyn'd us. Our Strength and Ability shall be proportion'd to our Burden. Thus you see how useful and serviceable in the Life of a Christian this Doctrine of *God's Omnipotence* is.

God's HOLINESS or GOODNESS is the next Attribute: for unto *Power* must be annexed *Goodness*, otherwise there will not be a right use of the former. Sovereignty or Dominion, separated from all respect to Goodness, is no Idea of *God*, but of some mercilesS Tyrant rather; yea, of the Spirit of Darkness, that *strong Man armed*, Luke 11. 21. But Power and Strength, guided by Goodness and Holiness, are truly Divine and Heavenly. *Tully* observed long since, that *Optimus* is put before *Maximus* in the Title of *Jupiter*: *Goodness* is placed before *Greatness*, * because it is really greater in it self, (as he suggests) and more grateful to Mankind to be good, and to do good, than to possess the greatest Riches, and to have an universal Sway in the World. God's *Holiness* is the Purity of his Nature, but especially of his Will: for as Omniscience is the Perfection of his Understanding, so Holiness is the Perfection of his Will. It is true, his Understanding (of which I spoke before) is pure and holy, and all the Acts of it are entirely so, but this proceeds from the necessary Conjunction between God's infinite *Intellect* and his infinite *Will*. These cannot be separated, though they are distinct Attributes. But it is the *Divine Will* that chiefly gives the denomination of *Sanctity*: and this is said to be *Holy*, because it fully and entirely chooses that which is holy, good and just, and is the Spring of all holy Actions in the Deity.

* *Majus est certeque gratius prodesse omnibus quàm magnas opes habere.* De Nat. Deor. l. 2.

The general Notion of the *Divine Holiness* is, that it is that Attribute whereby God loves, and is pleased with, and delighted in his own native Purity and Goodness, and loves all Holiness and Purity in his rational Creatures, and perfectly hates and abhorrs all Sin. *Holiness* is a Term in contradistinction to *Unholiness* and *Sinfulness*. The very first apprehension we have of God's being *Holy*, is that he is a Sinless Being, that there is no Impurity, Stain, or Fault in him, and that he is not, neither can be, the Author of any Sin or Vice in others. He *is without Iniquity*, Deut. 32. 4. And as *he cannot be tempted with Evil, so neither tempteth he any Man*, James 1. 13. If it shall here be asked, how Sin came into the World, and why God permits it, and how it is reconcilable with God's Holiness? I have fully satisfied that Question in another place, to which I referr the Reader. But this is it which on good ground I assert at present, *viz.* That Impeccability or innate Holiness is God's Attribute. It is that divine Property whereby God is absolutely and infinitely Pure. It is the same with his *Goodness*, taking this in a large and extensive Sense, for *there is none good but one, that is God*, Mat. 19. 17. there is none that is absolutely, originally and perfectly Good and Pure but he.

Holiness

Holiness then, as we now consider it, is a large Term, and signifies the intrinsick Goodness, Purity and Rectitude of the divine Nature, and of all the Actions that flow thence; it is a freedom from all Blemish and Pollution. Therefore *He whose Name is Holy*, Isai. 57. 15. is a Periphrasis of God: and he is often styled by way of Eminency, *the Holy One*, Isai. 5. 16.---40. 25. Jos. 11. 9. Prov. 9. 10. there being in him that Holiness and Purity, that Separation from all that is vile and sinful which is not competible to any other Being. His Nature is absolutely averse to all Evil, and therefore 'tis said, *He is of purer Eyes than to behold Evil, and cannot look on Iniquity*, Hab. 1. 13. Therefore this is often inculcated, *I the Lord your God am holy*, Lev. 19. 2.--20. 7.---21. 8. *The Lord is holy in all his Works*, Psal. 145. 17. *Thou only art holy*, Rev. 15. 4. That is, God alone in the highest Degree can be said to be Holy. He is Holy and Righteous in himself, and he is the Fountain and Spring of Righteousness in others. His just and upright Nature is the Rule of all Holiness: the Rectitude of his Will is the only Measure of Righteousness. By vertue of which original Principle he can do nothing that is Unjust or Unholy: but on the contrary, he doth all that is Righteous and Holy, and constantly acts according to those eternal and immutable Rules of Goodness and Righteousness which are contain'd in his Nature, and are essential to it, and he is not capable of doing otherwise. Thus God is Righteous and Holy.

But here, before I go any farther, it will be necessary to hearken to an *Objection*, and to return an *Answer* to it. Doth not the Scripture in many places represent God as countenancing and encouraging of Sin, as promoting and advancing it; yea, as acting it? Are there not several Texts in the *Old* and *New Testament*, that speak of him as the Author of Sin, and the Cause and Procurer of what is Vicious and Unlawful? How then is this consistent with the pure and holy Nature of God? The selling of *Joseph* into *Egypt* was a wicked Action, and yet it was from God, *Gen.* 45. 8. *It was not you that sent me hither, but God.* 'Tis, affirm'd, that *God harden'd* Pharaoh's *heart*, Ex. 9. 12.---14. 8, 17. whereby he acted most wickedly and impiously. *Sihon*, King of *Heshbon*, obstinately refused to let the *Israelites* pass through his Land, and the reason of it is given: for *the Lord God hardned his Spirit, and made his Heart obstinate*, Deut. 2. 30. So concerning the *Canaanites* who refused to make Peace with the *Israelites*, it is said, *It was of the Lord to harden their Hearts*, Jos. 11. 2. It is positively asserted, that *God sent an evil Spirit betwixt* Abimelech *and the Men of* Shechem, *Judg.* 9. 23. which produced most horrid effects, as we read afterwards in that Chapter. God himself saith to *David*, *I will take thy Wives* (that is, thy Concubines whom thou treatest as Wives) *before thine Eyes, and give them unto thy Neighbour, and he shall lie with thy Wives in the sight of the Sun*, 2 Sam. 12. 11. When *Shimei* was so malicious and prophane, as to curse *David*, *David* himself own'd, that *the Lord hath said unto him, Curse* David, 2 *Sam.* 16. 10. and ver. 11. *the Lord hath bidden him.* *David*'s numbring the People was a great and heinous Crime, as we may gather from the Punishment that was inflicted for it, and yet we are told, 2 *Sam.* 24. 1. that *the Anger of the Lord was kindled against* Israel, *and he moved* David *against them to say, Go number* Israel *and* Judah. We read in 1 *Kings* 12. 15. that *the King* (i. e. Rehoboam) *hearken'd not unto the People*, (nor to the good Counsel of the old Men) which shew'd a very evil Disposition in him, and yet it is said, in the next Words, the *Cause was from the Lord*; yea, this is rendred as the *reason* of *Rehoboam*'s Obstinacy and Defection, *for the Cause*, &c. And again, ver. 24. *For this thing is from me.* The same may be said, with respect to Deceit and Delusion, as is clear from 1 *Kings* 22. 23. *The Lord hath put a lying Spirit in the Mouth of all these thy Prophets.* It was a Sin in the King of *Assyria* to carry the People of *Israel* away Captive: but this also was from the Lord: for 'tis expressly said, *The God of* Israel *stirr'd up the Spirit of* Pul *King of* Assyria, *and the Spirit of* Tilgath-Pilneser, *and he carried them away*, 1 Chron. 5. 26. It is thus said by God himself, *Psal.* 81. 12. *I gave them up unto their own hearts Lusts.* And in *Psal.* 105. 25. *God turned the Hearts of the* Egyptians *to hate his People, to deal subtilly with his Servants.* The 10th of *Isaiah*, 5th and 6th Verses, are quoted on this occasion, O Assyrian! *the Rod of mine Anger, and the Staff in their Hand is my Indignation: I will send him against an hypocritical Nation, and against the People of my Wrath will I give him a Charge to take the Spoil and the Prey.* And yet you'll find in the following part of that Chapter, that what the *Assyrians* did was sinful and unlawful, and therefore they are threatned with Punishment. Notwithstanding this, they are God's *Rod* and *Staff*, and

and lift up by his hand, and managed by him. See this further in another Example, Isai. 19. 2. *I will set the Egyptians against the Egyptians*, and *they shall fight every one against his Brother, and every one against his Neighbour, &c.* and v. 14. *The Lord hath mingled a perverse Spirit in the midst thereof.* Upon such an occasion as this, that Complaint is grounded in Isai. 63. 17. *O Lord, why hast thou made us to Err from thy ways, and hardened our Heart from thy fear?* That is yet more positive in Jer. 4. 10. *Ah Lord God! surely thou hast greatly deceived this people*; and that in Ezek. 14. 9. *If the Prophet be deceived when he hath spoken a thing, I the Lord have deceiv'd that Prophet.*

And in the New Testament there are some passages, whence we may be inclined to inferr, that God is someways the Cause and Author of the sinfulness of Men, Joh. 12. 39, 40. *Therefore they could not believe because that* Isaiah *said again, he hath blinded their Eyes, and hardened their Heart, that they should not see, &c.* That is a close Text, Joh. 19. 11. *Thou couldest have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above.* They are Christ's words to *Pilate*, and he tells him that he could have no *power to condemn him*, (for that is his meaning, as we learn from *Pilate*'s words in the foregoing verse) unless he had it from God, yea, unless it was *given* him from God; it is a high expression: for *giving* is more than *permitting*. Concerning the Gentiles, the Apostle saith, *God gave them up*, or according to the Greek, *God delivered them up to uncleanness*, Rom. 1. 24. *God delivered them up unto vile affections*, v. 26. *God delivered them up to a Reprobate Mind*, v. 28. More generally the Apostle speaks in Rom. 9. 28. *Whom he will, he hardneth.* To which purpose the Apostle quotes *Isaiah*, *It is written, God hath given them the Spirit of Slumber, Eyes that they should not See, and Ears that they should not Hear*, Rom. 11. 8. Concerning the Antichristian Impostors he foretells, that *God shall send them* * *strong delusion, that they shall believe a Lye*, 2 Thess. 2. 11. Several other instances I might mention out of the Sacred Writings, but I will add only one more, *God hath put in their Hearts to fulfill his will*, Rev. 17. 17. which is not only to be applied to their *hating of the Whore* and *making her desolate, &c.* but to what follows, to *agree and give their Kingdom unto the Beast*, to joyn together in assisting him, to uphold Idolatry, and Irreligion and Persecution: yet this was *put in their Hearts by God.*

* Ἐνέργημα πλάνης. Ἐνεργεῖν *signifies the Efficaciousness of an Action in Scripture.*

Now, how can all this be reconciled with the *Purity* and *Spotless nature* of God, which I have asserted? must not he be said to be the Cause and procurer of Sin, who doth all this that hath been mention'd in the foregoing Texts? doth not all this argue God to be the Author of Sin? and yet we are sure he is not. No Proposition deserves our assent to it more than this, because if the contrary were true, then we attribute that to the Divine Being, which is proper to the Spirits of Darkness and to wicked Men: for these are truly the Authors and Causes of all Sin. It is against the true Notion and Nature of *Sin*, for Sin is *the Transgression of the Divine Law*: But God can't be supposed to Transgress that Law, *i. e.* to act contrary to his own Will. If we say, he is the Author of Transgressing and Sinning, this takes away the fundamental and formal Reason of Sin. This nulls not only the Law, but the Sanction of it: for if God be the Author of Sin, he cannot justly punish it; for Punishment supposes a Crime, but if a Man be thrust upon this or that act, without any freedom of his own; (which is necessarily contained in God's being the Author of Sin, there is no Crime or Fault. And can we believe, that God who hath declared his Hatred and Abhorrence of Sin, will enforce a Man to commit that which he absolutely hates? It is true he doth not as a Sovereign Lord, hinder the being of Sin in the World, but he hinders it as he forbids it, and commands the contrary; and threatens the Actors with Punishment; yea and actually inflicts judgments upon them, to create in them uneasiness and torment, that they might be deterred from the commission of Vice; and in short, he uses all proper means and expedients to prevent Sin. Wherefore we have reason to conclude, that God is not the Author of Sin.

But still the Difficulty remains, for how is it possible we can think otherwise, when it is expresly said, that God *hardens Mens Hearts, and makes them obstinate*, that he *sends an evil Spirit* on Men, that he *bids them curse*, that he *moves* them to do ill Actions, that he *puts a Lying Spirit into them*, that he *stirs up their Spirits* to act evilly, that he *gives them up to their Lusts*, that he *turns their Hearts to hate those that* are Good, that he *sets them against one another*, that he *mingles a perverse Spirit in the Minds of them*, that he *makes them to err* from his ways, that he *greatly deceives them*,

them, that he *blinds their Eyes*, that they should not see, that he *gives* them the Spirit of slumber, that he *gives Power* to do Sinfully, that he *delivers them up* to *Uncleanness*, and *vile Affections*, and a *reprobate Mind*, that he *sends them strong delusion*, that he *puts in their Hearts*, to do the worst and wickedest things? Who is able to reconcile these things with the untainted Purity a d Holiness of God?

Some endeavour to Salve it thus, When evil Actions are attributed to God in Scripture, it is a *Hebraism*. So saith a late † Critick, and before him many had said the same. It is the way of the *Hebrews*, say they, to attribute all to God, as if he did all, not excepting evil Actions. But this is a very frigid Criticism, and will not solve the present difficulty: for though we should grant, that all Great things are Attributed to God, and the Name of *God* is used to express whatever is Eximious and Excellent, yet we cannot stretch this so far as to apply it to the matter in Hand, *viz.* Sin and Vice: for it is not only once or twice, that these things are thus ascribed to God, but very often, and in plain Terms, and with a repeated Seriousness and Emphasis. Which shews plainly, that this is not a mere *Hebraism*, or certain *mode* of Speaking; it is not a bare Wording or Phrasing, but a plain Asserting of the thing it self.

† *Clerc. Ars Critic. cap.* 4.

Another * in his Sermon on *Deut.* 32. 4. resolves it into the bare *Permission* of God. And in another † place he saith, "All such expressions as these signifie *no more* "but that God for the former Provocations and Impenitency of a People, leaves "them to their own Hardness and Blindness, so that they desire not to under-"stand and make use of the means of their recovery. But who sees not, that to *harden or to make Men hard*, and to *leave them to their own hardness* are two distinct things? And therefore 'tis very unreasonable to confound them, as this Writer and some others do. Not that I think, that some of these Texts may not be interpreted, concerning God's *leaving* Persons to themselves (for I shall by and by assign this, as one way of expounding those Texts,) but there is no reason to assert, with the foresaid Author, that *no more* is signified by these expressions. Is it not as evident as any thing whatsoever, that these Positive Acts, God *Sent*, God *Bid*, God *turned their Hearts*, God *Blinded*, God *hardened their Hearts*, and the like, import something more than *bare Permission*, or even decreeing such a permission? Any considerate and unprejudiced Man, when he reads these and many more expressions of the same Nature, cannot but believe, that they signifie something else besides this, and that some kind of *Acting* is meant by them. I'm now to shew, what that is, and how God is said to do all these things, and yet how his Innate *Sanctity* and *Purity* are not intrench'd upon.

* *Dr. Tillotson.* † *Serm.* I. *on Jam.* 1. 13, 14.

First, he is said to do these things, as he withholds or withdraws his Grace from Persons, as he denies them the help of his Spirit, by which alone they can be enabled to do what is good and holy. Thus God withheld his Grace from *Pharaoh* and others, and thereby *hardened their Hearts*: for from that Promise in Ezek. 36. 26. *I will take away your stony Heart, and give you a Heart of Flesh*, we learn that the *Softning* of Men's Hearts is the Gift of God only, and consequently he may be said to *harden* the Heart, when he denies his Grace. *Rehoboam's* hearkning to evil Counsel was *from the Lord*, because he left that King to himself. Thus it might be said, that *the Lord put a lying Spirit into the Mouth of* Ahab's *Prophets*, in as much as he refused to grant them the Divine assistance, whereby they might speak the Truth. Thus when the Church complain'd, *Why hast thou made us to Err from thy ways, and hardened our Heart from thy Fear?* it proceeded from God's subtracting his Spirit from them: for God hardens by Desertion. And therefore we may observe that the Church begs that God would *return*, that is, Aid and Support them with his former Grace. So when the Apostle tells us, that God *gave up the Gentiles to uncleanness and vile Affections, and a reprobate Mind*, such passages may signifie, that God deprived them of his Grace, he neither enlightned their Understanding, nor enclined their Wills, but left them to themselves, and then they run into the Commission of the most flagitious Sins. And under this Head we may mention God's taking away all Restraints, and Hindrances of Vice, for as he *with-holds* Men *from Sinning*, as is evident in the case of *Abimelech*, *Gen.* 20. 6. So at other times he removes those hindrances, and thereupon Men fall into Sin; at the same time God not giving them his Preventing Grace, to keep them from Sinning.

Secondly, God may be said to do these things, which the forecited Texts make mention of, because he sometimes sets such *Occasions* and *Objects* before Men, where-

by they are excited to those sinful desires and actions. God brings Men into such Circumstances as administer unto Sin, but the Sin is by their own fault. God prospered and blessed the *Israelites*, and hence the *Egyptians* took occasion to hate them, and on that account God may be said to *turn their Heart to hate his People*. Which sense the Connection of those two verses, 24th and 25th, in the 105 Psalm directs us to, *God increased his people greatly, and made them stronger than their Enemies. He turned their Hearts to hate his People and to deal subtilly with his Servants.* God, by encreasing and strengthening his People stirr'd up the *Egyptians* hatred against them. When 'tis said, that *God hardened* Pharaoh's *Heart*, we may fitly interpret it in this sense, that God gave occasion to him to harden his Heart.

Here let me particularly and distinctly enquire into this famous Instance. It is said and publickly asserted by some, that *Pharaoh* first hardned his Heart, and then God hardned it, and they pretend to prove this out of the History of *Pharaoh* in the Book of *Exodus*: but tho' this be a received Notion, and confidently maintained by some, yet there is no foundation for it. In *Exod.* 7. 13. 'tis said, *Pharaoh's Heart was hardened*, for so it is in the Original, and so we find it in our English Translation, in 14th and 22d verses. The same we have in Chap. 8. 19 verse and Chap. 9. 7th verse, which we rightly render *Pharaoh's heart was hardened*. It is not said, whether it was done by God, or by himself: but because God had *foretold twice*, that *he* would harden *Pharaoh's* heart, as in Exod. 4. 21. *I will harden his Heart*, and Exod. 7. 3. *I will harden* Pharaoh's *Heart*, therefore I gather that the forecited places are to be understood of *God's* hardning that King's Heart. And 'tis expresly said, Exod. 9. 12. *The Lord hardened the Heart of* Pharaoh. This is the first time, that it is said, *the Lord* hardened his Heart, tho' it was sufficiently imply'd before, that he did. But now it is in express Terms said so: and again, *Ch.* 10. *v.* 1. *I have hardened his Heart*, and v. 20, the *Lord hardened* Pharaoh's *Heart*, and so in v. 27. and again in Ch. 11. v. 10. And *after* God had hardened his Heart, 'tis said that *Pharaoh* himself hardened his own Heart, *Exod.* 9. 34. *He*, that is, Pharaoh, *hardned his Heart*. It is our business then now to examine how *God* hardned this King's Heart, and how he hardned it *himself*, which will give us an account of the present Matter under our Consideration. It appears from the History of this Transaction, that God was the Cause of *Pharaoh's* Obduration, as he gave him the *Occasion* for it, but such a one, as he might have made use of to a contrary purpose. It was God's Mercy and Kindness in removinng the Plagues, that occasioned the harding of his Heart, as we are told in Exod. 8. 15. *When* Pharaoh *saw that there was respite, he hardened his Heart*, and in ch. 9. v. 34. *When* Pharaoh *saw that the Rain and the Hail, and the Thunder were ceased, he Sinned yet more, and hardned his Heart*: as on the contrary, when the Plagues were renew'd they softned him: then he call'd for *Moses*, then he acknowledged God, then he made great promises of Amendment, *Exod.* 12. 29, 30. So that it is plain, that God's Clemency and Forbearing was one occasion of *Pharaoh's* hardness, and at the same time the True Cause in *Pharaoh* was his abuse of that Clemency. Whereas that Goodness of God, should have led him to Repentance (which is the genuine Effect of that Mercifull dispensation) it had a contrary influence upon him, and made him Obstinate and Rebellious. He wilfully abused the Divine Grace and Mercy, and grew hard and refractary, by God's not continually punishing him.

Thus we see how *Pharaoh's* induration was an *Occasional* act, and how on that account God might be said to be the Cause of it. Thus perhaps God was said to *deceive the Prophets*; namely, by giving them Occasion to be deceived, and perverted by those Gifts which those that consulted them, conferr'd upon them; or by some other Allurements which God suffer'd to be in their way; yea, which he was pleased actually to set before them. Thus we are to interpret 2 Sam. 12. 11. *I will take thy Wives, and give them to thy Neighbour, and he shall lie with them.* God besets Men with Objects, which by their own voluntary fault are incentives to Vice, and hindrances to the practice of their Duty. Jer. 6. 22. *Behold I will lay Stumbling blocks before this People, and the Fathers and the Sons together shall fall upon them.* God influences on the Hearts of the Wicked by such Occurrencies as they shall make use of to evil purposes, and which shall prove very powerful Temptations to sin. This is not denied by a late Writer, who confesses, that * *no Man, who believes God's Providence to be concern'd in the Affairs of the World, can doubt that the*

* Dr. Tillotf. Ser. 1. on Jam. 1. 13, 14.

the Providence of God doth order, or at least permit Men to be brought into those Circumstance, which are dangerous Temptations to sin. It is granted by *Arminius* himself, that † *God administers Arguments and Occasions which incite to Sin: which Arguments*, he saith, *are offer'd to the Mind or to the Senses, and that either by the mediate intervening Operation of the Creature, or by the immediate Action of God.* In the same place, he saith, *This administring of Arguments and Occasions of Sin to Men, is not the Efficient of Sin but by Accident only, for 'tis so administred, that God suffers the Creature to act freely.* In another place he speaks of *God's directing of Sin*, viz. in regard of the *Object*: his Words are these, which may be of use to explain and confirm what I'm treating of, † *God's directing of Sin, as to the Object*, saith he, *is when he suffers not the Sin to tend towards such or such an Object, as the Sinner by chance lights upon, or would make choice of above others, but when he directs the Sin to a certain determinate Object as he thinks fit, but such a one as the Sinner himself never design'd.* Then he shews, that "This is agreeable to Scripture, and is thus "expressed in general Terms, *A Man's Heart deviseth his way, but* "*the Lord directeth his Steps*, Prov. 16. 9. And more especially concerning the "King's Heart, *The King's Heart is in the Hand of the Lord, as the Rivers of Water:* "*he turneth it whithersoever he will*, Prov. 21. 1. Of which we have an illustrious "Example in *Nebuchadnezzar*, who having purposed in his Mind to bring some Na- "tions and People under subjection, and being doubtful whether he should move "to the *Ammonites* or towards the *Jews*, God so order'd and administred his Divi- "nations, that he resolved to go against the *Jews*, and not against the *Ammonites*, "Ezek. 21. 19, *&c.* Thus *Arminius*, who concurrs with what I have deliver'd under this Head, that God's acting, with respect to Sin, is to be understood as to the *Occasions* and *Objects* which he is pleased to propound and set before vitiously disposed Men.

† *Disput.* 10.

† *Directio in objectum est quando peccatum quod permittit non pro arbitratu creaturæ in quodvis objectum ferri patitur, sed incertum objectum à peccante aliquando vel prorsus non petitum, vel saltem non præcisè petitum dirigit*, &c. Disput. 9.

Thirdly, God acts in reference to the evil Actions of Men, by *giving the Actors up to Satan*, to be assaulted and tempted by him: and on this Consideration, God is said to do even those things which the evil Spirit was the true Author of. We have an Instance and Proof of this in the first Book of *Kings*, where we read, that a *Spirit came forth and stood before the Lord*, and undertook to be *a lying Spirit in the Mouth of* Ahab's *Prophets*, 1 Kings 22. 21. and thence 'tis said, *the Lord put a lying Spirit into their Mouths*, ver. 23. namely, because he gave up those Prophets to the evil Spirit. Thus we are to understand 1 *Sam.* 19. 9. *An evil Spirit from the Lord was on* Saul. God gave him a Commission to tempt and vex *Saul*. So by comparing 2 *Sam.* 24. 1. with 1 *Chron.* 21. 1. we find that *Satan* was appointed by God to excite *David* to number the People, and thence 'tis said, *the Lord moved him* to do it. This is a certain Truth, that God makes use not only of wicked Men, but of Devils, in the Administrations of his Providence, but is not thereby culpable. When Sinners have wilfully revolted from their Duty, it is just with God to deliver them up to him, whose Service they addict themselves to: but from this judicial Tradition we cannot gather, that God is the Author of the Sins they commit by the instigation of *Satan*.

Fourthly, Some of those Texts above-mention'd are to be interpreted in this following Sense, that God doth the things there mention'd, in way of *Punishment*. God willeth and promoteth some vitious Dispositions and Actions of Men, as they are a due Penalty of former Offences. He makes one Sin to be a Punishment of some Sin that went before. Thus God hardned *Pharaoh*'s Heart, as a Recompence of his former Hardness. For here, by the way, I must let the Reader know once for all, that those Texts which I before set down, are capable of *more than a single Interpretation*; we may solve them in a different way, because God may be said to do those things which they make mention of, *in a different manner*. This is evident in the Texts now before us, concerning *God's hardning of* Pharaoh's *Heart*, which may be meant, not only concerning the with-holding his Grace, and his setting Occasions of Sin before him, but also by making one Sin the Punishment of another. *Pharaoh* would not hearken to, and be amended by God's Judgments, therefore God's greatest Judgment on him was, That he should not hearken and be amended; but that he should continue obstinate and incorrigible. Thus God hardned *Pharaoh's* Heart, and thus he judicially deals with other Sinners. God *sent an evil Spirit of Hatred and Contention betwixt* Abimelech *and the* Shechemites, to punish them for their past Enormities,

ties, and particularly their murdering of *Gideon*'s Sons. *God bid* Shimei *curse* David, as an Infliction justly due to him for his past Sins. One of the most learned and pious Fathers of the Christian Church, upon this and the former Examples of *Pharaoh* and some others, grounds this Doctrine, That * God by his just Judgment on Sinners doth sometimes incline their Wills to that which is evil. King *Rehoboam*'s Actings were *of the Lord*, God turning his Sin into a Punishment for that People. An evil Spirit stood ready to deceive *Ahab*'s Prophets, and offer'd to be a *lying Spirit in their Mouths : Go forth and do so*, saith God, to punish that King for his not giving credit to the true Prophets, and for even *hating them*, 1 Kings 22. 8. *If a Prophet be deceiv'd, I have deceiv'd him*, i. e. He delighting in Lyes, and the People so too, I recompence that Sin of theirs by giving them up to the telling and hearing of Lyes.

* *His & talibus testimoniis Divinorum Eloquiorum satis manifestatur, operari Deum in cordibus hominum ad inclinandas eorum voluntates, quocunque voluerit, sive ad bona pro suâ Misericordiâ, sive ad Mala, pro meritis eorum, judicio utiq; suo, aliquando aperto, aliquando occulto, semper tamen justo.* Augustin. l. 5. *Contr.* Julianum. cap. 3. de Grat. & Lib. Arbitr. cap. 20, 21.

In this Sense God is said to *set the* Egyptians *against the* Egyptians, *and to mingle a perverse Spirit in the midst of them*, as a Penalty of their former Contentions and perverse Spirit. So *God gave the* Israelites *the Spirit of Slumber* ; so we may understand those Words of the Psalmist, *Add Iniquity to their Iniquity*, Psal. 69. 28. and those in the *Apocalypse*, chap. 22. ver. 11. *He that is unjust, let him be unjust still* ; *and he that is filthy, let him be filthy still.* So God's *giving up Persons to Uncleanness, and to vile Lusts, and to a reprobate Mind*, is to be understood, not only in the Sense which I have before propounded, but in this present one, that because those Gentiles had abused the Knowledge and Light they had, and acted contrary to it, therefore God in his just Judgment dealt with them after this manner, making the evil of Sin become the evil of Punishment. Now, it is not unworthy of God, to have some Agency in the Production of those Acts which by Man's fault become Vitious, because he designs them for Punishment : for in immoral Actions is placed much of Man's Punishment, Misery and Unhappiness. Sin is a Penalty to most Persons, and really proves so to them. And indeed there is nothing more congruous and just, than that the Sinner should be punish'd by his Fault, and that Vice should carry its Recompence with it. The Case being so, the evil of Sin, consider'd as 'tis the evil of Punishment, is good ; because it is the Effect of divine Justice : and consequently God may have some hand in it, and yet not be the Author of Sin. Many Persons of good Judgment content themselves with this Account, and with what was said before in the other Particulars : but I am strongly inclin'd to believe, that there is *more* than all this in some of the Instances which I have produced out of the sacred Writings.

Therefore in the 5th and last place, I conceive, God is said to do these things, because he really concurrs with the *bare Act* of Vice, tho' not with *the Evil* of it. We must know then, that the *general Power* of thinking and willing, and the *natural Faculty* of doing any thing are from God, and are his peculiar Gift. *In him*, as the Apostle saith, *we live and move*, as well as *have our Being* ; we are not only sustain'd and upheld in our Existence, but we act and operate by the divine Influence, for these are meant by *living* and *moving*. He stirrs up that Power in us, which he gave us to act, and he also concurrs with the Act. As the Faculty is from him, so is the Operation. And this is true of every Operation, whether good or bad : as it is a natural Action, it is from God. The reason is, because the natural Action, as such, is not sinfull : and therefore, tho' God determines a Man to the natural Action, yet it follows not, that he determines him to the Sin that accompanies that Action. Though God, as the universal Cause of all natural Effects in the World, and as the Upholder and Sustainer of Men's Beings, influences on all humane Actions, yea the bad as well as the good, (for those have a natural Consideration as well as a moral one) yet the Evil of the Actions springs from their own depraved Wills, from the corrupt Motions of their own Minds. Evil Acts are properly their own Acts, they themselves are the Authors of them. God cannot will or promote Sin, as it is in it self consider'd, *i. e.* as it is a depraved wicked Act, or as it is a Transgression of the Law : but he can and doth concurr to the bare Act of Sin, even that Act, which by Man's evil Mind and depraved Temper is vitious : but he doth not concurr to it, as it is vitious : and consequently he is not the Cause of the *obliquity* of the Act, tho' he be the Cause of the *Act* it self.

If we thus distinguish, between the bare *physical Acts* and the *pravity of them*, we may

may solve all the Difficulties that are wont to arise about this Subject: and accordingly we may know how to give an account of such Passages as these in Scripture, some of which I have mention'd before; *God sent* Joseph *into* Egypt, in as much as he concurr'd to the outward Act of selling him; the *Lord bid* Shimei *curse* David, so far as it was a mere external Action. *God turned the Hearts of the* Egyptians *to hate his People*, as it was only a natural Exertment of the Mind. *God stirred up the Spirit* of Persons to do evil Acts, but concurred not to the evil of them. *He hath blinded their Eyes and hardned their Hearts*, as far as the physical Act was concern'd. The outward Act of destroying *Ahab* and his House, and of committing such Outrages in *Israel*, as we read of in the History of him, was by God's Command, † and therefore could not be faulty and sinful, but the Intention of *Jehu* was evil, and that made his whole Enterprize as to himself vitious, and yet the Act of God was not of that Nature, for he concurr'd only to the external Execution, not to the sinful Intention. The *Assyrian* (i. e. Nebuchadnezzar) *was a Rod and Staff in God's Hand: God sent him, God gave him a Charge to destroy* and lay wast the People of *Israel*, Isai. 10. 5, 6. Thus God himself was concern'd in their bare outward Act of ravaging the *Jews*: and this was appointed and determin'd by him: but as to the Delinquencies of it, God had no hand in it, but *Nebuchadnezzar* alone; for this powerful Enemy did this with a vicious and wicked Design, as we read, ver. 7. *Howbeit he meaneth not so; neither doth his Heart think so*, his Design is not to serve God and his Providence in this severe Execution, *but it is in his Heart to destroy*; his only Design is to satisfy his own Revenge, Lust, Covetousness, *&c.* This was the Obliquity, this was the Vitiosity of his Act, and God was not the Author of it.

† 2 Kings 10. 30.

It is remarkable, how the *delivering* our Saviour unto Death is ascribed to different Persons, Divine, and Humane. We read, that God the Father *deliver'd him* to Death, *Acts* 2. 23. *Rom.* 8. 32. Christ himself *deliver'd himself*, Eph. 5. 2. for so 'tis in the Original, and again in ver. 25. The *Jewish* Governours and Priests *deliver'd him*, Luke 20. 20. *Pilate* the *Roman* Governour did so, *Mat.* 27. 26 *Judas* the Traytor did the like, *Matt.* 26. 15. They all did this *Act*, but in a different way, and on that account the *Act* is *different*, tho' in the general it is one and the same. As God deliver'd Christ to Death, and as Christ deliver'd himself, it was a good Act: but as *Pilate*, and the *Jews*, and the Traytor *Judas* deliver'd him up to Death, it was an evil Act, and the most evil one that ever was committed. The diversity of Ends and Intentions makes the Difference. But if the *bare Act of Delivery* of Christ be consider'd, and not the Mind and Intention of the Deliverer, then *Judas*, and the other Enemies of Christ, did that which God the Father did, and what Christ did. This, I apprehend, doth clear the Point that is before us, and shews us, that the Cause of a vitious and sinful Action is not to be denominated from the mere external Act, and that God is not to be thought to be the Author of Sin, because he concurrs to the physical Production of it. The Act it self, barely consider'd, proceeds from God; to deny this, is to deny the Dependency of the Creature upon God: but that which makes it sinful is from Men. And what is that? The Will of Man. The evil of the Work consists in the evil design and contriving of it, not in the mere doing of it. The Act, which in it self is good, must be distinguish'd from the Evil that accompanies it: for these two are really distinct things.

To explain this further, take it in this Example, A Man draws his Sword to defend himself, or suppose in a lawful War to destroy his Enemy; this Action is good and laudable, and tends to the good of the Person that did it: but if the same Man uses his Sword to kill an innocent Person, and one that comes not violently to take away his Life, this Action of his is evil. Now it can't be denied, that using the Sword is an *Act* or *Deed* in one case as well as in the other, and that Act or Deed in both cases is alike, and that consider'd in themselves and their own abstract Nature, they are of the same kind, one is not more evil than the other. But let these two Actions be consider'd, with regard to the Principles from whence they proceed, and then we must acknowledge there is a vast difference between them: the one was only to preserve and secure himself, or in obedience to the chief Ruler and Governour, to repell the publick Enemies: but the other was the effect of implacable Anger and Passion, or of a malicious thirsting after Blood. From this Example it is plain, that Sin consists not in the *Deed* or *Action it self*, but in the *disorder*, the *inordinacy*, the *depravity* that attends it. *Benaiah* kills *Shimei*, 2 Sam. 3. 27. *Joab* kills *Abner*, 1 King. 2. 46. both are alike in a natural Consideration, tho' one is a lawful executing

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an Offender, and the other is Murdering an innocent Person. It must be remember'd then that the Nature of Good and Evil consists not in the bare Action, but in the Manner of it. The Physical action of Lifting up the Hand, or Thrusting a Sword is not Evil in it self; but so far as that Action is a Deviation from the right Manner, it is Evil. Killing is forbid by God, yet God appoints particular Cases wherein Mens Lives may be taken away. *Some killing* then is not forbidden, nay *some is Commanded*; but Killing is sinfull, and unlawfull in those Circumstances, which have been mentioned. This then is that which I say, that when the Act is thus and thus Fixed and Terminated, then there is Good or Evil in it.

But you will object, that in Theft and Adultery and some other facts, the *Action* and the *Vitiosity* can't be separated. I answer, this is a mistake, for even here the Action may be considered without the Vice. For in Theft it is not the bare taking away from another that which is his own, that constitutes that Crime: for then the *Israelites* spoiling the *Egyptians*, would have been unlawful. So in the other instance Carnal knowledge, or the Act it self is not Sinful, for then Marriage could not be Lawful. The vitiosity then of the Acts depend on particular and peculiar * Circumstances and Objects, about which they are Conversant. *Moses* Numbred the People by God's command, *Numb.* 1. 1, 2. And *David* commandeded them to be Numbred, 2 *Sam.* 18. 1. but the *Circumstances* altered the case: for the former did it to shew the truth of God's promise made to *Abraham*, of multiplying his Seed; the latter did it out of diffidence and distrust of God's Power and Providence. This may convince us, that *the bare Act* and the *Sin* are two distinct things: and consequently, that God himself may be concerned (as necessarily he must be, as the Universal Cause which Actuates all things, by an uninterrupted Concourse and Influx) in the outward Act or Event in wicked Enterprises, but he never is interested in the Vitiosity of them. God is not the moral Cause or Author, but he is the Physical Cause or Author of every vitious Act, because the Agent could not Act without his aid. The true Cause of Sin as 'tis Sin is the depraved Nature of Man, κακοφυία, as *Plato* calls it, a Natural malignity in Man's temper: but the Act which is thus made sinful by Man and so Morally considered, if it be Naturally considered, is of God. He doth with a real and proper influx concurr to vitious Acts, as they are bare Acts: but he concurrs to nothing that is the formal Reason of Sin, nothing that denominates a sinful Act. This fully clears that Objection, which is wont to be raised from the forecited Texts, *viz.* that God is the Author of Sin.

* *Aliquæ Circumstantiæ dant Speciem actui morali.* Aquin. 1 Secund. qu. 73.

And this was the way of answering that Objection, many Hundred years ago, as we may see in St. *Augustin*'s writings, against *Julianus* and other *Pelagians*, and in those of *Prosper* and *Fulgentius*. The Schoolmen afterwards borrow'd it from those Learned and Pious Fathers, and they professedly averred that all acts, whether Good or Evil are immediately by God's influx, so that no Man either willeth or refuseth any thing, but it is from that Divine determination and influx. This Concourse is expressly own'd and maintain'd by *Aquinas*; and *Suarez* inculcates it as a manifest Truth. You will find the same asserted by *Alvarez* a Dominican, in his book *de Auxiliis*. It were easie to add others of the *Roman* Communion, who utter words of the like import. So that it is not *Geneva* only that holds this special and immediate Concourse, but even the most Eminent Schoolmen say as much as the *Calvinists* do concerning God's actings with reference to Sin. And they both agree in this, that this Doctrine which I have been vouching imputes not the Casualty of Sin to God. * *Arminius* is likewise on our side, for he freely grants the Distinction between these two in every sin, *viz.* the *bare Act which is naturally good*, and the ἀνομία *which is morally Evil*: and the one he calls the *matter* of Sin, and the other the *form* of it; he owns that God concurrs to the former, that is, to the act of Sin, as 'tis an Act, but not to the latter. Yea, *Socinus* himself allows of this distinction, † *If there shall be*, saith he, *a certain Prediction of an Evil Act, it is true the Act it self was decreed by God, but not the wickedness of the Heart, whence the Evil of the Act proceeded* Here we see, he thinks fit to make use of that distinction which his followers have since derided.

* *Disput. 9. seu Thesis de Justitiâ & Efficaciâ Providentiæ Dei in Malo.*

† *Si certa Mali operis prædictio erit, ipsum quidem opus à Deo decretum fuit, non autem Cordis Malitia.* Prælect. cap. 10.

And I could further shew, that those that seem to deny this Doctrine yet grant it, or grant that which is equivalent: thus they are pleased to look upon the same Action

Action under this double Notion, *viz.* as a *Sin*, and as a *Punishment*: for they say *the hardning of Mens Hearts* may not be ascribed to God as 'tis a *Sin*, but as a *Punishment*, it may. If they can so distinguish as to make the same Act to be a *Sin* in respect of the Person that doth it, and only a *penalty* in respect of God that orders it, I don't see why they should be backward to consider the same Act as it is *Natural*, and as 'tis *Moral*, and to grant that God is the Author of it, under the first consideration, and Man the Author of it under the second. The Reasonableness of which is evident: for tho' *Sin* be the product of the depraved will of Man, yet every *Act* as such, is from God in whom we Live and Move. I was well pleased to see the following passages come from the Pen of one of our Divines, who I did not expect would favour this Cause, * *Preservation* (which is a part of Divine *Providence) is God's upholding and preserving all things, and enabling them to Act, cooperating with all Creatures, actuating them by a perpetual Influx and Concourse. It is God's † cooperation and concourse with Creatures in all their Actions. No Creature can Move or Act or do any thing, without the Concourse and Operation of God: God cooperates in all the Wickedness that is committed; Men do wickedly by the Power and Cooperation of God without which they can do nothing. Sinful actions are done by God's immediate Power.* Again, ‖ *It can be no fault in God to Cooperate with the Natural powers of Men, even in their sinfull Actions. This cannot entitle God to their Sins, to preserve their Natures, and to actuate their Natural powers, is no more a Cause of their Sin, than to make such Natures and such Natural powers, which was the work of Creation.* Therefore he grants afterwards, that *Men act, even when they Sin, by a Power derived from God in their first Creation.*

*Dr. Sherlock of Divine Provid. p. 19. 20.
† p. 31.
‖ p. 32.

Wherefore, whatever some have said to the contrary, we must distinguish between the *bare Act* and the *Vitiosity* of it, and we must hold, that God is the Cause of the one, and Man of the other. God concurrs with the Natural or Metaphysical Goodness of every operation (for in an Action or operation morally evil, there is a Physical and Metaphysical Goodness) but we our selves are the sole Authors, of the Irregularity and Obliquity of the Action. Which is sufficient to clear God, and vindicate his Holy and Pure Nature, to which Sin is always hateful, which is the Subject I am now treating of. The best answer to the Objection raised from the foregoing Texts, is, That God concurrs to the *Acts* in them mentioned, not to the *Defect* and *Evil* that adheres to them, this being wholly from the will of Man. For the Root and formal Reason of Sin, lies in the Free and Voluntary motion of the Soul. There is no Vitiosity without the Will, and where ever you find a Vice, it proceeds from the Will. Therefore here I fix the Author of Sin; and consequently the Vitious Man himself, or (which is the same) his Will is this Author, and none else.

The foresaid Scriptures acquaint us only, that God is the Author of the Act, as Physically considered: or, if there be any thing else, we have no Terms and Forms of words that can fully reach it. But howsoever God acts or operates with respect to the production of what is Evil, we are sure, that it is without all Stain, Depravity, Fault, or Umbrage of Vice: for the Divine Majesty is not capable of any thing of that Nature. Whatever Agency God hath in Sin, it is certain and undeniable, that he doth not by any positive Act instill or infuse evil Qualities into Mens minds. Wherefore I conclude that this *Attribute* of God, which is now under our Consideration, remains entire. The *Holiness* and *Purity* of God, are not impared by any thing that hath been produced in the foregoing Objection. He is Entirely and Absolutely Holy, that is, he is free from all impurity, Sin, and Vice, and hath all perfections of the contrary kind which are agreeable to his Divine Nature.

Wherefore I will now proceed to give a farther account of this Glorious Attribute, and to shew that under this General and Comprehensive Excellency of the Deity are contained these three particular ones; namely, *Mercifulness*, *Justice*, and *Faithfulness*: These are the *Moral Excellencies* (if I may so speak) these are the *Divine Vertues* (if I may be permitted to call them so, after the manner of Men) which give God the denomination of *Holy*.

I begin with the first of these, GOODNESS or MERCIFULNESS, and here 1. I will explain the true Nature of it. 2. I will assign the several kinds of it. 3. I will briefly shew the Ground and Root of this Excellent Attribute, as well

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as I have done of the rest. 4. I will enlarge upon the proper *Deductions*, that are to be made from it. First, as to the true *Nature* of this Attribute, the *several Names* which it is expressed by will give you the best account of it. *Goodness* is a fit and significant Name, and imports God's designs and thoughts of *Good* to his Creatures. For as the *Goodness* of God is a *General* term (as hath been suggested before) and is opposed to all that is Sinful and Vitious, and is the same with *Holiness*, so likewise it is to be taken in a *particular* and more confined Sense, and then it is opposed to ill Will and Hatred, and doing of Mischief, and it is that Attribute of God whereby he is inclined to intend and to do good to others, and to procure their Welfare and Happiness. It denotes the proneness of his *Will* to shew favour, the readiness and promptitude of his *Nature* to do Acts of Kindness and Beneficence: as also the Actual exerting of Goodness, the bestowing of benefits on Men. In this Notion of Divine *Goodness* we do not suppose Men, as sinfull, to be the object of it.

But the next word, and that which is most commonly used to express this Divine Attribute, supposes Sin and guilt in Men; namely, *Mercifulness* or *Mercy*, which is a willingness to relieve such as are in *Misery* and *Distress*, and it is an Actual helping of them, and shewing kindness to them in such a condition Now, there are two sorts of *Miseries*, and in both of them, God pities and helps his Creatures. First, there is the misery of *Sin*, and God is pleased to shew himself *Merciful* by his readiness to *Forgive* it. Therefore *Pardon* or *Forgiveness* is another Name whereby the Divine Goodness is represented to us. *He is a God that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by Transgression*, Mic. 7. 18. and he is called *a God of Pardons* (for so 'tis in the Original) *Neh.* 9. 17. This Goodness is set forth by a very fit Similitude, *He blotteth out as a thick Cloud our Transgressions, and as a Cloud our Sins*, Isai. 44. 22. That is, as the Sun with its powerful light and Heat disperses the thickest Clouds, and causes them to disappear and vanish, so the Glorious Beams of Divine Goodness and Compassion do blot out the blackest Guilt which we contract by our wilful offending of God. Secondly, there is the *Misery of Punishment*, and this also the Divine Beneficence is forward to remove, and take away. This is called *repenting of the Evil*, Jer. 18. 8.--26. 13. 19, for though properly and strictly speaking (as I shall more distinctly shew afterwards) God can't be said to *repent*, yet this manner of speech is used to signifie God's desisting from Punishing, his ceasing to shew the tokens of his displeasure: which is another act of that *Goodness* I am treating of. God doth not only remit the Guilt of Sin, but free the Person from the Penalty of it. Of this there are frequent and daily Instances, and hence it is that God is known in the Scripture style, by the Title of *Helper* and *Deliverer*. He not only blots out Transgressions, but rescues from Afflictions and Pressures, from the fear of Death, and from our obnoxiousness to Everlasting Death and Misery. *He forgiveth all our Iniquities, he healeth all our Diseases: he redeemeth our Life from Destruction, he Crowneth us with loving kindness and tender Mercies.* Psal. 103. 3, 4.

Grace is another Name (and that the most frequent in the *New Testament*) whereby this Attribute is expressed, and it peculiarly imports God's *free* and *liberal* conferring of Mercies and Blessings. *Grace* is that merciful propension in God's will whereby he shews favour to his Creatures, out of meer Love and Kindness. He is properly said to be *Gracious*, because he Acts with a free and unforced Mind, and because it is his Good Will and Pleasure to do so. Therefore it must be acknowledged, that all the Good we are partakers of is from *Grace*; and where this is, there can be no *Merit*: for God gives not as we deserve, but as he pleaseth.

Love is another usual Term in Scripture to denote this Divine Excellency which I am discoursing of, and the peculiar Nature of it is to aim at the Good and Benefit of those towards whom it is extended. Thus *God is Love*, 1 John 4. 8. it is of his very Essence to design the Advantage of his Creatures. For this Reason *Plato* in his *Sympostacks*, speaks according to the Scripture style, and calls God *Love*: and he adds that Love hath no Parents, and so represents God who is of Himself. *Orpheus* in one his *Hymns* makes *Love* the Origin of all things; all things are born and begot of *Love*, saith he, and in his *Argonauticks* he places *Love* in the Lap or Bosom of the *Chaos* whence all things were formed. *God* most certainly is that *Love* which is meant by these Ancient Sages, and by *Hesiod* and others, when they tell us, that this was it that erected the World. The excellent *Hierocles* saith the

the same, but in plain terms, * *There can be no other rational Cause assigned of the Creation of all things, than the substantial Goodness of God.* The World had its Rise and Beginning from this: This was the Principle of the Creation of all things, especially of intelligent Beings, and more particularly of Men.

* Ἀιτία τῆς τῶν πάντων ποιήσεως οὐσιμία ἄλλη προσεστὶν εὔλογος, πλὴν τῆς καθ' οὐσίαν ἀγαθότητος. *In* Pythag. Aur. Carm.

Lastly, This Attribute is known by the Name of God's *Forbearance and long Suffering*, Exod. 34. 6. Psal. 86. 15. Which is the divine Goodness, whereby he shews himself backward to use Severity, and is wont to deferr the punishing of Sinners, notwithstanding their heinous Provocations. And this he doth, that they may be invited to repent of their Sins, and to turn unto him.

Of this there are several notable Instances in the sacred Writings; the old World had the space of a hundred and twenty Years granted them to repent in, *Gen.* 6. 3. So long the Ark was building, so long God was denouncing the Destruction by the Deluge, before he sent it upon them. And even then they were not destroy'd till the Degeneracy became universal, *till all Flesh had corrupted its ways.* Of this St. *Peter* speaks, *The long-suffering of God waited in the days of* Noah, 1 *Pet.* 3. 20. *i. e.* God who is long-suffering, did not cut them off as soon as they apostatized from him, but a long time expected their Repentance and Reformation, and denied them not the Presence and Example of holy *Noah*, that preacher of Righteousness, to reduce and reclaim them. I pass to the next Generations after the Flood: Though they had forgot the wonderful Works of the Almighty, and as their Companies and Cities increased, so they grew more rebellious against God, and more extravagant in their Manners, yet God did not suddenly punish the Contempt of his Mercy and Grace. And when a crew of bold and daring Sinners undertook to build a City and a Tower whose top should reach unto Heaven, when they presumed to confront Omnipotency it self, and to scale the Throne of God; observe his *long-suffering* towards them, which is denoted to us in those Words, in *Gen.* 11. 5. *The Lord came down to see the City and the Tower which the Children of Men built.* And again, *ver.* 7. *Go to, let us go down, and there confound their Language.* The purport of which Phrase is this, That God was *not Rash* in his determination of Ruin to those bold Offenders, but was pleased as it were to *deliberate*, and *take time.* It is said, after the manner of Men, that *he went down to see* what they did, to signify that he did not bring a sudden Destruction upon them. Accordingly, some Authors tell us, that *Nimrod* and his Confederates spent forty Years in building, before the Judgment of confounded Languages dissolved their Work, and dispersed them. I might instance likewise in the Cities of *Sodom* and *Gomorrah:* they were not presently cut off, but had many and frequent Overtures of Mercy, occasion'd by *Lot*'s abode among them, and the Angel's coming to their Cities.

The People of the *Jews*, from first to last, are a signal Proof of what I am now speaking of; that is, They are remarkable Examples of divine Forbearance. *About the time of forty Years God suffered their manners in the Wilderness*, Acts 13. 18. Some think the *Greek* Word here used signifies to *suffer as a Nurse*, and accordingly God suffered the *Israelites* as a tender Nurse beareth with her Child: she winks at its Stubbornness, and passes by its Frowardness, and with Love and Pity complies with its Follies and Infirmities. In a resembling sort the great God of Heaven, who was continually provoked by the Incredulous and Unthankful, the Disobedient and Refractary *Israelites*, and saw his Mercies slighted and disregarded by them, yet deigned still to hold Correspondence with them, and to bear with their Miscarriages and evil Deportment. Though they *were a stubborn and rebellious Generation, and set not their Heart aright, yet he being full of Compassion forgave their Iniquity, and destroyed them not: yea, many a time turned he his Anger away, and did not stir up all his Wrath*, Psal. 78. 38. And how he bore with this Vineyard when 'twas planted in the Land of *Canaan*, we read in *Isai.* 5. 2. *He fenced it, and gather'd out the Stones thereof, and planted it with the choicest Vine, and built a Tower in the midst of it, and also made a Wine-press therein: and he looked* (a long time expected) *that it should bring forth Grapes.* And, as 'tis said in another place, *he spread out his Hands all the Day to a rebellious People*, Isai. 65. 2. Yea, even after the Coming of the *Messias* he forbore to cut them off, he still patiently expected their Conversion, as we learn from that Parable, *Mat.* 22. 3, &c. *He sent forth his Servants to call them that were bidden*, and *again he sent forth other Servants*, &c. And concerning the Sinners of the *last Days*, St. *Peter*

Peter declares, That *God is long-suffering towards them, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to Repentance*, 2 Pet. 3. 9. And thence we are told by the same Apostle, that *the long-suffering of our Lord is Salvation*, i. e it is in order to Men's Repentance, *and consequently their Salvation*, 2 Pet. 3. 15. Thus God is not easily provoked, thus he is slow to Anger: out of singular Mercy he is pleased to suspend the execution of his Wrath, and to suffer Offenders to go unpunished. And as for his Threatnings of Judgment, he shews his Clemency and Mercy even in them, for he threatens Punishment that we may prevent it.

Thus God's *Goodness* is his *Forbearing* and *Long-suffering*, his *Love*, his *Free Grace*, his *Forgiving of Sin*, and *Releasing the Punishment*, his *Pity*, *Compassion* and *Mercy* to the Distressed, with an *actual delivering* them from Evil, and *blessing* them with all Good. These are all expressed to us in such Texts of Scripture as these, *Exod.* 34. 6, 7. (where are five Words or Epithets to set forth this Attribute) *The Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in Goodness, keeping Mercy for thousands, forgiving Iniquity, Transgression and Sin.* Neh. 9. 17. *A God ready to pardon, gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness.* Psal. 86. 5. *Thou Lord art good and ready to forgive, and plenteous in Mercy.* Psal. 103. 9, 10, 11. *He will not always chide, neither will he keep his anger for ever. He hath not dealt with us after our Sins, nor rewarded us according to our Iniquities. For as the Heaven is high above the Earth, so great is his Mercy towards them that fear him.*

Secondly, Having given you an account of the Nature and Quality of God's *Goodness* or *Mercifulness*, I will specify the different Kinds of it. This divine Goodness is either *General* or *Special*. The first, is that Goodness of God which is extended to both Good and Bad, to the Righteous and Unrighteous. *The Lord is good to all*, saith the Psalmist, *Psal.* 145. 9. even the worst of Men partake of his Mercy and Benignity. Yea, Brutes, as well as Men, share in this common and catholick Goodness, according to that of the Psalmist, *Thou preservest Man and Beast*, Psal. 36. 6. But it is his kindness to the former that I shall here discourse of. Of this *universal Bounty* of God there are such Instances as these, 1. The making of Man, and of the whole World for his Use and Benefit. Though God was eternally happy in himself, and the fruition of his blessed Nature, yet being moved by his essential Goodness and Benevolence, he decreed from Eternity to create such Beings as should be capable of partaking of the Effects of his Goodness; and particularly, from that infinite Source of Liberality and redundant Grace, which his Nature abounded with, he produced Mankind. 2 He made them after his *own Image*, the consummate Idea of all Righteousness and Holiness. All Souls, as considered in their first Representative, bore upon them this divine and heavenly Impress, and thereby were Partakers of the divine Nature it self. This certainly was an eminent Instance of the Catholick and Extensive Goodness of the supreme Being. 3. God was gracious to Man though he lost his Image, and became obnoxious to the divine Vengeance. Annihilation at least may justly be the Penalty of Sin, for God may take away the Sinner's Life, and put a Period to his Existence, because he abuses them. Thus an endless Privation of Being and all Mercies is the Sinner's due. But lo! an early Example of Mercy in God; almost (if I may so say) to the breaking of his Word, *In the Day that thou eatest thou shalt surely die.* Man did not wholly die: through the divine Clemency and Benignity he was in part spared. 4. The preserving of the World, and upholding all things in the same Station that they were created in, is another wonderful Effect of God's Goodness. If he should but for one moment withdraw his Hand, and cease to sustain this vast Fabrick, it would immediately sink into Confusion, into its first Chaos; yea, into nothing. So that we are continually beholding to the divine Manutenency for the duration of the World, and much more for the kind and fatherly Government of it. He that from the mere emanation of his Love gave us our Being, doth constantly give proof of the same divine Principle, in taking care of us, and not leaving us to our selves. 5. In bestowing Favours on us every moment of our Lives. And these are either *Bodily* or *Spiritual*.

Of the first sort are those that appertain to our outward and temporal State in this World. *He maketh his Sun to shine on the Evil and on the Good, and sendeth Rain on the Just and the Unjust*, Mat. 5 45. Such Mercies and Benefits as these are promiscuously conferr'd by him on the whole Race of Mankind: even his worst Servants have some Wages. The Apostle observes, That even when *he suffered Men to walk*

walk after their own ways, he left not himself without witness, in that he did good, and gave them Rain from Heaven, and fruitful Seasons, filling their Hearts with food and gladness, Acts 14. 16, 17. He left them not without sufficient Testimonies of his general Goodness and Philanthropy, in that he bestow'd these earthly Blessings upon them. Yea, that is true which *Seneca* saith, * There is no Man so wretched, so abandoned, none of so hard a Fate, and as 'twere born to Punishment, but he hath some experience and feeling of the divine Munificence. Here I might particularly recount those temporal Blessings and Enjoyments which God indulges in common to the generality of the Sons of Men. It was this divine Bounty that provided for us Parents, and Friends, and kind Helpers, to support and provide for the Weaknesses of our helpless Infancy. It was this that supplied us with Conveniences proper to our Childhood. It is the same indulgent Hand that furnishes us with Provisions suitable to our riper Years. And truly this we cannot but take notice of, That God is continually vouchsafing to us, such Mercies and Benefits as are most agreeable to our particular successive States and Conditions in the World. We are enrich'd with the whole Store and Treasure of corporeal Blessings, the Refreshments of Sleep, the Recruits of Food and Drink, the Defence of Rayment, the Ease of Health, Liberty, and Peace. So bountiful is the heavenly Donour, that he affords us Plenty, as well as Sufficiency; he gives us a Supply of those things which are not only for Necessity but Delight. There is no end of reckoning up the Particulars in this kind. We may say here, as the Son of *Sirach* in the like Case, *When a Man hath done then he begins*; when he hath rehearsed a great number of these common Blessings, there are still many behind that are not named: yea moreover, there are many unknown Mercies, (as Deliverances from those Dangers which we took no notice of, and the like) which we have been Sharers in. There are many unseen Evils which we have escaped, and many undiscern'd Kindnesses which are daily heap'd upon us: for such is our Ignorance or our Inadvertency, that we oftentimes perceive not what Perils we are in, or what Favours we are in possession of Thus that of the Psalmist is made good, that *the Lord daily loadeth us*, Psal. 68. 19. Our Translators add, *with Benefits*, tho' that be not in the Text. But this I conceive is that which the Holy Ghost would have us take notice of in this place, that God is so Gracious as to *accummulate* Mercies upon us, and by the continual accession and multiplying of his Favours to lay *a load* as 'twere upon us, a very light and pleasant Load.

* *Nullus tam miser, tam neglectus, tam duro fato & in penam genitus, qui non Deorum munificentiam sentiat.* De Benef. l. 4.

The other sort of general Mercies freely collated on us by our heavenly Benefactor, are those that are *Spiritual*, those that concern our Souls. All the Children of Men are sharers in these. They all have some Experience of the Goodness of God as it hath respect to their better Part. They cannot deny that he deals with them with much Kindness and Compassion, they must needs acknowledge that he waves the Rigour of his Justice, and though they daily forfeit all their Mercies by their continuing in their Sins, yet he takes not the advantage of them: he doth not presently reject them for their first refusal of Grace: he still makes farther Offers of Kindness to them, and sollicites them to accept of it. None are destitute of the Means of Life and Happiness. By all the Methods and Ways his Wisdom suggests, and Man's Nature is capable of, he invites and allures them to repent and be saved. And as for his Precepts, they are not grievous, but easy. One of the ancient Lawgivers among the *Athenians* was said to write his Laws in Blood, because they were cruel and harsh, and every little Crime was made a capital One. But we have no such thing under the Gospel; there is the greatest Equity and Favour imaginable, and God will condemn none for what they could not help. Thus God is *Good* to all, his Mercy is Universal, *it is over all his Works*, as the Psalmist speaks, *Psal.* 145. 9. it extends it self to all his Creatures, to the worst and unworthiest of Men, and that both as to their Bodies and Souls.

But, as there is the *General*, so there is the *Special Goodness* of God, his Grace and Favour, which he vouchsafes to *some* only. As there is a common and catholick Love which God extends to all Mankind, a Love of *Benevolence*, (as some have styled it) which he shews to all his Creatures without distinction, so there is a Love of *Complacency*, (as 'tis call'd) wherewith he loves his Elect, and none else: that particular Love which he bears to his own People, and to no other in the World besides. For as the chosen Nation of the *Jews* was styled God's *peculiar People*, Deut. 14. 2. and *his peculiar Treasure*, Exod. 19. 5. Psal. 135. 4. or *his Property*, (for the Word *Segullah*,

lab, which is used in these places, signifies ones *own proper Goods*, common to none else, but special and singular, and kept for our selves and our own use. And it is observable, that *Segullah* is the Name of the fifth *Predicable*, viz. *Proprium*, among the *Hebrew Logicians*,) so with reference to that ancient Denomination, there is a People, chosen out of *Jews* and *Gentiles*, that is called in the *New Testament*, God's *peculiar People*, Tit. 2. 14. 1 Pet. 2. 9. *viz.* Such as are *called out of Darkness into God's marvellous Light*, as St. *Peter* there explains it. These are the more especial Objects of the divine Love and Favour, for God who *is the Saviour of all Men*, is *especially* so *of them that believe*, 1 Tim. 4. 10. He saves all Men from many Evils, and bestows many good Things upon them, but he hath a more especial regard to Believers, both as to temporal and bodily things, and as to those that are spiritual and eternal. He doth *himself* as he enjoyns us to do, *i. e. He doth good unto all Men, but especially to the houshold of Faith.* He is benign and merciful to every one of his Creatures, but he hath a singular and particular Regard to those who are become new Creatures, and are his adopted Children. *Truly God is good to* Israel, *to such as are of a clean Heart*, saith the inspir'd King, *Psal.* 73. 1. With admiration the same holy Penman cries out, *How great is thy Goodness which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee!* Psal. 31 19.

This peculiar and special Goodness of God manifests it self in such Instances as these, 1. In the *eternal Election* to Grace and Glory. Therefore they are called, * *the Vessels of Mercy*, predestined and foreappointed by the good pleasure of God, to be partakers of Life and Happiness. And when they are call'd the *Vessels of Mercy*, it is implied that they were before *miserable*; else they would not have been the Objects of *Mercy*. In *Eph.* 1. 4. 'tis said, they *were chosen that they might be holy and unblameable*: therefore we rationally gather thence that God, in his Decree, look'd upon them as *unholy*, that is, as fallen, and in a State of unhappiness. 2. In the actual *Redemption* wrought by Christ Jesus, through the Merit of his Sufferings. For though I grant that the Vertues of the Death of Christ reaches in some measure to all Mankind, so far as it is of sufficient worth and value to save all Persons, yet the particular and efficacious Application of it, extends to the Elect only, as I have prov'd in another place. 3. The *Regeneration* and *Sanctification* which are wrought by the Holy Spirit are proper only to these; though there are common Gifts and Virtues which are found even in other Men. By this we may judge of what is pronounced by a † late Writer, that those Terms, [*Elect*, *Regenerate*, *born of God*] are applied promiscuously to all Christians in Scripture. 4. *Justification* by Christ's Blood, and a plenary Remission of Sin are the particular Donatives granted to those Persons; yea, although they have been the most heinous and scandalous Offenders, as *David* an Adulterer and Murderer, *Manasses* an Idolater and Sorcerer, *Zacheus* and *Matthew* noted Publicans, *Mary Magdalen* an infamous Prostitute, *Paul* a Persecutor and Blasphemer. 'Tis observ'd, that Men make choice of those Persons to be their *Friends*, who they know * are not wont to object their past Failings to them, or to remember the ill Deeds they have formerly been guilty of. Such a *Friend* is God: when his Servants have most unworthily deserted him, and slighted his Love and Kindness to them, he hath been willing to take them into Friendship again, through his infinite Compassion in the Blood of Jesus, and he embraces them with a singular Love and Favour, such as he vouchsafes to none in the World besides. 5. Another peculiar Act of Mercy is *Adoption*, whereby they become the Children of God, and have a certain Title to the Inheritance, besides the paternal Care, Affection and Love which they are at present assured of. *Like as a Father pitieth his Children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him*, Psal. 103. 13. Moreover there are such unparallell'd and singular Acts of Goodness towards them as these, They have a Blessing on whatever they have, and though they are brought into Streights and Troubles, yet then they are upheld, supported, assisted, chear'd, and are fill'd with Serenity, Peace and Joy, for this is one of the experienced Paradoxes in Christianity, that God's Love is *chiefly* discover'd to his Servants in the times of Difficulty and Calamity. *Now* this excellent Attribute displays it self in a more illustrious manner than ever towards them. All their Wants and Distresses tend to their real Profit and Advantage. Likewise their Prayers are always heard, and answered by God: *he gives them their Hearts desire, and doth not withhold the Request of their Lips.* Lastly, Their weak but sincere Endeavours of Piety, together with their short and momentary Afflictions and Pressures in this Life, are recompensed with everlasting and endless

* *Rom.* 9. 23.

† Clark's 3 *Practical Essays.*

* Οἱ μὴ ὀνειδιεῖν, ὅτι μὴ μνησικακοῦσι. Aristot. Rhet.

Endless Glory in the Life to come. Of this discrimating Goodness the Apostle speaks, when he tells the Converted *Ephesians* that *God, who is rich in Mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved them, even when they were dead in Sins, had quickned them together with Christ, and had raised them up together, and made them sit together in Heavenly places in Christ Jesus*, Eph. 2. 4, 5, 6. His distinguishing Mercy is seen in providing for them after this Life is ended. As their Everlasting Happiness in Heaven, was the matter of his kind decree from all Eternity, so in due time he actually bestows it on them, and Christ ascended on purpose to prepare that place of Blessedness for them. These are some of the chief Instances and Proofs of the *Special Goodness* of God: I say these are *some*, for I do not undertake to enumerate all, that being too great a Task at present.

Thirdly, the *Reasons* and *Grounds* of this Attribute are to be considered. Now, this (as well as the rest before spoken of) is founded on the *Nature* of God. To be Good and Gracious is one of the greatest Excellencies that an Intellectual Being is capable of, and therefore we cannot but Attribute it to *God*, and thence he hath his * *Name* with us. He must needs be Compassionate, Merciful and Loving, he must needs be so in Himself: and from that Original Sweetness and Essential Bonity of his Nature, he communicates of his Goodness to his Creatures. This is one of the prime Properties of the Deity; and those other Excellencies of *Wisdom* and *Power* before mentioned, are Attendants on this, for Infinite *Wisdom* is serviceable to direct it, and Infinite *Power* is useful to *execute* it, and bring it into Act in the World. These other Attributes receive their Worth and Excellency from *Goodness* and from *Justice*, (of which I shall speak next,) yea they are no farther Good and Excellent, than as they participate of, and are joyned with these: as we see in Mankind, Wisdom abstracted from Goodness and Justice is Craft: and Power devoid of these is Tyranny. Hence it appears that *Goodness* or *Benignity* is the Rule and Measure of those other Attributes, and it gives an Excellency and Value to them.

* God *or* Got *from the Teutonick word* Got, *i. e.* Good.

This is so clear a Truth, that the Natural Reason of the *Pagan* World informed them of it: all the Gentiles had a Notion of this, that a Deity is a Merciful, Kind and Benign Being, and thence they Sacrificed to it, and did all other Acts of Worship, that they might conciliate its Good will and Favour. The Divine Being, as the Great Philosopher represents him, † is not Envious, hath nothing of Ill will, Grudging or Malice in him, but is of a Sweet, Loving and Obliging Nature. Thence *Tully* saith rightly of *Epicurus*, that ‖ he struck at the very Root of all Religion, and subverted the very Nature of a Deity, by holding that God is not Helpfull and Beneficial to us, that he is not Good and Gracious to Mankind.

† Ὅυτε τὸ θεῖον φθονερὸν ἐνδέχεται εἶναι. *Aristot. Metaphys. l. 1. c. 2.*

‖ *Epicurus ex animis hominum extraxit radicitus Religionem, cùm Diis immortalibus & opem & gratiam sustulit.* De Nat. Deor.

Again, we may inferr the universal Goodness of God to the whole stock of Mankind, from his first Creating of them: for we have reason to believe that the same Essential Goodness of the Divinity, which gave them their Being, still prompts him to continue it to them, unless they wilfully forfeit it.

Likewise, we may argue the Divine Philanthropy, from what we feel in our selves, and what we see in others. We find in our breasts a desire and readiness of doing Good and of being Beneficial, which is a certain proof that God much more delights to do and to be so: for there is no Excellency but what is derived to us from God. When we discern any Mercifulness and Beneficence in others, we may rationally gather that these are in a Transcendent manner in God, because he is the Cause and Source of all Good, and consequently of these Eminent Acts of it.

And then as to the *Special* Goodness of God, the Grounds of it are plain. He is singularly good to his chosen Servants, because he being All-Good, and therefore loving Himself and his Divine Perfections, he must needs love his own Image, which is more peculiarly formed in these Persons: because likewise for their sake chiefly the World was made, because their Happiness (next to his Glory) was especially designed by him, because the Son of his Love *Christ Jesus* the Blessed undertook the accomplishment of it in a singular manner. Besides, this *Singular* Favour which God shews to *some* can't be thought unreasonable, we think it not so to have our Favourites, some select Persons, that we bestow peculiar Love upon.

upon. There have been eminent Examples of this Friendship and Love, which have been exceedingly commended and celebrated in the Writings of the Ancients, and are applauded at this day. And shall we not allow the Supreme Infinite Being, who is Love it self, to chuse out his more especial Friends to whom he may be pleased to bestow some more peculiar demonstrations of his Kindness? This must be of very great force, with those who always tell us that we may know what is laudable in the Deity, by our consulting Mankind, and seeing what is praise worthy in our selves. But it will be said, these Persons who had a particular love and regard to some, yet hated not the rest. No, more doth the Sovereign Being, he is Good to all, he hates none as they are his Creatures, and the workmanship of his Hand, but only as they have revolted from him, and are Sinners: that is, he hates none but because they deserve it; and no Man can rationally except against that. It is clear then that if amongst Men, Love and Friendship are fixed on *some select Persons*, and this is not blameable in them, then there is no reason why we should blame it in God, and why we should think it strange that his peculiar Love is limited to certain Persons, especially when we consider that his Love to such is thereby commended and inhansed. Thus we see on what Foundations the *General* and *Special* Goodness of God are erected, and why he is styled *the Father of Mercies*, 2 Cor. 1. 2. and is said to be *Rich in Mercy*, as you heard before.

Fourthly, I proceed to the *Practical Result* of all. Learn we our duty in these following particulars.

1. Let us rightly apprehend concerning God, and his Excellent Nature. Some melancholick and disturbed Minds frame a very disagreeable Idea of Him, and think he wholly delights in the destruction and ruine of his Creatures. They are always complaining against him; among all his Glorious Attributes, they cannot espie this of *Mercy*; they will not take notice of any Exertments of it; they are backward to acknowledge any discoveries of so Divine an Excellency. In short, these dismal Souls imagine God to be like themselves, and so represent him unto others. They have black and discomposed Thoughts, and accordingly they conceive of God as some Frightful and Dismal Being. But let us form other conceptions concerning Him, even that lovely Character of him, which the Holy Scriptures offer to us. We are thence acquainted that our very Existence in the World is of Mercy, and that our well-being is much more so. What we have, Enjoy, or Hope for, is from the same Source, even when God takes from us some of our Enjoyments and Comforts, yet he leaves us such a portion of them, that we may still pronounce him to be a Gracious Benefactor. Our lives do daily proclaim the reality of the Divine Goodness, because though we daily offend the Majesty of Heaven, yet our offences do not prove our Ruin and Destruction. An * Ancient Historian tells us, among the *Persians* no Man could be punished for one fault alone: if it did not appear that he was guilty of more than one, he escaped. But how *many* repeated Faults and Crimes do we stand guilty of before God, and yet are not condemned and punished? Men forget God and their Duty, provoke him every Minute by their wilfull miscarriages, continually affront him and defy him, and thereby deserve the greatest Plagues and Curses: yet God is infinitely Patient, and forbears to inflict these upon them. What a Prodigy of Kindness and Mercy is here shewed? There is no Human Compassion and Forbearance in the World, that can vie with this Divine Indulgence. This shews how Essential this Attribute is to God: this may persuade us to rectify our Apprehensions concerning him. The Name of the Angel of the Bottomless pit is *Abaddon*, or *Apollyon*, which is the same, and signifies a *Destroyer*, for his great and only business is to procure the Destruction and Damnation of Men. But *God* is a Lover of Souls, and delights not in the Death and Ruin of Sinners, but earnestly beseeches them to turn from their Evil ways, and to live, and be Happy. Here is the Mercy, Compassion and Beneficence of the Supreme Lord of Heaven and Earth. *Goodness* is his choice Attribute, without which none of the others, whether they belong to the Intellectual or Operative Power, are wont to be executed.

* *Herodot.* l. 1. c. 137.

2. This indearing Attribute calls for our *Thankfulness*; which comprehends in it these two things, 1. a due Valuing, 2. a hearty Acknowledgment of the Goodness of God. First, we are engaged to set a high value on this Divine Property, and that both as by it are conferred upon us Mercies which have relation to our Bodies and to our Souls. The former of these deservedly require a grateful Estimation: our

our Outward and Temporal Enjoyments are worthy to be prized. Yea, the least of them deserve our Praises, according to that Proverbial saying among the *Jews*, * *Blessed be the Lord and Giver of this little Particle*, this small pittance of Earthly Good things. But blessed be God we can look no where but there are Great and Vast doles of *this* sort of Benefits vouchsafed to Mankind. *God hath given us Richly*, (plentifully, abundantly) *all things to Enjoy*, 1 Tim. 6. 17.

† *Benedictus sit Dominus hujus particulæ.* Beracoth.

I will at present single out one of them, and that is *Health*, what a valuable Blessing is this! If I should rifle the universal Inventory of Corporeal Benefits, this must be given as the Summ Total of them all. This is a most Pregnant and Comprehensive favour, this is that which sweetens all our other Enjoyments, this is that which renders us capable of using and improving them all. Who sees not that all a Man's Riches and Revenues, all his Wealth and Possessions are *useless*, yea *troublesome* without this? This therefore was one of those Three things, which *Pythagoras* was wont to implore so Zealously: and hence it was usual among the *Gentiles* in the front of their Epistles to prefix ὑγαίνειν, as the Summ of all their Wishes for their Friends. Nay, let it not pass any longer for a *Pagan* Complement, since I find it adopted into Christianity. *I wish above all things*, saith St. *John*, *That thou mayst be in Health*, 3 *Epist.* John v. 2. *Health* is the Temperate Zone, the habitable and delightful part of a Man's Life, yea it is truly and properly † *Living*. So that I may without an Hyperbole say that of *Health*, which is spoken of *Life* it self, *Skin for Skin, and all that a Man hath will be give for* the fruition of it. If you would truly prize this Blessing, and esteem it according to its worth, then go a while and visit the Sick and Diseased; take a view of their forlorn postures, listen to their Complaints, their horrid Sighs and Groans, observe their ghastly Looks, consider their Pain and Torture, and then come and tell me what you think of this Great Mercy, and how highly it deserves to be rated. Then those of you who are in Health, will extoll God's Goodness towards you, for this unspeakable favour: then you will confess that this Blessing is a very weighty and complicate one. Why then are you not deeply sensible of this Favour *now*? Must you needs repair to Hospitals, or lie under languishes of Body your selves, that you may learn to prize Health? O *now*, whilst you are in the actual possession of this Mercy, value and esteem it. Think what a precious Blessing it is to be free from Pain and Sickness, to live in Health, and to enjoy a happy plight of Body.

* *Non est vivere, sed valere Vita.* Martial. Epigr. l. 6. Epig. 69.

I know the Commonness of this Benefit causes most persons to undervalue it. For so it is, the most valuable things become vile, because they are not Rare and Scarce. The advantage which we have from the most Glorious *Luminary* of Heaven, is disesteemed because we every day enjoy it. The blessing of *Food* is not sufficiently valued because it is that which we daily partake of. Thus the *Commonness* of a benefit, which really inhanses it, makes us insensible of the Greatness of it. But this is a notorious weakness and depravity in Mens Judgments, and ought to be severely corrected. If we proceed on Rational grounds, we cannot but conclude it absurd to slight the Divine blessings merely because they are bestowed with a plenteous hand, and that every day. Certainly this very thing ought to make us *the more* apprehensive of the Heavenly Gift, and *more* thankfull for it. The constant and undisturbed fruition of these Favours should create in us a higher relish of them. In fine, let us remember that the Commonest of our outward Mercies are the greatest, and consequently in themselves the more Precious: therefore let us have an estimate of them accordingly, and never be of the number of those Vain and Inconsiderate people who know not how to prize a Mercy, till it grows scarce, yea till it be quite taken from them.

I might instance next in the blessing of *Peace*, the very Name of it is Sweet, the Thing it self much more so. How pleasant and melodious is the Sound of it, and with how great a Ravishment doth it enter our Ears, and lodg it self in our Hearts, and there create on a sudden a new kind of Life, Vigour and Activity? The Alarms and horrid Affrightments of War, are a Foil to this Excellent Blessing, and serve to set it off the more advantageously. *Peace* brings with her Letters of Commendation from those others of *Mart*. And if she were always with us, and dwelt in our Nation without any flitting, if she were not sometimes frighted away by the Noise of Drums and Trumpets, the clashing of Swords, and the glittering of Armour, alas she would, like that Glorious body the Sun, be useful indeed and Beneficial, but not be gazed at and admired, because of its Commonness,

monness, and daily commerce with us. It pleaseth therefore the great and wise Providence, to banish and proscribe Peace for some time, that it may be entertain'd more courteously for the future, that it may be more entirely loved and embraced, and that the Absence of it may produce in us a greater desire and longing after it, and (which is the main) a better Improvement of its Society upon its Return to us again.

Secondly, The Thankfulness which is requir'd of us for these Blessings, consists in a hearty and chearful Acknowledgment of the Goodness and Bounty of God, in a joyful praising and celebrating the divine Philanthropy. *I will praise thee, O Lord my God, with my whole Heart, and I will glorify thy Name for evermore, for great is thy Mercy toward me*, saith the Psalmist, *Psal.* 86. 12. *O give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good, for his Mercy endureth for ever*, Psal. 107. 1. and then afterwards those Words, *O that Men would praise the Lord for his Goodness!* are often repeated. The whole 103d Psalm is a devout Exemplification of this. So the 136th Psalm is one entire Thanksgiving to God for the various Dispensations of his Kindness in the Works of his Creation and Providence. The 145th Psalm is an admirable Descant on the divine Benignity, and a pious extolling of it; that pathetick Clause being all along inserted, *His Mercy endureth for ever.* To promote and advance this Thankfulness for the continual Mercies of our Lives, we ought to lodge them safe in our Memories, and in order to that, to keep a Register of them, especially of those particular ones which we (above some others) have received from the divine Bounty. Let us record the several Instances of the heavenly Goodness towards us, in the sundry Changes of our Lives. And let us often consult this Catalogue, and give God the praise and glory of his Mercy. How manifold Experiments have we hourly of the fatherly Kindness of the loving Parent of the World? Where can we cast our Eyes, but we may find abundant Topicks to present us with Arguments to enforce our Thankfulness? Wherefore let us live in a grateful Sense of God's Munificence toward us, and let us express it by our Eucharistick Rehearsals of the several Branches of it.

But there are Mercies of another and higher Nature (as I have before specified,) spiritual Blessings and such as concern our everlasting State: these do more signally require our *Thankfulness*, which (as hath been said already) consists in our high Valuation of these divine Favours, and in a due praising of God for them. We are to magnify the *divine Goodness* for those more signal Emanations, Results and Effects of it; we are to laud and bless the divine Being, that when we lay in Darkness and in the shadow of Death, he said *unto us, live*, and receive the Benefits of my everlasting Love toward you, in ordaining a *Saviour* to deliver you from Death and Hell. Infinite Thanks are due to him for all the Conveyances of Life and Grace to us, that we are initiated and baptized into the *Faith* of the Holy Prophets and Apostles, of Confessors and Martyrs; that we know the *Truth*, and that all the Aids and Helps, all the Opportunities and Means which are in order to the practice of our *Duty* are vouchsafed to us; that God hath reveal'd to us the sole Author of Happiness, and the true and only Source of divine Mercy. He *hath not dealt so with every Nation*, and as for the discoveries of this Mystery, *they have not known them.* It is true, the *Pagan* World had a Notion of God's being *Merciful*, and they have frequently expressed the Sense of it; but none of them have had a true and right Conception of it. For there is no Mercy but through *Christ*; it is founded only in his Undertakings: which is demonstrated from this, that *Christ* came and suffer'd, and died to *reconcile* us to God the Father. Therefore unless *Christ* had expiated our Sins, and merited for us by his Death, we could have found no *Mercy* with the incens'd Majesty of Heaven. The sum then of all our spiritual Mercies is the *Love* of God to us in *Christ Jesus.* This justly challenges our thankful Esteem, this powerfully commands our Praises.

The Apostle would have us *comprehend* (as far as 'tis possible) *the breadth, and length, and depth, and heighth* of this transcendent Blessing, *Eph.* 3. 18. It is observable, that the Extent of God's Love and Grace towards us, through his Son Christ Jesus, is expressed here by those *Dimensions* that are made use of for the measuring of Bodies. But yet, whereas there are three Dimensions in natural Bodies, the Apostle adds a fourth when he undertakes to display the *divine Love.* There is not only *Breadth* without Lines, *Length* without Points, *Depth* without Bottom, but *Heighth* without Surface. There is first the *Latitude* of this astonishing Love, *i. e.* Its extending it self to all degrees of Mankind, to all sorts and ranks of Men. It spreads it

it self wide, and is stretched out to a boundless Circumference. There is, secondly, Its immense *Longitude*, taking in all the habitable Regions of the World, reaching from one end of the Earth to the other; yea, to all Times as well as Places, to all the Ages and Generations of Mankind in a continued series; yea, from Eternity to Eternity. There is, thirdly, Its *Profundity*, letting it self down to the lowest Abyss of Sin and Misery, to bring Men thence, and effectually to free them from both. And besides, This expresses the profound *Mystery*, the unsearchable Depth of this divine *Love* reveal'd unto us in the Gospel. Fourthly, There is its *Altitude*, its rearing it self up to the highest Heavens, the place where this glorious Attribute shall discover it self most to eternal Ages. And this Expression also denotes, how far this divine Excellency is exalted above our Thoughts and Conceptions, *it passeth Knowledge*, as the Apostle immediately adds. These are the perfect *Dimensions* of the *Love* of Christ to Sinners: and shall we not with thankful Hearts regard, esteem and magnify so compleat, so extensive a Love?

That we may duly resent this unspeakable Boon, and extoll the Name of God for it, let us often revolve the *Freeness* of it. God's Love in sending his Son to redeem us was wholly without any Worth in us; yea, it was before we could desire or wish for it; yea, it was when we were professed *Enemies* to him, and therefore on that account might justly have been left to perish in our Sins. Wherefore it is evident, that nothing could move him to contrive our Good but his free and unmerited Grace. So true is that of the blessed Apostle, *According to his Mercy he hath saved us*, Tit. 3. 5. And again, *Eph.* 2. 8. *By Grace ye are saved*, by the mere Bounty of Heaven we are made partakers of this matchless Benefit. And that it was a free and arbitrary Act of the most High is evident from the singularity of it. Christ * *took not on him the Nature of Angels*, as the Apostle reminds us, he died not to redeem the apostate Spirits that voluntarily forsook their first Habitation. It was for *Us* only that he was pleased to give his own Son. This ought to inhanse our Thankfulness for this heavenly and divine Gift: for upon these and many other accounts we may conclude, that the greatest Blessing that could be conferr'd upon us, was *Jesus Christ* the Redeemer, and consequently we are to value it above all other Mercies whatsoever. If it be part of *Wisdom* (as certainly it is) to esteem things according to their intrinsick and real Worth, then we cannot shew our selves more *wise*, (as well as grateful) than by setting the greatest Value on these Blessings which are in themselves so excellent and worthy. We may in a due proportion and measure prize the things that appertain to our Bodies, (as was said under the last particular) for even they are the Gift of God: but these other Gifts which relate to our everlasting Happiness, are much more excellent in their own Nature, and therefore deserve our highest Esteem and Regard. And with these let us joyn Praises and Thanksgivings, let us utter the Memory of God's great Goodness toward us. The Redemption by *Christ Jesus* will be the happy Subject of our everlasting *Anthems* and *Hallelujahs*, in the Regions of the Blessed: let us now begin that great Work, and magnify the divine Goodness, for so peculiar a Pledge and Token of his Good-will, Compassion, and Love to us.

* *Heb.* 2. 10.

3. This amiable Attribute of God should excite our Love to him. *I love the Lord*, saith the Psalmist, *because he hath heard my Voice, because he hath inclined his Ear unto me*, Psal. 116. 1, 2. *i. e.* he hath *mercifully helped* and *delivered me*, as you find it explain'd in the 6th and 8th ver. How inflamed should this divine Passion be, when we recount those various Methods of God's Love which have been before rehearsed, when we call to mind that God is more ready to do us good than we are to seek to him for it? Malefactors of old ran to the Altar, and there secured themselves: *We* have at this Day an Altar, we have a Sanctuary, a place of Refuge to fly to, we have a *Mercy-seat* to repair to, and there, yea there only we can be safe, for Sinners have no Plea but *Mercy*. It is certain that we can plead no Merit or any thing that is like it. All we have or hope for is from the unbounded Grace and Goodness of God. If he were not infinitely Merciful, we were all of us irrecoverably Miserable. Therefore he saith, *I will not contend for ever, neither will I be always wroth: for the Spirit should fail before me, and the Souls which I have made*, Isai. 57. 16. The *Jews* have this Saying, The Angel *Michael*, who is the Messenger of Wrath, flies with one Wing; but *Gabriel*, the Minister and Dispenser of Mercy, flies with two. We have found the reality of this, we have experimentally known that the Messengers of Anger are slow, but those of Kindness and Love make hast

to us, and even surprize us with their joyful Tydings. And shall we not entirely *Love* the Author of them? What can we do less? We read that the penitent *Mary*, who had her manifold Sins forgiven her by our blessed Lord, *loved much*, Luke 7. 47. And shall we be backward to do so, when not only the free Pardon of our Sins, but all other Blessings (as well Temporal as Spiritual) are granted to us? What can command this Affection if Goodness and Love cannot?

4. Imitate this lovely Excellency of God: strive to resemble him in his Mercifulness and Goodness, in his Long-suffering and Forbearance, in his Pity and Commiseration, in his Love and Beneficence. We are very defective in this, and even some good Men are faulty here. *Jonas* was angry with God for his thinking thoughts of Mercy to the *Ninevites*. The elder Brother shew'd himself discontented at the Reception and Entertainment of his prodigal Relation. And in other things it frequently appears, that we are backward to Acts of Benevolence and Good-will to others, and that we are too much enclined to envy their Happiness and Wellfare. Which are Indications of a very ill Disposition of Mind, and especially unbecoming those that are constant sharers in God's Bounty. For it is certain, that his readiness to do good to us, should effectually move us to do the like to our Brethren. Is God slow to Anger, and shall we be easily provoked and incensed? Doth he bear with us, and shall not we do so with our Fellow Creatures? Doth he forgive Talents, and shall we be unwilling to forgive Pence? Shall we be cruel to one another, when we our selves are so kindly used? Is God a merciful Father, and shall not we reckon it our Duty to shew our selves his Children by imitating him? Which is the meaning of our Saviour's Words, *Mat.* 5. 44. *Love your Enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, &c. that ye may be the Children of your Father which is in Heaven*, That is, that ye may resemble him as Children do their Parents. St. *Luke* represents this Exhortation thus, *Be ye Merciful as your Father is Merciful*, Luke 6. 36. and shall we obstinately refuse to obey it? The learned *Grotius* hath observed, that the *Talmudists* and *Chaldees* call'd God (as it were by his proper Name) רחם. * *Merciful*: and thence, this being common and usual in our *Saviour's* Days, he makes use of it (as he did of several other Words that were frequent among the *Jewish Masters*) and bids us be *Merciful as our Father in Heaven is Merciful*, and known by that *Name*.

And even among the *Pagans*, the most understanding Men were sensible, that Mercifulness and Benignity do in a more eminent manner make us like unto God. * *How may Men resemble God?* saith one: *by imitating* (saith he) *his saving, loving and fatherly Nature.* † *It was well said*, saith another, *that Mankind doth chiefly imitate God when they perform Acts of Goodness and Charity.* * *It is a Godlike thing to be beneficial and helpful to Men*, saith a third. And the *Roman* Orator sums up all when he saith, † *Men in nothing make a nearer approach to God than in being a help and safegard unto Men.* Therefore if we be desirous to be like God, (and it is certain there is no Desire, Ambition or Emulation so noble and glorious as this) let us be Merciful and Loving to our Brethren, and do what we can for the good of their Souls and Bodies.

But much more, when we consider for whose sake God is merciful and gracious to us, we are engaged to the Performance of this Duty. *Be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you*, Eph. 4. 32. And again, *Put on Bowels of mercies, kindness, long-suffering: forbearing one another, and forgiving one another: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye*, Col. 3. 12, 13. If we set the holy *Jesus* before us as our Pattern, we shall be soon induced to be kind and merciful. If we remember that he came to reconcile us to God, we shall not be backward to be reconciled to our Brethren, to forgive one another, and to do all Offices of Love and Kindness. For by this we resemble the divine Nature, we become like unto God.

5. And lastly, This Goodness of God should be serviceable to produce in us Repentance and Obedience. Some shamefully abuse and pervert this Doctrine of God's Mercifulness, and make it administer to carnal Security and presumptuous Liberty in sinning. Will God our Creator and Maker, say they, destroy his Creatures? Can he forget the Work of his own Hands? Yes, assuredly, if they by their Works, which are contrary to his, dishonour his Name, disgrace Religion, and pervert the Design

* Πῶς γένοιτ' ἂν ἀνθρώποις Διὶ ὅμοιοι; μιμούμενοι αὐτοῦ τὸ σωτικὸν, φιλοπτικὸν καὶ σωτηρικόν. Max. Tyr. Dissert. 6.

† Εὖ γὰρ εἴρηται καὶ τοῦτο, ἀνθρώπους μάλιστα μιμεῖσθαι θεοὺς τοὺς εὐεργετοῦντας. Strabo Geogr. l. 10.

* *Deus est mortali juvare mortalem.* Plin. Nat. Hist. l. 11. c. 7.

† *Homines ad Deos nullâ re propiùs accedere quàm salutem hominibus dando.*

Design of their Creation. Then *he that made them will not have Mercy on them, and he that formed them will shew them no favour*, Isai. 27. 11. In a * late Writer we may see what strong Deductions are made from that Proposition, *God is merciful*, and that other, *God makes no Man to damn him.* The sum of what he inferrs is, that God will punish no Man, his Mercifulness excludes Severity to any. And then how easy is the Consequence from *Impunity* to *Licentiousness?* Thus they turn the Grace of God into Wantonness; and the multitude of his Mercies causes them to multiply their Rebellions. But we must abhorr such Notions and Practices, and know what is the design and true end of the divine Forbearance and Indulgence, *viz.* Not to encourage us in our evil Courses, not to harden us in our Sins, but to soften and melt us, to win us to a thankful Compliance with the divine Will. These mild and gentle Dealings are proper to work upon the stubbornest Natures. When *David* shew'd himself favourable and kind to King *Saul*, and only cut off the lap of his Garment, when it was in his Power to deprive him of his Life, this made that wicked Prince relent. He who was otherwise hard and stubborn, when he saw how his Life was spared, † *lift up his Voice and wept.* And shall not the thoughts of God's sparing us, though we deserve a thousand Deaths, kindly work upon us, and mollify our obdurate Minds? Shall not the Consideration of the inexhaustible Goodness and Mercy of Heaven to us perswade us to forsake our Sins, and to devote our selves to the Honour of our gracious Benefactor?

* *Mr.* Blount's *Oracles of Reason.*

† 1 Sam. 24. 16.

It appears from the Writings both of the *Old* and *New Testament*, that this divine Goodness is a cogent Argument, and is made use of to prevail with Sinners to confess their Sins before God, and to be grieved for them, and to renounce them, and give themselves up to the Service of God. *Fear the Lord*, saith *Samuel*, *and serve him in truth with all your Heart: for consider how great things he hath done for you*, 1 Sam. 12. 24. *Rent your Hearts and not your Garments*, saith the Prophet *Joel*, *and turn unto the Lord your God, for he is gracious and merciful, slow to Anger, and of great Kindness*, Joel 2. 13. *There is forgiveness with him, that he may be feared*, that he may be worshiped, served and obeyed, saith the Psalmist, *Psal.* 130. 4. *Let the Wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous Man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him, and to God, for he will abundantly pardon*, Isai. 55. 7. There is a Proclamation of Pardon; you may come in, and accept of it. There is an Act of Oblivion, wherein God hath promised that he will remember your Iniquities no more: you may have the Benefit of it if you please. And this also is the grand Motive in the Gospel; *Despisest thou the Riches of his Goodness, and Forbearance, and Long-suffering, not knowing that the Goodness of God leadeth thee to Repentance?* i. e. in its own Nature and genuine use it doth so, *Rom.* 2. 4. Hence the Apostle beseeceth the Christian *Romans* by the *Mercies of God*, that they *present their Bodies* (i. e. themselves) *a living Sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God*, Rom. 12. 1. And we find in 2 *Pet.* 3. 9. that God's *Long-suffering* is grounded on this, *that he is willing that all should come to Repentance.* Think then seriously of this, and amend your Lives, and religiously improve the Mercies you have received, to God's Glory, and the Good of the World. Call to mind the particular kindnesses of Heaven: do you remember how often God hath deliver'd you from eminent Dangers, how often he hath relieved your Necessities, and how liberal he hath been in his Favours to you. And can you be so base and unworthy, so vile and ungrateful, as to disregard this Bounty, and to sin against God, notwithstanding all the manifestations of his Mercy to you? Be not so disingenuous and shameless as to act thus. Sin not against that Grace and Goodness which were design'd to reclaim and reform you. Make use of these to the Purposes of Religion and Holiness, and to excite you to make some returns of Piety and sincere Obedience. Otherwise, let me tell you, you exceedingly aggravate your Sins and your Guilt; and the *Mercy* of God, the most precious of all the divine Perfections, will soon give way to his *Justice.*

And so I pass to the next Attribute, the JUSTICE or RIGHTEOUSNESS of God; which must not be separated from his *Goodness.* Indeed we find these two divine Properties *linked together* in several places of Holy Writ. In the said Commandment God declares, that *he visits the Iniquities of the Fathers on the Children, unto the third and fourth Generation of them that hate him, and shews Mercy unto thousands of them that love him and keep his Commandments.* In that glorious Title and Character of God, proclaim'd by himself in *Exod.* 34. 6, 7. he is said not only to be *Merciful and Gracious,*

cious, &c. but it is immediately added, *He will by no means clear the Guilty*. These two are joined by the Psalmist when he saith, *Verily there is a reward for the Righteous: Verily he is a God that Judgeth in the Earth?* Psal. 58. 11. Accordingly in Psal. 101. 1. *He sings of Mercy and Judgment*. And in Psal. 61. 7.--85. 10.--89. 14. there is a Conjunction of *Mercy* and *Truth*, by which latter is meant *Justice* or *Righteousness*, as we shall see afterwards. *The Lord is Righteous in all his ways, and merciful* (for so the Hebrew word *Chesid* signifies) *in all his works*, Psal. 145. 17. God is said *in wrath to remember Mercy*, Hab. 3. 2. As God is *slow to Anger*, so *he will not at all acquit the wicked*, Nah. 1. 3. And other places in the Old Testament might be alledged where these two are coupled together. It shall suffice to mention only two places in the New Testament, *viz.* Rom. 11. 22. where we are bid to *behold the Goodness and Severity of God*, to take notice of one as well as the other: and the Apostle propounds the converted *Gentiles* and the unbelieving *Jews* as the noted Examples of either: and 2 *Thess.* 1. 6, 7. where God's *recompensing Tribulation*, and *recompensing rest* are mentioned together. And indeed these two may well be united, for they are nearer related to one another than they seem to be (yea indeed, they are commonly thought to be Opposed) for Remuneration or Rewarding is a part of *Justice*, as well as 'tis an act of *Goodness* and *Mercy*: yea, Severity is Goodness, Justice is Mercy; 'tis Mercy to the good and Righteous that wicked and mischievous persons are punished. Thus there is an intimate Connection between these two Attributes.

But to wave this, I am now to discourse of *Justice* or *Righteousness* by it self, and to shew the full extent of it. As to the more general Notion of *Righteousness*, these following Texts express the nature of it. *Righteous art thou, O Lord, and just are thy Judgments*, saith the Psalmist, *Psal.* 119. 137. i. e. Thou art Righteous Just and Upright in thy self, and thou dost no wrong, no injury unto others, when thou visitest them with thy Judgments. *Shall not the Judge of all the Earth do right*, saith the Holy Patriarch, *Gen.* 18. 25. Shall not he who is the Rule and Standard of all Justice and Equity be just and equitable himself? *Are not my ways Equal?* saith He, Ezek. 18. 29. *He renders to every Man according to his deeds*, (which is the highest Act of Justice) saith the Apostle St. *Paul*, Rom. 2. 6. *He judgeth without respect of Persons, according to every Mans work*, saith the Apostle St. *Peter*, 1 *Ep. ch.* 1. *v.* 17. The summ is, God is righteous as to his Essence and Nature: and he disposeth, ordereth and acteth all things Righteously and justly. This is the more general Conception we ought to have of God's Righteousness or Justice. Now we will particularly and distinctly set it forth. There is then 1. his Justice or Righteousness in Rewarding, 2. his Justice in Punishing, 3. his Faithfulness in keeping his Word. For though I did before propound this Attribute of *Faithfulness*, abstractly and by it self, yet I think I may properly treat of it under this Head of Justice. And if so, then it will appear that this is the most Comprehensive of all the Attributes: there is more contained in it than in any of the rest.

I. There is God's Righteousness in *Rewarding*. The Apostle tells us, that *he that comes unto God must* not only *believe that he is*, but that *he is a Rewarder of them that diligently seek him*, Heb. 11. 6. There is, as our Saviour informs us, a difference of Rewards, there is *a Prophets reward*, and a *Righteous Man's reward*, Mat. 10. 41. *i. e.* God will reward, but in a different manner, those who shew kindness to either of these. Yea we are told in the same Chapter, that he who refreshes a Disciple with *a Cup of cold Water*, shall be Recompensed for it. Whence we may inferr, that no good action (be it never so mean) shall go unrewarded. Now, 'tis plain that God's *Justice* is shewed in this, for else the Apostle would not have said, Heb. 6. 20. *God is not unjust to forget the labour of Love*. And 2 Thes. 1. 6. *It is a Righteous or Just thing with God, to recompence to you that are troubled, Rest.* It is manifest therefore, that God acts according to the Laws of Justice and Righteousness, when he Rewards the good services of the Faithfull in this Life. And he doth so when he Crowns them with Everlasting Glory in the Mansions of the Blessed, as we may gather from 2 Tim. 4. 8. *There is laid up for me a Crown of Righteousness, which the Lord the Righteous Judge shall give me at that Day*. By the Tenour of the New Covenant, there is assured unto all Believers Eternal Happi- both as God is Merciful, and as he is Just. That the Crown is *laid up for them*, is the product of Divine Mercy, that it is actually given to them, at the great Day

Day of Accounts, argues God to be Righteous, for seeing he hath engaged by his promise to bestow Heaven upon them, it becomes an Act of Justice or Righteousness to perform his word and promise: though to make this promise to them at first, was an Act of mere Grace and Favour. So that the *Remunerative Justice* of God is not to be measured by the Rules and Proportions of Human Justice, which is according to Mens merits: but God's giving a Reward to Holy Men (none of whom are in a Capacity to deserve any thing at his Hands; yea whose daily Failings render them obnoxious to him) is to be reckoned as an Act of *Mercifulness* and *Liberality*, and thus it belongs to the former Attribute: or, it is an Exertment of his *Faithfulness* and *Truth*, and so it may properly be referred to that Branch of Divine *Righteousness*, which I shall speak of anon: or more Generally, it is a proceeding according to the Rules and Methods which God hath prescribed himself: for he Eternally appointed this as a Law to himself, to reward the Actions of Holy and Good Men. This is one of the Constitutions of his Government, and he hath determined never to decline from it. Accordingly he perpetually observes this, and as it were ties himself to the performance of it: but more especially this is remarkable at the day of Judgment, *Behold, I come quickly, and my Reward is with me, to give every Man according as his work shall be*, Rev. 22. 12. which shews him to be exactly *Just* in his Administration and Government of the World.

II. There is God's *Punitive Righteousness* or *Vindicative Justice*: that whereby he inflicteth Punishment on Offenders. In respect of this kind of Righteousness God is styled *the God of Vengeances*, Psal. 94. 1. and *the Lord God of Recompences*, Jer. 51. 56. for this (as the Context will satisfie you) hath reference to those Judgments which God visits his Enemies with. And the Apostle tells the *Thessalonians*, that *it is a Righteous thing with God to recompense Tribulation to them that troubled and persecuted them*, 2 Ep. ch. 1. v. 6. This is that *Righteousness* whereby he acts as a *Judge*, as the former (immediately before spoken of) is that by which he demeans himself as a *Father*. The Writings of the Prophets, Evangelists and Apostles, frequently mention this Justice or Severity of the most High, and they express it by his *Wrath*, *Anger*, *Indignation*, against Sinners. For by these Terms is not meant any Commotion or Passion in God, but the implacable Averseness and Opposition of his Nature to Sinners, and his severe Punishing of them, at least his declaring his will and intentions to punish them. When God's *Anger* is so often made mention of in Scripture, it is spoken, saith *Philo*, * *for Instruction sake, and to teach the Vulgar*: it is so expressed, saith he, † *that those persons may be taught after this way, who can't be instructed otherwise*: that those who feel Anger in themselves may know that God is as really displeased with Sinners as if he were moved and stirred with such a Passion as this. But we must not imagine that there are any such Passions in God as there are in Men, for this would argue Imperfection and Infirmity in him, the thoughts of which we must abhorr. And this will serve to explain what had been said in the preceeding Discourse concerning God's *Compassion* and *Mercifulness*. These are not the same in God, that they are in us, for in him they are void of all Trouble and Disturbance. And perhaps this was it the wisest sort of *Stoicks* meant when they declared against all Passions, *viz.* that they would have the Affections of their Wise Man to be like the Mercy, and Love, and Anger of God, *i. e.* without Perturbation and Disorder, or any vitious allay.

* Παιδείας ἕνεκα καὶ νουθεσίας, πρὸς τὴν πολλῶν διδασκαλίαν. *Lib. quod Deus sit immutabilis.*

† Τὸ νουθετοῦσαι χάριν τοῖς ἀτέχνως μὴ δυναμένοις σωφρονίζεσθαι. *Ibid.*

To this purpose that which I meet with in * *Max. Tyrius* is remarkable, who tells us that the *Divine* and *Humane* Vertues have different Names, the same vertues are named otherwise by the Gods than by Men: thus that which by the former is called θέμις and δίκη is among the latter called φιλία and χάρις. The former names are, saith he, † Mystical and worthy of the Divinity, the latter are * more Benign and according to Men. This was the *Pythagorean* Notion: they held that the same Attributes, as they are in God and in Men, differ: the same qualities are not altogether alike. This is true in the matter I am now speaking of: the *Hatred* and *Wrath* of God are not such Affections as are found in Men, *i. e.* they are not sudden and turbulent Emotions, which generally are accompanied with a disorder of Mind, but they are the steady and resolved Averseness of the Divine Nature to all sin (which is more than a bare disliking, as some have thought and writ: for those several words used in Scripture, *viz. Anger*, *Wrath*, *Indignation*, *Fury*

* *Dissertat.* 36.

† Μυστικὰ καὶ θεοπρεπῆ ὀνόματα. *Ibid.*

* Προσηνῆ καὶ ἀνθρωπικά.

fury, &c. must necessarily signify something more) and moreover, they import a Readiness to punish those who willfully and designedly commit Sin, and also an actual inflicting of Punishment. This (in a way of speaking after the manner of Men) is styled God's *Anger*: not that any such Property, as it denotes a *Passion*, is in God, but because he on occasion of Mens sinning against him doth, as *we* do when we are *angry*, i. e. he withdraws his Favours from the Offenders, and shews his Displeasure by animadverting upon them with some Severity: therefore we call this *Anger*. This is one way of expressing God's *Justice* or *Punitive Righteousness*, which is shewed in avenging those Injuries and Affronts which are done to him and his Name.

The most eminent Proofs of this are those *Examples* which are recorded in the sacred History; the first and earliest of which, is that of the divine Vengeance upon the *Angels*, the Glory and Flower of the Creation, the first-born of intelligent Beings, who for their vile Apostacy and Rebellion were thrust down from Heaven, *their own Habitation*, (as St. * *Jude* speaks) *and were cast down to Hell, and delivered into Chains of Darkness*, as St. † *Peter* phrases it. Soon after this our first Parents (and all Mankind with and in them) became the remarkable Instances of God's Justice and Severity, being for their wilfull Miscarriage sentenced to Death and Misery, and that both as to their Bodies and Souls. And, now ever since this general Curse, we have abundant Examples in all Ages of the World, of God's avenging Justice towards Sinners. All the *Ante-diluvian* World, except eight Persons, was swept away with an universal Inundation, because a worser Deluge, even that of Vice and Prophaneness had overflow'd the face of the Earth, and bred a general Corruption among Mankind. The Destruction of *Sodom* and the neighbouring Cities by another, but a fiercer Element, was as remarkable a Proof of God's Wrath. *The Lord out of Heaven rained Brimstone and Fire* on those extraordinary Criminals, *Gen.* 19. 24. that is, He consumed them by Thunder and Lightning. Which some of the *Pagans* had notice of, for *Tacitus* tells us, that those Cities * were set on fire and burnt up by the stroke of Thunder. *The Saline Pillar* which *Lot*'s Wife was turned into, was probably the Effect of this wonderful Meteor; for from several Examples it appears, that Persons struck with Thunder have continued in the same Posture wherein they were when they were alive, and their dead Bodies are stiffned by the sulphureous Vapours penetrating them. The several *Plagues* inflicted on the *Egyptians* are well known: so are the sundry Acts of God's Severity towards the rebellious *Israelites* in the Wilderness, in the Land of *Canaan*, in their *Captivity*, and afterwards when they were guilty of any gross Defection from God: and at last, for their murdering of the *Messias* and rejecting the Gospel they were destroy'd with a great Destruction at the Siege of *Jerusalem*, where Eleven Hundred Thousand perished by Famine, Sword and Pestilence, and very near a Hundred Thousand were carried away Captive. Ever since which fatal Overthrow their Nation and Polity have been extin[illegible] and at this very Day they are Vagabonds in the Earth, and bear the visible Marks of God's rejecting them. Tho' they are a very cunning sort of People, and have great Riches, and hold Correspondence with most Nations in the World, yet they could never form themselves into a National Body, but live as mere Aliens wheresoever they are; yea, in that very place which was their own Country.

* *Ver.* 6.
† 2 *Pet.* 2. 4.

* *Fulminum ictu arsisse* Hist. lib. 5.

Besides these general Examples of divine Wrath and Severity, there are other particular ones made mention of in the sacred Records of the *Old Testament*, and no less notable, as *Cain*, *Pharaoh*, *Corah*, *Dathan* and *Abiram*, *Jezabel*, *Sennacherib*, *Nebuchadnezzar*, *Belshazzar*, &c. And in the *New Testament*, *Herod*, *Agrippa*, and many others are register'd. Thus some great and notorious Criminals are made the eminent Examples and Monuments of this divine Attribute. It was observed long ago, that Oppressors and Tyrants and such infamous Sinners *seldom die a dry death*, they are violently dispatched out of the World, and swim to their Graves in Blood and Gore. Some uncommon Disaster, or some violent Fate plucks them away hence when they think themselves far enough from it: and so they become open and manifest Proofs of the Vengeance of Heaven. They are (as 'tis fitly expressed in *Job* 34. 26.) *struck in the open sight of others*, or (more exactly according to the *Hebrew*) *in the place of beholders*, in an universal *Theatre*, where all the World are *Spectators*: and whilst they are so, they cannot but applaud this tragical End of those who so greatly deserv'd it.

Give

Give me leave to expatiate on this Head, that I may the more graphically describe the dreadful Nature of God's *Justice* in punishing Sinners. His general Method is to inflict the greatest Judgments on those that are the greatest Offenders. When *Jerusalem sins grievously* she is *removed*, Lam. 1. 8. no less than Captivity and Devastation are her Portion. God threatneth, that when a Land sinneth against him by *trespassing grievously*, he will *send his four sore Judgments upon them, the Sword, and the Famine, and the noisom Beast, and the Pestilence*, Ezek. 14. 13, 21. Extraordinary Sins call for extraordinary Punishments. When the Inditement against *Israel* ran thus, *There is no Truth, nor Mercy, nor knowledge of God in the Land: by swearing, and lying, and killing, and stealing, and committing Adultery, they break out, and Blood toucheth Blood*, Hos. 4. 1, 2. it is no wonder that the Doom answered to the Crimes, ver. 3. *Therefore shall the Land mourn, and every one that dwelleth therein shall languish, with the Beasts of the Field, and with the Fowls of Heaven; and the Fishes of the Sea also shall be taken away.* Which in a prophetick Style expresses the greatness and extensiveness of their Ruin, even all the parts of the Creation shall suffer with them. When the Sins of a Land are grievous and heinous, their Punishment shall be great and astonishing.

For although God's *Justice* ingageth him to appear against every Sin, Sin in the complex Notion of it, Sin in general, as it is Sin, yet some Sins do more especially provoke the divine Majesty, and call for greater and more eminent Discoveries of his Wrath and Indignation. Though the *Stoicks* (who were observed to be great maintainers of Paradoxes) asserted all Sins to be alike, yet we have good reason to explode that groundless Opinion, and to believe the contrary, *viz.* That all Sins are not equal, but that some are more heinous and grievous than others. As Physicians make a difference between the common *Leprosy* and * that whereby the Body is all crusted over, and the Skin becomes like an Elephant's Hide: in the like manner the spiritual Leprosy hugely differs in its Nature and Quality. For though all Sins are committed against the same infinite Majesty, yet there are several Aggravations of Sin, there are different Degrees of Malignity and Enormity in Vice. All Sin is a Leprosy, and distempers and infects the soul, but some Sins are more foul and spreading, and bring a fatal Hardness and Searedness upon it. Now as *Sins* differ, so do *Punishments*: some Vices and Enormities being greater than others, it is reasonable and just that the Penalties should be so too. There is therefore a certain measure observed by the divine *Nemesis*, which proceeds according to the demerit and heinousness of the Crimes. In this Sense that of the Prophet is true, *God will lay Righteousness to the Line, and Judgment to the Plummet*, Jer. 5. 6. The Punishments which he inflicteth shall be commensurate to the Offences.

* *Elephantiasis.*

We may take notice likewise, that Reason and Prudence have taught earthly Judges and Magistrates to imitate in this the great Judge of Heaven and Earth. The *Roman* Prætor, as he had his bundle of *Rods* to scare the meaner sort of Offenders, so he was furnish'd with his *Axe* for more flagitious and gross Criminals. *Plutarch* represents it thus, * Some Vices (saith he) being Curable and others Incurable, those Offenders were corrected with Rods of whom there was a possibility of amendment, but those Delinquents who were incorrigible were cut off with the Axes. And this disparity of Punishments was thought to be so rational a thing, and so adjusted to the Dictates of Nature, that it generally obtain'd with all wise Lawgivers, and passed into their fixed Laws and Constitutions. In so much that I can hardly believe what the fore-mentioned Author, in the Life of *Solon*, saith of that excellent and renowned Lawgiver, *viz.* That he ordered Death should be the Punishment for almost all Faults. Particularly I remember he saith, That those who were convicted of Idleness were to be put to Death according to his Laws: and to steal Herbs and Fruit was as capital as to rob Temples, and to be guilty of Murther. Indeed *Draco* is said to have made no Disparity in Punishments, and therefore *it was said, that his Laws were writ in Blood.* But the general Practice of all wise Governours, (as well as the Law of natural Reason) hath authorized an Inequality of Punishments, and fitted them according to the Demerits of the Offenders. This is *God's Method* likewise: his Punishments and Judgments are most ordinarily heightned according to the Nature of the Sins: and great Offences meet with great Plagues and wonderful Retributions of Wrath and Vengeance. It was long since the Observation of the great Father of History, that

* Ἐπεὶ δὲ τῆς κακίας τὸ μὲν ἰάσιμόν ἐστι, τὸ δὲ ἀνήκεστον, αἱ μὲν ῥάβδοι κυβεύουσι τὸ μεταβάλλειν δυνάμενον, αἱ δὲ σκολόπαι ἀποκόπτουσι τὸ ἀνιάτου. Quæst. Roman.

that * even in this Life flagitious Crimes meet with severe Punishments from the Gods, as he speaks after his Heathen fashion. *Mighty Men shall be mightily tormented*, † saith a more authentick Writer; great and capital Sinners are recompensed with exquisite Punishments. Though there are some Exceptions from the Rule, yet this is the usual and ordinary Method which divine Providence observes in the World. As there is a Difference between Mens Sins, so God hath made a Difference of Punishments. He hath (if I may so speak, with allusion to what was suggested before) his *Rods* for the chastising of lesser Crimes: but if the smart of these will not awe and amend Sinners, he hath *prepared the Instruments of Death*, *he will cut off head and tail, branch and rush in one day*. A Person or Nation that persists in their Defiance of Heaven and the divine Laws, shall experience a more than ordinary Penalty to be the Attendant of their wretched Behaviour.

* Τῶν μεγάλων ἀδικημάτων μεγάλας εἰσὶ καὶ αἱ τιμωρίαι παρὰ τῶν θεῶν. Herodot. l. 2. c. 120.

† *Wisd.* 6. 6.

And here it will not be unseasonable to take notice, that God is *no respecter of Persons* in his inflicting Punishment on Sinners, and that he reckons his own People among the most heinous Offenders and Transgressors. I cannot pass this by without observing it in the Example of the *Jews*, who, tho' their Name be now odious, were once God's chosen People, gather'd and cull'd out of the rest of Mankind, and incorporated into a peculiar Church. *In* Judah *was God known, his Name was great in* Israel: *in* Salem *also was his Tabernacle, and his dwelling-place in* Sion, Psal. 76. 1, 2. *Hither the Tribes go up, the Tribes of the Lord, unto the Testimony of* Israel, *to give thanks to the Name of the Lord. For there are set Thrones of Judgment, the Thrones of the house of* David, *Psal.* 122. 4, 5. And very full and comprehensive are the Words of the same divine Psalmist, *He sheweth his Word unto* Jacob, *his Statutes and Judgments unto* Israel. *He hath not dealt so with any Nation, and as for his Judgments they have not known them*, Psal. 147. 2 last Verses. The Prophet *Isaiah* calls *Judea*, the *Valley of Vision*, chap. 22. ver. 1. because God had there made his Presence in some sort *visible* to his People, by the many remarkable Representations and Tokens of his Glory and Majesty, which were continually before their Eyes: or *Judea* was called so, because it was the Land of *Seers*, of inspired Prophets and divine Messengers, who constantly came with Discoveries of God's Will, and instructed that People in all that they were to do: so that no Persons upon Earth had the like Honour, to hold daily Commerce with Heaven. The Apostle hath comprized all their unparallell'd Privileges in few Words, *Rom.* 9. 4. *Who are* Israelites; *to whom pertaineth the Adoption, and the Glory, and the Covenants, and the giving of the Law, and the Service of God, and the Promises*: and in the next Verse, *Whose are the Fathers, and of whom as concerning the Flesh Christ came*. It is impossible to couch more in so narrow a compass. Give me leave to present you with a brief Comment upon the several Particulars.

The first Privilege that People might justly glory in was this, That they were *Israelites*; that is, they were descended of an ancient Stock, their Pedigree was worthy and honourable: the holy Patriarchs, of whom *Jacob* or *Israel* was not the least eminent, were the Heads of their Nation: they came of a faithful Seed. Again, The *Adoption* pertained to these *Jews*, i. e. they were the adopted Children of God; they were taken into the Family, and had a Right given them to the Inheritance, when other People were look'd upon as Strangers and Aliens, and were rejected of God. To them also pertained *the Glory*, i. e. they had the *Ark of the Covenant*; which was a Pledge to them of the *Shechinah*, or divine Presence, which is justly called *the Glory* in the *Old Testament*; and particularly, when the *Ark* was taken it is said, *the Glory was departed from* Israel. Theirs likewise were *the Covenants*, (which is the next thing here mentioned) *viz.* The *two Tables of the Law*, which was called, the *Covenant* or the *Testament*, for the * *Greek* Word signifies both. It therefore follows, *and the giving of the Law*, as much as to say, This People had not only the *Moral Law*, written on purpose for them by God's own Finger, but they had also the *Ceremonial* and *Judicial Laws* given to them, both of which were designed for their great Benefit and Advantage; the first to make their Religion more venerable and valuable, and to keep them from the vain and idolatrous Observances of the neighbouring Nations: the second, to fix them in a due and laudable Community, for the exercising of Judgment, and the advancing of Justice and Righteousness among them. Next, It is said, *the Service* of God belong'd to these *Jews*, i. e. the publick Worship of God was settled among them, and this Worship consisted in the Ser-

* Διαθήκη.

Service of the true and only God, whilst other Nations went a whoring after Idols. Besides, it is said, *the Promises* appertained to them, *i. e.* the Promises concerning the blessed *Messias*, which were the Substance of all other Promises whatsoever. These were made to the *Fathers*, and therefore 'tis added, that *theirs were the Fathers*, the holy Patriarchs to whom God revealed himself so often, especially *Abraham* the Father of the Faithful, who had singular Revelations and Discoveries made to him. Lastly, *Of these as concerning the Flesh Christ came*, Jesus the Messias and Redeemer was born of the Jewish Stock. Here are no less than eight or nine wonderful Privileges reckon'd up by St. *Paul*: so that it appears thence, that nothing was too dear for this People. They received matchless Tokens of the divine Goodness and Love, they had Favours granted them which were denied to all the World beside. And yet *this People*, who were thus highly graced and honoured above all the rest of Mankind, were as remarkably *punished* when they broke the divine Laws. Which shews how impartial the *divine Justice* is, and that no outward Dignities and Blessings can exempt a People from the Anger and Displeasure of God, if they persist in their Sins and Provocations without Repentance.

And the Ground of this is evident, for the more a People have been favour'd and indulged, the more grievous are their Miscarriages, and therefore they of all Men must expect the Rigour of God's Wrath. This is excellently set forth in the Parable of the Vineyard, *Isai.* 5. 1, *&c.* God's *Church* there is his *Vineyard*: he *fenceth it*, and *gathers out the Stones thereof*, and *plants it with the choicest Vine*, and *builds a Tower in the midst of it*, and *makes a Wine-press therein*: all which denotes God's singular Care and Love to his Church. *But behold, when he looked that it should bring forth Grapes, it brought forth wild Grapes.* Hereupon he tells you what he will do to his Vineyard, (now he will do something that *he had not done*) *he will take away the Hedge thereof, and break down the Wall thereof, and he will lay it waste.* All that Pruning and Fencing and Cultivating of the Vineyard before mention'd, that is, all the Cost and Pains laid out upon the Jewish People did but aggravate their Barrenness and Unfruitfulness, and (which is a Consequence of that) inhanced their Punishment. Hence God by the Prophet *Amos* speaks thus to this People, *You only have I known of all the Families of the Earth; therefore will I punish you for all your Iniquities*, chap. 3. ver. 2. I have shewed Kindness to you, O ye *Israelites*, above all Nations and People upon the face of the Earth; therefore you shall be more signally punished than others. You have I *known* in Mercy, and you shall now *know* me in Judgment: for your Sins are far greater than those of others, because I have shew'd my self more obliging and kind to you than to them. On this account it is, that God tells the *Jews* that they were greater Sinners than the very *Sodomites*, *As I live, saith the Lord*, Sodom *thy Sister* (it is come to this, that *Jerusalem* is *Sodom*'s Sister) *hath not done, she nor her Daughters, as thou hast done, and thy Daughters*, Ezek. 16. 48. And what is the reason that *Jerusalem* is worse than *Sodom*? Namely, Because *Jerusalem* had received more Favours and Mercies from God than *Sodom*. This made the Miscarriages of the former much more heinous than those of the latter, and this also made their Punishment to be greater. See this in the Example of the same People afterwards; the *Romans*, a Heathen and Idolatrous People, were sent by God to besiege *Jerusalem*, according to our Saviour's Prediction: they sack'd the City and burnt the Temple, and destroy'd the whole Nation, so that they have not been able ever since to appear in a considerable Body, but are to this Day scatter'd up and down the World, as was observed before.

To pass from *Jews* to *Christians*, we are inform'd that towards the latter end of the 5th Century, those of the *Roman* Empire were invaded by the barbarous *Goths* and *Vandals*, and were inhumanely treated by them. Whereupon a pious Father in those Times had this Reflection, * By our Sins the very Barbarians grow strong, by reason of our Vices the Forces of the *Roman* Empire are vanquish'd. And † *Salvian* agrees with him, "For "this it is, saith he, that God suffers that savage People to over-"run the *Roman* Territories, and to make havock of them in our "Days. Since *Christians* are worse in their Manners than *Pa-"gans*, it is not to be wonder'd at they are punish'd, and even subdued by them. He insists on this, That the Christians by their Perjuries, Prophaneness, Unthankfulness, Injustice, Oppression, Covetousness, Luxury, Uncleanness, their frequenting the Theatres and Spectacles, *&c.* provoked God to deal thus severely with them.

* *Nostris peccatis Barbari fortes sunt, nostris vitiis Romanus superatur exercitus.* S. Hieronym.

† *De Gubernat. Dei.*

them. Since Christians, saith he, live Wickedly, and yet profess the best Religion, we cannot marvel that Infidels are made the instruments of their Punishment. And in many other Excellent passages, that Ancient and Religious Father, that Pious and Zealous Bishop, that *Jeremiah* of the Age, lamented the miserable case of the Christians of those times, and vindicated the *Justice* of God in the breaking in of the Barbarous *Goths* on the Christians: and he lets us know that a People whom God hath crowned with Spiritual and Temporal Blessings, and to whom he hath been favourable above other Countries and Nations, are so far from being privileged and exempted from Punishment, that they shall be the first of all, who shall feel the Wrath and Indignation of the Almighty, and that in the highest degree.

I will go on still to display the nature and methods of *Divine Justice*, as they are discovered to us in the Sacred Records. There we find that the just Indignation of God against obstinate and incorrigible Sinners exerts it self in *Different* and *Various* manners. Which I will explain in these following particulars.

1. God can and oftentimes doth *repeat the same Judgments*. Sinners fondly imagine that the Divine Justice is tired out, and that if once they have been in the Fiery Furnace they shall not be cast into it again. This is a huge mistake, all the Calamities which they felt before, they may make their return to them: and all other Miseries which they formerly had experience of may be Renewed. If they do not see the hand of God, and renounce their Sins, these Evils may visit them again, like the broken sighs of a Tempest, which intermits only to recruit it self, and to return with greater Fury. *Thus will I do unto thee*, even *thus* as I did *before*, Amos 4. 11, 12. the Plagues shall be Periodical, the Judgments shall be repeated over and over again.

2. God sends the same Judgments as to kind, but *Greater as to degree* and *measure*. The Sword shall be more Bloody, the Pestilence more Raging, the Fire more Furious and Violent. The Arrows of God's quiver shall be sharper pointed, and they shall flie with greater Force, and enter deeper, and prove more destructive. The Calamities which seemed before to have some Pity, shall now shew none at all. The Judgments shall wax Bigger and Fiercer, these Winds shall be more Impetuous and Implacable, and like an irresistible Hurrican carry all before them. This Lightning and Thunder shall be brighter and louder, and both more affrighting and astonishing. *The Lord hath his way in the Whirlwind and in the Storm*, saith the Prophet * *Nahum, Who can stand before his Indignation? and who can abide the Fierceness of his Anger?* God's wrath like a mighty Torrent shall overwhelm all with sudden and unavoidable ruin. The Scourge shall be Universal, and none shall be exempted from it, as the Prophet *Amos* sets it forth, † *The flight shall perish from the swift, and the strong shall not strengthen his Force, neither shall the mighty deliver himself.* All shall equally be concerned in the Calamity; The hand of God shall reach every one promiscuously, and none shall escape.

* *Ch.* 1. 3, 6, 8.

† *Ch.* 2. *v.* 14

3. God may suffer Troubles and Crosses *to be more Durable*, than they were before. God threatens the *Israelites* that *he will make their plagues of long continuance*, Deut. 28. 59. He hath his Extraordinary and his Leiger Embassadors: some of the Judgments which he sends are Transient, others are Permanent. Those Calamities which staid but a short time before, may take up their Abode afterwards, and tarry a long Season. This might be illustrated in several Instances: I will mention only one, and that is the Persecution of the Primitive Saints. They had often felt the Tyranny and Oppression of the Pagan Emperours: that Rod was several times laid upon them, and they Groaned under the lashes of it. But of all the Ten Persecutions the last was the worst, because it continued Ten Years together in great Extremity. It was the same Punishment, but it differed from the former ones, in regard of the space of *Time* which it lasted. Herein the diversity of God's Judgments is to be taken notice of. But,

4. The Just God doth moreover *send new Plagues and Punishments* upon offenders such as they never experienced before. Alass! they are apt to think and perswade themselves that they have passed all the fatal Guards, that the bitterness of Death is over, that there are remaining no other ways of punishing them. But they labour under a gross mistake. The wrath of God is used to display it self in many and various instances of Vengeance. There is a *Climax* of Judgments, there are several Steps belonging to God's Judgment-Seat, there are diverse Degrees of Penalty. Most

Most dreadful is that which we read Deut. 28. 15. *It shall come to pass if thou wilt not hearken unto the voice of the Lord thy God, to observe to do all his Commandments and his Statutes, which I command thee this day, that all these Curses shall come upon thee, and overtake thee.* And in the ensuing verses of that Chapter, we have a particular of them. They shall be Cursed *in the City*, and *in the Field*, in their *Basket*, and in their *Store*, in the *Fruit of their Body*, and in their *Cattle*, the Lord shall make the *Pestilence* to cleave unto them, the Lord shall smite them with a *Consumption*, and with a *Fever*, and with an *Inflammation*, and with an *Extreme Burning*. Drought and Famine, and War, and Captivity, shall be the publick Miseries which shall befall them, as you read in the same place. Yea, after all these Curses and Plagues, it is added, * *If ye will not yet for all this hearken unto me, then will I punish you seven times more for your Sins.* And again, † *If ye walk contrary to me, I will bring seven times more plagues upon you according to your Sins.* And this is repeated ‖ twice more, to Confirm us in the Belief of the Proposition which I have offered, and which I am now making good, that God's *Justice* in punishing Sinners discovers it self in *Various* ways.

* Lev. 26. 18. † v. 21. ‖ v. 24. 28.

Let me enlarge a little further upon this, our most Faithful Friends and Associates, (who of all persons are most unlikely to hurt us) may Accidentally and Unadvisedly do us the greatest discourtesies, and promote our Miseries: not unlike some Over-fond Nurses, who overlay their Children, or occasion their smothering by too kind a Care and Concernedness for them. Our Ease and Plenty may become our greatest Mischief. Our Pleasures may be most instrumental to our Pains and Grief: for 'tis too often seen that the most pungent Sorrows are conveyed unto us by something that we most Delight in. Our Prosperity is oftentimes the greatest Snare to us: and some Men had never been Unhappy, unless they had been first Happy. There is nothing we converse with in the World, nothing that we See, or Hear, or take notice of, nothing that we Enjoy or Possess, but may prove a Punishment to us by the permission and disposal of the Governour of all things. We are not safe any where, Calamities may meet us from all quarters. There are unexpected Disappointments, Losses and Distresses in Body, Estate, and Relations: Crosses and Afflictions may arise out of Causes that are now latent, and wholly undiscovered. The things which we least imagine may be the instruments of our unspeakable dissatisfaction and trouble. There is not a Creature, though never so little and contemptible, never so weak and crazy, but may have power enough given it to molest us, and make us miserable. The most inconsiderable and despicable Objects, may be subservient to our greatest damage. Thus you see there is ground for what I assert, and let it be our Prayer that we of *this Nation*, may not be Experimentally convinced of the Reality of it; namely, that *New Evils* may attack us, *Fresh Judgments* may overtake us: and when we think the Store is exhausted, new Supplies may be made by the Angry and incensed Majesty of Heaven. There may be other distresses, besides those which we have already been acquainted with. We have felt great and grievous Plagues: who knows what is the next that shall be allotted us? Is there not Famine and Scarcity yet behind? may not cleanness of Teeth, and want of Bread be the just Recompence of our Luxury and Intemperance? may not Poverty and Nakedness be the condign Reward of our flaunting Pride and Prodigality? In a word, may not we expect for our universal Ingratitude and Impenitency to be dispossess'd of the Blessings we now Enjoy, and to Experience not only diverse kinds, and several degrees of Punishment, but also to feel *New Judgments*, such as we have not already known?

5. God in his severe Justice, may think fit to *inflict all his Judgments together* upon a Nation. There are single Scourges wherewith he uses to lash an impenitent People: but these may be all twisted into one, and we may feel the smart of them all at once. God's Judgments may not only be increased in Quality, but as to their Number, and we may feel the whole shock of them together. This without doubt is the sense of the Prophets words in *Ezek.* 14. 21. for whereas before he had reckoned up singly the Judgments of God which were like to overtake the Impenitent *Jews*, as Famine, *v.* 13. and noisome Beasts, *v.* 15. and the Sword, *v.* 17. and Pestilence, *v.* 19. now at last he lets them know, that God can inflict all these at once, *Thus saith the Lord, how much more when I send my four sore Judgments, upon* Jerusalem, *the Sword, and the Famine, and the noisom Beast, and the Pestilence, to cut*

off from it Man and Beast? God may justly join all these together, when a Land heaps up all Sins and Vices together.

6. God can and oftentimes doth judicially harden the Hearts of Sinners, so that Sin shall be the *Punishment* of sin. One Sin shall be the Torment of another. Which seems to be the meaning of the Psalmist, Psal. 69. 27. *Add Iniquity to their Iniquity*, let one wickedness be the Penalty of another, and let blindness of Mind and a seared Conscience, be the recompence of all. When the Gentiles had voluntarily stifled the Notions of Goodness and Vertue, and had run into all sorts of Wickedness, the Apostle tells us that *for that cause God gave them up unto vile affections*, Rom. 1. 26. And the same Apostle acquaints us that *for this cause God shall send* upon Apostates *strong delusions, that they shall believe a Lye*, 2 Thess. 2. 11. But this I have mentioned above.

Thus I have demonstrated the thing I undertook, which was to shew that the *Just God* hath a Store-house of Judgmenes, he hath an inexhaustible Treasure of Calamities and Punishments. I will now only take Notice how this is represented to us very appositely in that Type or Vision of a *Chain* in Ezek. 7. 23, 24. *Make a Chain, for the Land is full of Bloody crimes, the City is full of Violence: wherefore I will bring the worst of the Heathen, and they shall possess their Houses.* And v. 26. *Mischief shall come upon Mischief, and Rumour shall be upon Rumour.* The Prophet was to make a *Chain*, and that was to set forth both the *Sins* and the *Punishments*, of that people. A Chain of Sins calls for and justly merits a Chain of Curses and Judgments. And it is no wonder that this Chain is Long and Heavy, that all the several Links of it are so Massy and Ponderous. *Mischief comes upon Mischief*, one link draws on another; there is a complication of Judgments as well as of Sins. That was another long Chain of Sins, which the Prophet *Hosea* mentions, ch. 4. v. 1, 2. *The Lord hath a controversy with the Inhabitants of the Land, because there is no Truth, nor Mercy, nor Knowledge of God in the Land. By Swearing and Lying, and Killing and Stealing, and committing Adultery they break out, and Blood touches Blood.* This is the Chain of Sins: and now cast your Eyes on the next verse, and there you will find the Chain of Judgments, *Therefore shall the Land mourn, and every one that dwelleth therein shall languish, with the Beasts of the Field, and with the Fowls of Heaven, yea the Fishes of the Sea also shall be taken away.* These particulars are inserted to set forth the Extensiveness and Universality of the punishment. It shall be a Catholick and Epidemick Plague: all Creatures shall be concerned in it; The Variety of Sins shall be answered with a variety of Punishments. As Sinners have diverse ways to displease and provoke God, so he hath diverse ways to punish and chastite them.

This is so important a Truth, and so Remarkable a proof of *God's Justice*, (which is our present Theme) that it will not be unseasonable to prosecute it yet further, and to shew the *Reasonableness* of it.

1. It must be thus from the very Nature of Sin, which carries along with it a whole Heap of Evils and Calamities. *Sin* in it self is productive of Sorrow and Misery; it is attended with Trouble and Distress, it naturally brings forth Affliction and Mischief, and therefore the same word in the *Hebrew* signifies both. There are particular Crosses and Calamities entailed upon some Sins: there are peculiar Curses which are the attendants of some Crimes, as the serious Observers of God's Providence in the World have taken notice. And there are no Sins whatsoever, but at one time or other bring with them their own Punishment. Hence, from the very Reason of the thing it self, it follows that there is a variety of Judgments for the punishing of a sinful Nation.

2. It will appear *Just* and *Reasonable*, that God should inflict diverse Punishments, if we consider that his Anger is infinitely increased when one Judgment and another after that will not correct and amend Sinners. Doth it grieve and incense a good Magistrate, that the Punishments which he by Law inflicts on Offenders have no Effect upon them, but rather harden them in their Sins? much more is the great God (who is *of purer Eyes than to behold iniquity*) offended when his Punishments upon Sinners are disreguarded by them, when the signs of his Anger and Displeasure are despised by them. Every Sinner who doth not repent and amend after Punishment, doth in his Heart defie God and his Providence, and all the tokens of his Wrath. This must needs highly provoke God; this certainly will cause the Almighty to exert his utmost Indignation against them. *The people turneth not unto him*

that

that smiteth, neither do they seek the Lord of Hosts: therefore the Lord will cut off from Israel *head and tail, branch and rush in one Day*, Isai. 9. 13. There can be no greater Affront offer'd to the divine Majesty, than slighting of his Judgments, and refusing to be amended by them. 'Tis no wonder then if he augments the Number of them, and adds to the Weight and Burden of them.

3. To give yet a further Account of this Truth, it is not for God's Honour to give over the inflicting of Punishments, till he hath accomplished the thing he sent them for. What is said of God's *Word* in *Isai.* 55. 10, 11. may be truly applied to his *Judgments, As the Rain cometh down, and the Snow from Heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the Earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give Seed to the Sower, and Bread to the Eater: so shall my word be that goeth forth out of my Mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it.* Apply this to the *Judgments and Punishments* which God is pleased to inflict on a Person or Nation, and it will afford you a sufficient *Reason*, why God sends one Judgment after another. His Pleasure is that his Judgments shall be *Effectual* some way or other: they shall answer his Design: they shall be Useful and Serviceable to the End which he intended, and therefore, if *this* or *that* Calamity proves not successful, he will accomplish his Work by *others*, he will by *all of them together* finish what he purposed to do. This is signified to us by what we read in *Ezek.* 15. 6, 7. *Thus saith the Lord God, as the Vine-tree among the Trees of the Forest, which I have given to the Fire for Fuel, so will I give the Inhabitants of* Jerusalem. *And I will set my Face against them: they shall go out from one Fire, and another Fire shall devour them, and they shall know that I am the Lord, when I set my Face against them:* God will be known to be the great *Jehovah* by inflicting variety of Punishments, and by doing this effectually. Though Sinners may go out from *one Fire*, though they extricate themselves from one Danger and Calamity, yet other Evils shall overtake them. For the Almighty will not be baffled, the All-wise God will not be frustrated in his Designs. If he intends either the Amendment or utter Confusion of a People, he will effect it to purpose. This is the meaning of those Words in *Hos.* 5. 15. *I will go and return to my place, till they acknowledge their Offence and seek my Face: in their Affliction they will seek me early:* they will either seek me sincerely, and repent of their Evil ways, or I will force them to seek me, and cry unto me in the anguish of their Spirits. *Shall one take up a Snare from the Earth, and have taken nothing at all?* saith the Prophet *Amos*, chap. 3. ver. 5. Which is as much as to say, Shall God be frustrated and disappointed in the executing of his Judgments? Will not he bring to pass what he hath ordain'd and decreed? Yes, assuredly he will. Sometimes those Words in *Nahum* 1. 9. are experimentally verified, *He will make an utter end: Affliction shall not rise up the second time.* But if it be not thus, if one Judgment or another seems to be successless, yet the next which follows shall not be so. There shall be a succession and series of Punishments, until God hath either reformed or destroyed Sinners. He will not make an end till he hath accomplished either of these.

If there be a company of Rebels abroad, and a few Forces which the Prince hath sent out against them be not able to scatter them, will he give over till they are absolutely reduced to Obedience? will he not dispatch greater Numbers, and more powerful Aids against them? Yes, he will not suffer himself to be baffl'd; he will let Rebels know and feel that he is above them, and is able to confound their Forces. *This* gives the *Reason* of the *Variety of God's Judgments.* When the Lord begins he will make an End. It is derogatory to his Majesty and Power to *desist*, until Offenders be humbled and brought to submit. We read in 2 *Sam.* 20. how *Joab* besieged a certain Town, and was resolved not to raise the Seige till *Sheba*, the rebellious *Sheba* was subdued; [*Deliver him only to me, and I will depart from the City*] said that valiant Captain. The Head of *Sheba* must be thrown over the Wall before he will quit the Seige. This represents to us in some measure the thing which I am now treating of. The Lord of Hosts appears in a Hostile manner against obstinate Sinners, he besets and environs them with divers Judgments and Calamities, and it can't be expected that he will desist till the Heads of those Rebels are delivered to him, till they are either brought to relent of their Sins, or are destroyed in them. The Bow of *Jonathan* and the Sword of *Saul* did not return empty: and shall we think that *God*'s shall? No; he will accomplish the thing for which he intended them, he will be glorified in the Subjection or Subversion of Sinners. God doth with his Judgments, which are his Messengers, as *Joram* did with his that he sent to *Jehu*, *be*

he sent one after another: seeing those he dispatched away first did not come back again, he ordered others to follow them. In a resembling manner, if God sends one Calamity on a Land, and that returns not with its Errand, another is dispatch'd after it, and a third and a fourth soon after them, that the Design and Purpose of God on Sinners may prove effectual.

4. God sends one Judgment after another, that he may hereby punish a *whole Nation*, that as All have sinned so All may suffer. There must be this variety of Calamities, that those who have escaped some, may be overtaken by others, and so that none may be exempted. Which is well expressed by the Prophet *Isaiah*, chap. 24. ver. 17, 18. *Fear and the Pit and the Snare are upon thee, O Inhabitant of the Earth: and it shall come to pass, that he who fleeth from the noise of the Fear shall fall into the Pit, and he that cometh up out of the midst of the Pit shall be taken in the Snare: for the Windows from on high are open, and the Foundations of the Earth do shake.* Above and below, every where God will so surround and incircle them with Calamities, that they shall no ways evade them. When they are quit of one Evil, another shall prevail against them: and if they get rid of that, a third shall beset them. This is also decypher'd to us in *Amos* 5. 19. *As if a Man did flee from a Lion, and a Bear met him; or went into the House, and leaned his Hand on the Wall, and a Serpent bit him.* That is, Suppose a Man should escape Dangers abroad, and is so nimble as to reach home, yet when he comes there, a domestick Enemy assaults him. Thus those who have escaped the Fury of the Sword, and the Mischiefs that come by War and Battle, when they have returned to their Houses have met with infectious Diseases, which like the biting of some venomous *Serpent* have proved mortal to them. And in other Instances I might shew how one Misery succeeds another, and how one compleats what another could not. Thus I have offer'd the *Reasons* of this *Judicial Procedure* of the great Judge of Heaven and Earth.

In the next place, to evince yet farther the Truth and Nature of this *Attribute*, I will shew, that God is wont oftentimes to observe the Law of *Retaliation* in the punishing of Offenders. He is so exact and punctual in his *Justice* which he executes on Transgressors, that he takes care to *proportion* the Punishments to the Crimes; so that a Man may plainly read the latter in the former. It may be observ'd, That Penalties are often adjusted to the Sins; I mean not only as to the Greatness, but as to the Likeness of them. The Judgments which are inflicted by God, carry with them the very Mark and Character of the Enormities which are committed. It seems good to the divine *Nemesis* to punish Offenders in their own kind. This was remarkable in the first Sin: Man's Punishment was adapted to his way of Transgressing, for as he sinn'd in eating the Fruit of the Earth, so he and his Posterity suffer'd for it, by having the *Earth* and the *Fruits* of it *cursed* for his sake, *Gen.* 3. 17. This was observed in that primitive and original Sanction against Homicide, *Whoso sheddeth Man's Blood, by Man shall his Blood be shed*, Gen. 9. 6. And afterwards under the *Mosaick* Dispensation, there was the Law of returning like for like, or punishing in the same kind: *An Eye for an Eye, a Tooth for a Tooth:* and so as to other Damages, *As he hath done, so* (i. e. in the very same manner) *it shall be done unto him*, Lev. 24. 19. In that old *Mosaick* Institution concerning *drinking the Water of Jealousy*, 'tis observable, that those Parts which were instrumental in the Sin were particularly punished, the *Belly swell'd*, and the *Thigh rotted*, Num. 5. 21. An exact Retaliation is denounced in *Exod.* 22. 22, 24. If the *Israelites afflict any Widow or fatherless Child*, the Threatning against them is, that *their Wives shall be Widows, and their Children Fatherless.* And so likewise in the frequent Occurrences of God's Providence in the World, it is taken notice of in the Sacred Writings, that Punishments are proportion'd to the particular Sins and Enormities. *The Wicked is snared in the Works of his own Hands*, Psal. 9. 16. *God brings upon them their own Iniquities, and cuts them off in their own Wickedness*, Psal. 94. 23. This Parity between the Crime and Penalty is partly suggested in that Execration of the Psalmist, *Let his Memory perish out of the Earth, because he remembered not to do Mercy*, Psal. 109. 15, 16. His Name shall deservedly be forgot who was wilfully forgetfull of that necessary Duty of Compassion. This Proportion between the Crime and the Penalty, is contain'd in those other Words of the Psalmist, *Psal.* 18. 26. *With the froward thou wilt shew thy self froward.* Not that there is the same *frowardness* in God that there is in Man: Frowardness when it is spoken of the latter is a Vice, but it cannot enter into our Thoughts, that it is of that Nature when applied to the former. But when 'tis said, God will *shew himself*

self froward, the meaning is, that he will deal with Perverse Sinners according to their Perversenes, and even in that way and manner which answers to their dealing with him. A particular instance of this is thus expres'd by *Solomon*, Prov. 21. 13. *Whoso stoppeth his Ears at the cry of the Poor, he shall cry himself, but shall not be heard.*

This Correspondence between the Judgment and the Sin is meant in *Job* 4. 8. *They that plow iniquity and sow wickedness, reap the same:* and in Hos. 8. 7. *They have sown the wind: they shall reap the whirlwind.* And indeed this is a Similitude very often used in Scripture: *ye have plowed wickedness*, saith the same Prophet, *ye have reaped iniquity, ye have eaten the fruit of lyes*, Hos. 10. 13. and in other places there are the like Expressions. *They shall eat of the fruit of their own ways*, saith the Wise Man, *and be filled with their own devices.* It is highly reasonable that a Man have liberty to reap what he sows, to eat of the Food that he hath prepared: So 'tis equitable that a Sinner should feel those Judgments which his own doings have procured him, it is just that his Punishment should be answerable to his Faults, and that one should bear the very Image of the other. *His own iniquities shall take the wicked himself, and he shall be holden with the cords of his Sins*, Prov. 5. 22. This is that which our Blessed Saviour informs the World of, and bids them expect, *with what measure ye meet unto others, the same shall be measured to you again*, Mat. 7. 2. *He shall have judgment without mercy, who hath shew'd no mercy*, saith St *James*, Chap. 2. v. 13. *Whatsoever a Man soweth, that shall he reap*, saith St. *Paul*, Gal. 6. 7. *He that leadeth into captivity, shall go into captivity: he that killeth with the sword must be kill'd with the sword*, Rev. 13. 10. The meaning of all which Passages is that the *Just* God suiteth Punishments to the particular and individual Quality of the Offences. Mens Sins are destructive to them in that very way and nature, in which they design'd Mischief and Destruction to others: Which the *Hebrew Masters* have thus expressed, * *They are boiled in that Pot, in which they boil'd:* And again, † *the Archer is slain with the same Arrow, that he made with his own Hand.* That is, Sinners shall suffer the very things which they intended for others. Which is thus fully expressed by the Psalmist, Psal. 7. 15, 16. *He made a Pit, and digged it, and is fallen into the Ditch which he made. His mischief shall return upon his own Head, and his violent dealing shall come down upon his own Pate.* His Arrows shot up against Heaven, fall down more furiously on himself.

* *Sota.*

† *Talm. Pesach.*

Let us see this in some *Particular Examples.* And truly we shall find that God is pleased to deal thus with his own Servants, as well as with Strangers and Enemies, to let us see that he hates Iniquity in both. I will offer you a large Catalogue of *both* together to confirm this part of my Discourse, which I design to be an Illustrious Proof of the Exact *Justice* of God. *Jacob* imposed upon his Brother *Esau*, and by deceit got the Blessing from him: But behold he is punish'd afterwards in his own Kind, by his Treacherous Uncle. He that deceiv'd *Isaac* by personating of *Esau* is cheated and supplanted by *Laban*, who substitutes *Leah* in the place of *Rachel*. Some of the Plagues of *Egypt* answer'd that People's Sins, as the Author of the Book of *Wisdom* observes, *For the foolish devices of their Wickedness, wherewith being deceiv'd they worship'd Serpents and Wild Beasts, God sent a Multitude of Beasts upon them for Vengeance: that they might know that wherewith a Man sinneth, by the same also he shall be punish'd*, Wisd. 11. 15, 16. They commanded the *Hebrew* Children to be thrown into *Nile*, and behold the River returns a fit Punishment; it gives Frogs instead of Fish, and Blood for Water, the latter more especially to check them for their Infanticide. Yea further, 'tis observable that the *Egyptians* were punish'd with the Death of their Children, for murdering those of the *Israelites*. God is pleased to shew the suitableness of the Punishment on another account, which we should not have taken notice of, if himself had not remark'd it to us. *He slew the Sons, even the First-born of the Egyptians*, because *Pharaoh refused to let* Israel *go, who was his Son, even his First-born*, Exod. 4. 22, 23. Some think they rightly pursue this *suitableness* of Sin and Punishment, when they tell us that *Pharaoh*, who order'd the *Hebrew* Children to be drown'd, was himself drown'd in the Red Sea. But this is a Vulgar Error, and ought to be Corrected, for a Man with a little Pains may inform himself, that *Jacob* came into *Egypt* in the time of *Orus* the Son of *Osiris*, King of *Egypt*, who was a great Friend and Favourer of the *Israelites*: But under *Busiris*, or *Orus* the second, they were grievously oppressed; he it was that made the Edict of drowning the *Hebrew* Male Children.

After

After this *Orus* succeeded his Daughter, Queen *Thermutis*, who took *Moses* out of the Water of *Nile*, in an Ark of Reeds. She had two Brethren, one of whom, viz. *Rathoris* succeeded her in the Kingdom. After him *Cenchres*, his Son, Reigned: And this was he that refused to dismiss the *Israelites* out of the Land: And because he did so ten several times, God sent ten *Plagues* on him and his People, and at last overwhelm'd him with the Waves of the *Red Sea*. So that it is plain that *Pharaoh*, who order'd the Infants to be drown'd, was not the same that perished in the Sea. Nevertheless, the Tragical overthrow of this latter was very suitable to the Offence of the former.

To proceed in our present Task, and to let you see that there is an *agreeableness* between the Fault and the Penalty, *Nadab* and *Abihu offered strange Fire*, and were *devour'd by Fire*, Lev. 10. 1, 2. *Adonibezeck*, that cruel and mercileſs King of the *Canaanites*, was as cruelly used, so that he grew sensible of it, and said, *As I have done, so* (i. e. in the very same Kind) *God hath requited me*, Judg. 1. 7. *Gideon* slew 40 Elders of *Succoth*: And as many (bating only one) of his own Sons were murder'd by *Abimelech*; for the Punishment is sometimes transferr'd from the Person of the Criminal himself, to his nearest Relatives, though still 'tis in the same Kind. *Abimelech* was himself slain with a *Stone*, who had slain his Seventy Brethren *on one Stone*, Judg. 5. 18, 53. *As thy sword hath made Women childless, so shall thy mother be childless among Women*, said *Samuel* to *Agag*, 1 Sam. 15. 33. A suitable recompence for Unmercifulness, and Blood-shed. And this we may observe in God's Dealing with King *David*, when he punish'd him for those Flagitious Enormities of Murder and Adultery. Because *he killed* Uriah *with the Sword*, it was pronounced against him that *the Sword should never depart from his House*, 2 Sam. 12. 10. And because he vitiously conversed with *Uriah's* Wife, and *took her to Wife*, the Prophet denounced this Sentence against him, *I will take thy Wives before thine Eyes, and give them to thy Neighbour, and he shall lye with them in the sight of the Sun*, v. 11. Yea, we read that *David's Adultery* was punish'd by *Absalom's Incest*, 2 Sam. 16. 22. Thus the Sins of this Scandalous Offender met with an agreeable Reward: He was plagued by the same things wherein he Transgressed. And hither also we may referr God's way of punishing his *numbering the People*, viz. by a Judgment that *lessened their Number*. Of this suitable way of Animadverting on Sin the *Amorites* were an instance, who *made their Children pass through the Fire to Moloch*; and lo a worthy Punishment it was to make them suffer in the same way, as we read in 2 *Sam.* 12. 31. *David made them pass through the Brick-kiln*, or *Furnace*. We may see how Sin and Judgment correspond in *Achitophel's* Case, whose very *Politick* Fetches and Devices wrought his Ruin and Destruction. It may be the Fair *Absalom* was proud of his flowing Locks of Hair, and thence was hang'd in them. We may see that God makes Men taste those Evils which they inflicted on others, and in the very same manner, in the Example of *Abner*, concerning whom we read that *he smote Asahel under the fifth Rib*; and he was Smote himself in the same place by *Joab*, as is particularly Recorded, 2 *Sam.* 2. 23---3. 27. That there is a certain Proportion between the Crime and the Recompence of it, is manifest from what is Recorded of King *Ahab*, and his Queen *Jezabel*, that *the Dogs licked their Blood in the place where they licked the Blood of Naboth*, 1 Kings 21. 19.—— 22. 38. 2 Kings 9. 36. And more particularly of that Infamous Woman 'tis said, *The Dogs shall eat Jezabel in the portion of Jezreel*, (2 Kings 9. 10.) i. e. in the Field, which *Ahab* unjustly took from *Naboth* the *Jezreelite*. This is exemplified in King *Jeboiakim*, who *slew the Prophet* Uriah, *and cast his dead Body into the Graves of the common People*, Jer. 26. 23. and *he himself was slain, and buried with the burial of an Ass, drawn and cast forth beyond the Gates of* Jerusalem, as we read in the same place.

This Affinity between the Guilt and the Punishment is observable in *Hezekiah*, who out of Pride and Ostentation shew'd all his Wealth *to the Babylonian* Embassadors: And accordingly God gave all that Wealth and Treasure as a Prey to the *Babylonians*. This is particularly taken notice of in *Isa.* 39. 4. *All that is in my House have they seen: there is nothing among my Treasures which I have not shew'd them*, saith Hezekiah. And the Agreeable Doom follows in the 6th v. *All that is in thy House, and that which thy Fathers have laid up in store shall be carried to* Babylon: *nothing shall be left, saith the Lord.* Observe what was foretold, Levit. 26. 34, 35. *Then shall the Land enjoy her Sabbaths, as long as it lyeth desolate, and ye be in your Enemies*

nemies Land, because it did not rest in your Sabbaths when ye dwelt upon it. You prophaned the *Sabbaths*, and your Country shall as it were enjoy a *Sabbath*, when you are gone into Captivity, and cannot Till and Manure it. The Prophet *Isaiah* tells us of some of his Countrymen that they mocked at God's forbearance, and impudently dared him to hasten his Judgments: *let him* (i. e. God) *make speed*, say they, *and hasten his Work, that we may see it*, ch. 5. v. 19. but God in way of Retaliation tells them, that he will bring Enemies upon them, *that should come with speed swiftly*, v. 26. So in *Isai.* 30. 16. it is spoken thus concerning those *Jews* who vainly confided in *Egypt*, *Ye said, we will flee upon Horses, therefore shall ye flee; and we will ride upon the Swift, therefore shall they that pursue you be swift.* They are punished in a way proportionable to their demerit: the one plainly answers to the other. Among the instances of this Nature we must not forget *Haman*, who was Hanged on the same Gallows which he prepared and erected for *Mordecai:* nor *Daniel's accusers*, who caused him to be cast into the Lions den, and were cast into it themselves, and there immediately devoured. So the *Chaldean Officers*, that threw the three *Hebrew Captives* into the Fiery Furnace, were themselves consumed by the violent Flames. Here I may add that just denunciation against the *Chaldeans, because thou hast spoiled many Nations, all the Remnant of the People shall spoil thee*, Hab. 2. 8. and that other Doom pronounced against the Enemies of the Church, *As thou hast done, it shall be done unto thee: thy Reward shall return upon thy own Head*, Obad. v. 15. Thy Enemies shall make Reprisals upon thee, and thou shalt suffer the very same things which thou hast done to others.

There are in the *New Testament*, some Examples likewise of this *Proportionate Justice:* thus the *Jews* who opposed our Saviour and his Doctrine and all that believed on him, *lest* (as they pretended) *the Romans should come, and take away both their Place and Nation*, Joh. 11. 48. by this very means lost their Place and Nation. They persecuted and crucified Christ, to keep out the *Romans*; and behold as a condign Recompence, the crucifyiug of Christ brought in upon them, by the just Hand of God, the *Roman* Armies, who utterly destroyed them. *Paul* that consented to, and approved of the Stoning of *Stephen*, suffered in the sane kind, though God was pleased to raise him to Life, *Acts* 14. 19. There is some resemblance of this Proportion, in what befell the *Corinthians*, 1 Cor. 11. 30. *For this cause many are Weak and Sickly among you, and many Sleep.* They were faulty in *not discerning the Lord's Body*, and behold they are punished in their own Bodies, with Sicknesses, Diseases and Languishments. They received no *Spiritual refreshment*, no strength to their Souls, by reason of their unworthy Receiving the Sacrament, and lo! their Spirits are weak and fainting. They did not (as was required of them) *shew the Lord's death*, therefore their own was the just Penalty of it: but this *Proportion* is most Remarkable in very Wicked and Profligate Persons. It is the Mystical *Babylon's* Doom, *Reward her even as she Rewarded you: in the same Cup which she hath filled, fill to her*, and that *double*, Rev. 18. 6. I might add also that this severe *Proportion* is observed likewise, when *Sin* is made by God's just Providence, the *Punishment of Sin*, as in Rom. 1. 28. *Even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate Mind.* Here is first their Sin, οὐκ ἐδοκίμασαν, *they approved not of* the Acknowledging of God. Secondly, the Punishment, God answerably gave them over εἰς ἀδόκιμον νοῦν, *to a Mind void of Judgment*, to a Mind that could not approve of that which was Good. Thirdly, the Connection of the Sin and the Punishment, *as* they were first Guilty of the one, *so* God gave them up to the other. *Not approving*, is recompensed with a *Reprobate sense. So deceiving and being deceived* is a Character of Bad Men, especially false Teachers, 2 *Tim.* 3. 13. Deceiving and Imposing upon others is their main Business, they practise the κυβεία, the sleight which the Apostle speaks of in another place, *Eph.* 4. 4. they cog the *Die* (for that *Greek* word properly signifies Cheating at *Dice-playing*) like cheating Gamesters they impose upon the unskilful and unwary; and at other times they are deluded and cheated themselves by a false Throw from another Hand. Herein the *Justice* of Heaven is plainly discovered.

Besides these Examples in Scripture, there are many others in Ecclesiastical Story both Jewish and Christian, as also in the Pagan Records, whence we may be convinced, that God oftentimes punisheth Men in that very thing wherein they provoked him, and consequently that the *Equitableness* of God doth signally therein appear. Thus if *Josephus* may be credited, the Tower of *Babel* which *Nimrod*

Built, and where he inhabited after the Confusion of Tongues, was thrown down by a Tempestuous Wind, and slew him with the fall. From the account which the same Historian gives of the Final Destruction of *Jerusalem* in *Vespasian*'s Reign, we learn that as the place, so the very time and other notable circumstances of their Punishment agreed with the Place and Time, and other Circumstantials of their horrid Sin of Crucifying the Lord of Life. Again, we read not only in *Macrobius* but others, that *Herod the Great* slew his own Son, whilst he was hunting after the Blessed babe *Jesus*, and designed to take away his Life. That is very observable which *Nicephorus* relates concerning *Salome*, *Herodias*'s Daughter that as she was passing over a Frozen lake, the Ice brake, and she fell up to the Neck in Water, and her Head was parted from her Body, by sharp Flakes of Ice. In this strange manner was she Beheaded, by whose procurement the Holy *Baptist*'s Head was cut off. *Eusebius* acquaints us that the cruel *Maxentius* perished by that Trap-bridge, which he had designed to entrap *Constantine*. If we may give credit to *Trithemius*, *Hatto* Archbishop of *Mentz*, in *Germany*, scoffingly comparing the lamentable Out-cries of the Poor people whom he had shut up in a Barn, in time of Famine, and then set it on Fire, to the crying of Mice, was haunted soon after with a whole Army of Mice and Rats, who from place to place pursuing him, at last devoured this Mercileſs Derider; thus was his Fate suitable to his Villainy. Pope *Alexander* 6th, who had prepared for his Guests some Empoisoned Wine, deservedly received his Death from it, whilst he drank of it by a mistake. What, the Pens of *Heathens* write concerning *Perillus*, is to our present purpose: it is a known Story, that when he presented *Phalaris* with a Brazen Bull, made so that those who were to be Tortured in it should be heard to Roar as Bulls, the Tyrant ordered this Inventor of it to be first Tortured in it himself, and there to be put to death. Blood hath been signally recompensed with Blood, as in that memorable Exprobration of *Cyrus*'s Cruelty (which he met with from *Tomyris* Queen of *Scythia*, after she had caused his Head to be thrown into a Vessel filled with Blood) * *Thou thirstest after Blood, and therefore with Blood thou shalt be Glutted.* And from several other Historical relations it might be shewed that Cruelty and Bloodshed, which Men have been guilty of, have been suitably rewarded either from their own Hands or from others. *Brutus* and *Cassius* dispatch'd themselves with the same Swords wherewith they stabbed *Cæsar*. *Ulpian* a Great Lawyer, and as Great an Enemy of the Christian Religion, who writ down and prescribed the particular Arts and Methods of Tormenting, which the Persecutors at that time used towards the Christians, met with a Fate that answered to his savage Mind, for he was violently dispatched out of the World by the Emperours Life-guard for the Severity which he used towards them and others.

* *Justin Hist. l. 1. Val. Max. l. 9. c. 10.*

There are other Histories that furnish us with Examples of this just *Nemesis* and Retribution. *Bajazet* the First, who intended (as he confessed) to coop up *Tamerlain* in an iron Cage, and to shew him publickly, was so served himself. And that God repays Evil in its own kind, may be illustrated from that notable Historical passage in *Crantzius*, the *Danish* Historian, who tells us that one in *Denmark* was hired for a summ of Money to kill an innocent Person: accordingly when he had done it, he was rewarded with a Purse of Gold. In a little time after, the Conscience of this Murderer would not suffer him to be at Rest: he grew so weary of his Life, that he offered that very Purse of Gold to any one that would undertake to rid him out of the World: and at last he met with one who accepted the offer, him he hired with the same Price for which he had lately Murdered the innocent. Thus the Crimes of some notorious Sinners are *retaliated*, and in their very Offence they receive the Reward of it.

And to come nearer, I will mention one domestick Example. Was not the Horrid Conspiracy of the *Fifth* of *November*, in a signal manner, and in that *Suitable* way which I have been speaking of, animadverted upon, when one of the chief Conspirators was Apprehended in the very place where he was preparing the Instruments of Death, in the dark Vault where he was studying the Destruction of so many, and likewise when several of the designed Actors, were unexpectedly hurt and maimed by the sudden Firing of *Gunpowder*, (which they laid to drie) the very Materials wherewith they had purposed to Execute their Cursed Plot, and Effect the Ruin of the whole Kingdom in a Moment? And afterwards when with the Fall of the House at *Black Friars*, where great Numbers of *Roman Catholicks* were met on

on the 5th of *November*, (for so it was according to the *New Style* which the *Papists* observe) to hear *Drury* the *Jesuit* preach, there were 94 of them killed outright, and most of the rest were bruised and maimed? Thus the Fifth of *November* was *retaliated*, thus the divine Justice avenged the execrable Crime of that Day, by a seasonable and agreeable Punishment. And so I have from abundant Examples proved the Reality of this Attribute: I have shewed, That God is in a strict Sense a God of *Retributions*, for he renders to Men according to their own ways; his Punishments are fitted to the Offences, to the Nature and Quality of the Crimes. Yea, this *Retaliation* hath been observed, not only on profligate Sinners, but on those that are the Favourites and Friends of Heaven, for it is God's Will, that even their Faults should sometimes be legible in the Penalty.

And seeing it is thus, let us not shut our Eyes, or refuse to read those plain Characters of divine *Justice*. There are more of them before our Eyes than we imagine. If we would seriously and industriously *study* and *observe* the afflictive Dispensations of God towards us, we should be able to discern that we receive Measure for Measure, and Like for Like. Let us then in good earnest set about this Work, and let us trace the Footsteps of our Sins by what we suffer: let this latter lead us to a sight of the former. Since there is sometimes a *Proportion* observ'd, since the kind and nature of our Miscarriages may be known by the Evils which we feel, let us be very careful to take notice of these latter, and let those shew us our more particular Offences which we are guilty of, and let us with the profoundest Submission and Humility acknowledge God to be a most righteous Judge and Avenger: for this way of his dealing with us is a visible Proof of the Rigour and Exactness of his Justice.

Having thus sufficiently display'd the divine *Justice*, and the Methods of it, I will now in the next place lay before you the *Reasons* and *Grounds* of it. First, This divine Property towards Offenders, is founded in *God's very Nature*. To hate Sin is essential to him, and this necessarily produceth Punishment, for the abhorrence of Sin is naturally manifested by a severe Animadverting upon it. *Upon the Wicked God shall rain Snares, Fire and Brimstone, and a horrible Tempest: this shall be the Portion of their Cup*, Psal. 11. 6. And the Reason of it is assigned in the next Words, *For the righteous Lord loveth Righteousness*, his holy Nature prompts him to love Righteousness, and consequently to hate all Unrighteousness. So that punitive Justice is the absolute result of the righteous Essence of God, it is grounded on the Holiness of his Nature. If you believe him to be Pure in himself, and an hater of Impurity in others, you cannot but grant that it is his inseparable Property to punish Sin. I say, the Nature of the Deity obliges him to this, for he hates Sin naturally and necessarily: he therefore must discover this Hatred by correcting and curbing it. This then is a very clear Proposition, That there is an innate Standard of Punishment in God's Nature; and thence follows this other, That there is such an eternal Attribute of the Deity as *Justice* or *Severity*: which is as the divine *Nemesis*, to scourge and lash the Vitious, and to chastise the wicked Lives of Sinners. And I may further add, That God cannot chuse whether he will punish Sin or no: for seeing God naturally abhorrs it, it is requisite that he should by some Act shew how displeasing it is to him; now the most suitable Act is *Punishing* it. Therefore I conclude, That God cannot but Animadvert upon Mens vitious Actions; for if he did otherwise, he would act repugnantly to his divine Nature and Purity. Which overthrows what a * learned Man hath left in Writing; to wit, "If God punishes Sin, he doth what "is just; but nevertheless, God is not by any Attribute of his, under a Necessity "to punish Sin, if the Sinner repent, deprecate his just Offence and Displeasure, and "return to his Duty. God doth that which is just, if he punish Sin: but then I "dare not say, that *'tis just* that God *should punish*, or that he were *unjust* if he "*should not do it*.

* *Dr.* Whichcot. *Serm. on* Acts 13.38

Secondly, From the very *Nature of Sin it self* it follows, That there is a vindictive Justice in God. If we rightly consider what *Sin* is, we must needs acknowledge, that there is a Necessity of being severe against it. Here I might insist on the Greatness and Majesty of the Person affronted. Sin is offering an Indignity to the infinite and supreme Being, the Creator, Preserver, and Benefactor of Mankind. The infinite Excellency of the Person offended adds an Infiniteness to the Offence. *God* is injured: if we say no more, that sufficiently expresses the Heinousness of the Fact, and tells us it can't escape punishing. Again, The Meanness and Baseness of the Persons offending, argue as much. If we consider that we were produced out of

nothing by the Almighty Power of God, that we are dependent and precarious Creatures, and are every minute running back into nothing; unless we were by the same omnipotent Hand upheld by which we were at first created, we cannot but grant that our wilfull Displeasing of God is of that Nature, that it must needs be follow'd with Punishment. Besides, If we consider the abundant Obligations that are upon us to serve and obey this supreme Lord, it will yet further appear, that sinning against him is unspeakably base and unworthy, and cannot go unpunish'd. God not only deserves our Love by reason of his own innate Excellency, but because we are continually Partakers of his Mercy and Bounty: we tast and see, and experimentally feel that he is Good, that he is a gracious and benign Being. And can it then enter into our Thoughts that the wilfull Disobeying of him will not be taken notice of, that the vile and unthankfull Slighting of him, yea the obstinate Rebelling against him will never be accounted for? Certainly this cannot be the Perswasion of any Man of sober Reflections. Our very Reasons dictate to us, that there is a natural Connection between Sin and Punishment. We must be forced to subscribe to this grand Truth, That the abominable Nature of *Vice* argues a *Punitive Justice.*

Thirdly, God, as a *Governour* and *Law-giver*, is engaged to punish Sin. And therefore on that account also his *Justice* is indispensible.

1. As a Law-giver he chastises the *past* Folly, he makes the Offender suffer for what he hath done. By shewing himself severe against Sinners he causes them to *know and see that it is an evil thing and bitter that they have forsaken the Lord, and that his fear was not in them*, Jer. 2. 19. This is the natural Demerit of past Vice.

2. God's Severity is necessary in respect of the *present time*, viz. To rouze Men out of their Sins, to make them thoroughly apprehensive of their Guilt. The generality of Men sleep so soundly, and are so deeply immers'd in Vice, that it is impossible to awake them any other way but this. This Thunder therefore is requisite to fright them out of their present Commission of Sin.

3. God by annexing Penalties to his Laws, prevents Sin *for the future.* As a severe Judge of Assizes by his impartial executing of Justice on those that are found Criminal, scares the drouzy Neighbourhood, and alarms the whole Country, and they are all deterr'd from incurring the Penalty of the Law, and they become strict observers of their Duty: so in like manner, it is the Method of divine Justice to make Punishment to be the Attendant of Sin, and especially not to suffer heinous Sins to go unpunish'd, lest the wicked World should be encourag'd from their Impunity to commit the same or grosser Offences, and lest even the Good should be tempted to do Evil, by God's neglecting to shew his Anger against it. We may inferr then, that this is the most proper way God could use to hinder the spreading of the Infection of Sin. By animadverting on past Crimes, he in some measure restrains Men from the perpetration of them afterwards. Whereas, on the contrary, if he should suffer Sin to be attended with Impunity, the World would be invited to persist in their Follies; yea even in their greatest Enormities; and they would, as 'twere, be upheld and maintain'd in Vice.

4. God, as a Governour, keeps up Order in the Universe; yea indeed, keeps up the World it self, by adjoyning severe Execution to his Laws. If this were not duly observ'd, the Community would soon feel the miserable Effects of it, all things would run into Confusion, Wickedness would be so rampant on the Earth that there would be no living here. * *If there be Sin, and no Misery that attends it*, saith a pious Father, *such Iniquity will spoil the Order of the World.* Wherefore God's Wisdom directs him to vindicate his Laws by punishing the Transgressors of them. And if we weigh things aright, we shall find that there is *Mercifulness* in this *Severity*: the World is hereby hindred from flying back into a Chaos.

* *Si peccata fiant, & desit miseria, ordinem dehonestat iniquitas.* Augustin. de lib. Arbit. l. 3. c. 9.

5. The *Authority* of God, as he is our Governour and Legislator, cannot be preserv'd if there be an universal Impunity. It is necessary that his Wrath should be reveal'd from Heaven against bold Offenders in order to the maintaining a due awe and reverence of his Dominion and Rule over us. It is prejudicial and derogatory unto these not to punish Sin, for due Punishment is the great Prop of Dominion and Sovereign Power. Rebellion against Heaven would soon spread, Devils and wicked Men would grow unruly, and the Divine Majesty and Dominion would become contemptible, and his Sovereign Authority rendred vile and despicable, if bold Offenders were not severely check'd for their Enormities. He as a King

a King prescribes us Laws, and enjoyns the Observation of them: but Sin is a palpable Breach and Violation of them. Wherefore he is concern'd to chastise it with some Rigour, that his Authority may not be endanger'd; yea, that it may not be lost in the World. This the wise Law-givers among the *Pagans* were sensible of, and accordingly, in the close of their Laws were wont to make mention of * *God's being an Avenger*. The dread of this will much more enforce the *Divine Laws*; for he that made them will not let the Violation of them go unpunish'd: he will not pass by the insolent Affronts of Men against his Sovereign Majesty and Supreme Power. There is a necessity of God's punishing the Disobedient, and animadverting with Severity on Sinners, to vindicate his Honour and Justice: for these must be satisfied; and they cannot be satisfied but by the Transgressor's undergoing Punishment. Thus, besides what was said before, (*viz.* That vindictive Justice is natural to God, because of his spotless Purity, and because of the Nature of Sin which speaks a Defiance to him,) it is further evident, that this Justice is Essential to him as he is our *Governour* and *Ruler*: he cannot but rigorously treat Offenders, (*i. e.* Either the very individual Persons that displease him, or some that undertake to be their Surety and Proxy) as he hath this Character.

* *Qui secus faxit, Deus ipse vindex erit.* Cic. de Leg. l. 2.

But this is very stiffly opposed by *Socinus* and his Followers, who hold that Punishment for Sin may be altogether dispensed with, and that there is no *Essential Justice* in God that requires it. Which they maintain for the sake of another Doctrine that is held by them, *viz.* That there is no Attribute in the Divinity that requires *Satisfaction* for Sin. *Socin. Prælect.* cap. 16. *De Servat.* l. 1. c. 1. *Catech. Racov.* Sect. 6. c. 8. Which is a Notion that takes much with our *Deists*, as indeed these Gentlemen shew themselves very much pleased with the Doctrines of the *Socinians*, or else we should not find them taking their part four Pages together (*viz.* 97, 98, 99, 100.) in *the Oracles of Reason*: but more especially the Doctrine of *Satisfaction* is exploded by these modern Pen-men, and they declare to the World, that *a Mediator is unnecessary, and derogates from God's Mercy*, p. 89. For, say they, God may *freely* pardon the Sins of Men, without any *Satisfaction*: and they think they sufficiently prove it thus, Men can forgive Trespasses without Satisfaction, therefore God can. But this is a very loose and groundless way of arguing, because there is not the same Proportion between God and Man, as there is between Man and Man. The one is infinite, the other is finite, which makes as vast a difference between them as can possibly be imagin'd. Again, Though Man can forgive the Trespasses and Injuries against himself, yet he can't forgive and pardon the Trespasses and Injuries done to God. Therefore you see the Argument is of no value. I confess it is hard for us shallow Creatures to determine positively what God *could do* if he pleased, because he acts most freely: but yet this must be said, from what we see done, we may, yea, we cannot but inferr, that God acted conformably to his Nature, when he demanded a Satisfaction and Propitiation for the Sins of Mankind, and when he pardoneth Sin on Consideration of the Satisfaction which was made by Christ to his offended Justice. Yea, I go further, *viz.* That the Death of Christ is a demonstrative Argument of the vindictive Justice of God. For no Man can assign any Reason why he was made a *Sacrifice*, but this, That it was necessary that an Atonement should be made for Sin. The infinite *Justice*, as well as the *Mercy* of God, was consulted in the great Work of Man's Redemption. It was the result of the latter, that God the Father sent his only begotten Son to assume our Nature, and to die for us, that we might live. This must be acknowledged to be the Product of *Mercy*. And yet at the same time the *Justice* of God was manifested, for this was satisfied by the Undertaking of *Christ*, on whom God laid the Iniquities of us all, *setting him forth to be a Propitiation, to declare his Righteousness*, as the Apostle speaks, *Rom.* 3. 25. And 'tis observable, that these last Words are repeated, *to declare* (saith he again) *his Righteousness*, and he adds also, *that he might be Just*, ver. 26. So that this divine Writer would have us especially take notice of this, that 'tis according to the *Justice* and *Righteousness* of God to exact a *Satisfaction*, i. e. a Punishment for Sin, and that there cannot be a greater Eviction and Demonstration of the *vindictive Justice* of God, than the Sufferings and Death of the *Messias*.

Hence it appears, that the *Socinian* Cavil is groundless, and that what I asserted before is impregnable, that punitive Justice is a real Attribute of God, and that it belongs to him as he is of infinite Purity, and as he is the Governour and Manager of

of the World. And therefore unless you can suppose that he can alter his Nature, and receed from his Right, he must animadvert upon Sinners. To conclude, though Punitive Justice be a Secondary Attribute, yet it is a natural Property of God, and inseparable from him. * *It appertains to the natural order of Justice*, saith St. Augustin, *that either there should be no Sin, or that it should be Punish'd.* Seeing then it is undeniable that Sins are committed in the World, God is absolutely and necessarily bound by his Just Nature to inflict Punishment on the Offenders, *viz.* either the Parties themselves that offend, or whoever assumes the Guilt upon him.

* *Ad naturalem Justitiæ ordinem pertinet ut aut peccata non sint, aut impunita esse non valeant.* Lib. 26. cont. Faust.

I having answer'd the shrewdest Cavil that can be made against the Doctrine, I referr the Answer to some other *Objections* against God's *Justice* to the Discourse of *Providence*, where the considering of them will be very Pertinent.

And now in the last place I will conclude with some *Inferences* from the Doctrine of Punitive Justice, which I have been asserting and vindicating.

First, Let no Man Repine at whatever happens to him by the Divine Disposal, for God doth all things Justly, and he cannot do otherwise. To bring our Minds to a steady Contentment and Patience we must urge upon them continually, that of a profound Moralist, *viz.* that † the Deity by its Nature is the most Just of all Beings, otherwise he were not a Deity. But more especially we ought to inculcate on our Minds what God himself saith, that *his ways are equal*, Ezek. 18. 29. and what the inspired Writer saith, *God is Righteous in all his Ways*, Psal. 145. 17. *Yea surely God will not do wickedly, neither will the Almighty pervert Judgment*, Job 34. 12. with God there is not, there cannot be the least shadow of Injustice. He may most truly say to us (whatever distresses befall us) what he once told the *Jews*, Ezek. 14. 23. *Ye shall know that I have not done without cause all that I have done unto you.* It is not without cause that any Persons lie under Pain and Torture of Body, it is not without cause that Poverty and Scarcity are his Portion: It is not without cause that they are brought to shame and disgrace; in a word, it is not without cause that they labour under any other sort of Affliction. For he that is Justice itself cannot deal unjustly with any of his Creatures: He that is Righteousness itself cannot do them any injury. Think then that you hear God say to you, in all your Disappointments and Calamities, what the House-holder in the Gospel replied to one of the Labourers that wrought in his Vineyard, *Friend, I do thee no Wrong: take that thine is, and go thy way. Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with my own?* Mat. 20. 13, 14. Do not presumptuously expostulate with Heaven, and call God to an Account for his Actions. Be not so hardy as to accuse thy Maker, preferr not a Bill against thy Judge. For shame be silent, and submit: Take that which *thine* is, and be contented. Poverty and Sickness and bodily Pains are *thine*, reproach and contumely are *thine*, all is *thine*, that God is pleased to exercise thee with. Where then is there any place left for Freting and Discontent?

† Δικαιότατον φύσει πάντων τὸ θεῖον, ἐπεὶ οὐδ' ἂν ἦν θεῖον. Porphyr.

Thus we must reckon it to be our Duty to clear the Majesty of Heaven from all Injustice, Rigour and Cruelty in his Judgments executed either on our selves or others. In the extreamest Miseries we must banish all words of Discontent and Impatience, and heartily acknowledge that God's Dealings with us are most Just. Yea we ought to take notice of, and admire the Divine Mitigation and Indulgence, as that Holy Man did, *Thou, O Lord*, (saith he) *hast punish'd us less than our iniquities deserve*, Ezr. 9. 13. That we are not thrust down into endless Torments, and made irrecoverably miserable, is the effect of God's Patience and Forbearance. *It is the Lord's Mercy that we are not Consumed*, Lam. 3. 22. We have by our repeated Transgressions incensed him, insomuch that we might expect to feel the utmost of his Severity; but behold! In the midst of Judgment he remembreth Mercy: *He deals not with us after our Sins, nor rewards us according to our iniquities*, Psal. 103. 10. Therefore we have no cause to murmur against Heaven, and to find fault with his severest Dispensations toward us. Let us remember this, that God is Just, and cannot do any thing that is Injurious. Wherefore let this effectually silence all our Discontents, and make us bear the indignation of the Lord with the humblest Submission.

Second-

Secondly, Behold here *Sin* in it's dismal, but proper Colours. Satan endeavours to cover the fatal Hook with a pleasant Bait, he uses all Arts to disguise the Mischief which attends Vice. But be not deceived; know that God is *Just*, and then you cannot but know that *it will be bitterness in the latter end.* Tho' you flatter your selves, and are applauded by others, and make a Covenant with Hell, yet be ascertain'd of this that the close and issue of all Disobedience is Fatal. God's *Sword* is drawn, his *Bow* is bent, his *Arrows* are prepar'd, his *Cup* is mingled, the *Instruments of Death* are made ready, and you shall sooner or later experience the woful effect of all this. Think not that God's Goodness and Clemency exclude his Severity: Remember that though he is Merciful, yet he is Just; know that he is a * *Consuming Fire* as well as a Chearing and Warming *Light.* Say not that he was your Creator, therefore he will not destroy you: for you read the contrary in *Isa.* 27. 11. *He that made them will not have mercy on them; he that formed them will shew them no Favour.* The same Hand that created them will ruin them: As by the way, it may be observ'd by those that are critically disposed, that the *Hebrew* Word *Bara* signifies not only *to make* or *Create*, but to *remove, cut off, destroy.* By reason of *Sin* it is that he who is *the Preserver of Men*, (Job 7. 20.) becomes a *destroyer* of them. This, and this only moves him to send Judgments and Plagues on the World.

* Deut. 4. 4. Heb. 12. 29.

All the *Gentiles* had a Notion of this, and thence they brought Sacrifices and Oblations to their Gods, to pacifie their Anger, and to prevail with them to remove the Evils which they either fear'd or lay under. For their Offerings proceeded not only from their Belief of God's being *Merciful* (as was said before) but from the persuasion and sense they had of his *Justice.* Even the ignorant and barbarous People of *Melita*, when they saw the Viper fasten on the Apostles Hand, concluded him to be some Heinous Criminal, and consequently that † *Vengeance would not suffer him to live:* The Divine *Justice* or *Nemesis* would certainly punish such a one. This is imprinted in the rational Nature of Man, and accordingly it is a generally acknowledged Truth. All subscibe to that of the Apostle, Heb. 10. 31. *It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the Living God.* As his Favour is Life, so his Displeasure is Death and Destruction. If *the Wrath of a King* be as *the roaring of a Lyon* (as *Solomon* represents it) then certainly the Wrath and Indignation of the Supreme King of Heaven and Earth is much more Terrible and Astonishing. *Who knoweth the Power of his Anger?* saith the Psalmist, Psal. 90. 11. which is as much as if he had said, It is impossible to conceive or express the infinite power and tenor of it. Therefore hence we ought to have a right Apprehension of *Sinning* against God, and the horrid consequences of it. From the Justice and Severity of God we must needs inferr the cursed nature of *Vice.*

† Acts 28. 4.

Thirdly, Let no Man venture upon the Commission of Sin on hopes of escaping the Vengeance of God, and finding him Merciful. Nothing can secure us if we offend the Divine Majesty, and disobey his Laws. It was a fond and weak Exploit (which I read in our Chronicles) of *Canute*, the first *Danish* King of *England*; he by the persuasion of his flattering Courtiers had his Chair of State brought to the Sea-shore: And he there placed himself in it, and charg'd the Waves not to come in upon him. It is much more weak and irrational, more absurd and presumptuous for Sinners, who willfully offend God, to expose themselves to his Wrath and Displeasure, to set themselves down in a confident presumption of Impunity, to defie God's Justice and Vengeance, and to flatter themselves into a belief that this raging Ocean will not break in upon them, and overwhelm them. This is the guise of hardned Sinners; and who sees not that it is as dangerous as absurd? It is egregious Folly, as well as Frontless Impudence, to provoke God. What tho' thou hast hitherto gone unpunish'd? Wilt thou therefore perswade thy self that thou shalt be wholly exempt from all marks of the Divine Displeasure? Knowest thou not that the Storm is gathering, that the Tempest is approaching, that the Terrible Thunder will break out, and that thou shalt feel the amazing Stroke and Force of it? Before it be too late be sensible of thy Condition, be throughly apprehensive of thy Danger.

That infallible Penman of the Holy Ghost, who acquaints us that *the Righteous shall be recompensed in the Earth*; i. e. he shall certainly be corrected and punish'd for his Sins in this Life, adds *that much more the Wicked and the Sinner* shall be dealt with in this manner. Which is back'd by that of the Evangelical Writer,

1 Pet.

1 Pet. 4. 17. *If Judgment begin at the House of God, what shall the end be of them that obey not the Gospel of God? And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the Sinner appear?* This our Saviour also expressed by a Proverbial Speech, Luke 23. 31. *If they do these things in the Green Tree, what shall be done in the Dry?* If I and my Disciples, who are Innocent, saith he, fare so hardly, what will become of those that are Guilty, how lamentable and deplorable will their case be in the Day of Visitation? If those who have been dear unto God have not been spared, then surely those obstinate Wretches who bid defiance to God and Religion, and persist in their Exhorbitant Courses, without any regret and remorse, shall find the Divine Vengeance doubled upon them, they shall have no Refuge or Sanctuary to betake themselves to, they shall be destroy'd with a great and unavoidable Destruction. This may justly strike Terror into all impenitent and profligate Sinners. Let them with Fear and Trembling Meditate on this, and no longer make a Mock of Sin, no longer dally with Divine Justice, no longer play with Lightning, and sport with Thunder, no longer embolden themselves in sinning, and at the same time vainly presume of Pardon.

Another branch of God's *Holiness* which likewise is a part of his *Justice*, is his *FAITHFULNESS* or *VERACITY* in keeping his Word. This is part of his *Name* which was so solemnly proclaimed, Exod. 34. 6. *Abundant in Truth.* Yea, it is that part which renders all the rest effectual: Which I take to be the meaning of the Psalmist's Words, *Psal.* 138. 2. (which I find most Commentators have misinterpreted) *Thou hast magnified thy Word above all thy Name.* Where by *Word* is to be understood God's Truth and Faithfulness in performing his Word; and then the sense of the place is easie and plain, *viz.* that God's Truth in keeping his Word and Promises is the most conspicuous of all his Attributes. And that this is the meaning of that Text is clear, not only from the foregoing Clause where *Truth* is the immediately preceeding Word, but from the next verse, (which relates to this) where God's Faithfulness *in answering him when he cried to him* is particularly mentioned. So that this Attribute is exalted above all the rest in some sort. It gives Efficacy to them all, for by this we are assur'd of the actual exertment of them all, when there is occasion for it.

But especially we are assur'd of the performance of all his *Promises*; for God being *True* and *Faithful* cannot fail or deceive us. This Divine Veracity is signified to us by the Name *Jehovah*, for though (as I shew'd before) 'tis a Name of *Essence*, and implies God's *Self-existence*, yet with all it hath a farther import (which is derived likewise from that first Denotation of the Word) for it signifying *Essence* or *Being*, it doth thereby intimate the *Being* and *Reality* of God's *Word* and *Promises*. God himself alludes to this in Deut. 7. 9. *Know that* Jehovah *thy God he is God, the faithful God who keepeth Covenant.* He is *Jehovah: Being* is his Property in a most signal manner: And he gives a real Being and Energy to his *Word.* And it is evident to me that God's Veracity in fullfilling whatever he hath said is denoted by this *Name*, because otherwise it will be hard to make sense of that Passage in Exod. 6. 3. *I appear'd unto* Abraham, Isaac, *and* Jacob, *by the Name of God Almighty, but by my Name* Jehovah *was I not known unto them.* The *Jewish* Doctors tell us that the Name *Jehovah* was known to the *Patriarchs*, but the Use and Vertue of it (which they dream to be Miraculous) were first revealed to *Moses.* But this seems to have little or no ground in Scripture: Yea rather, it hath no bottom but their own Fancies. We cannot think (as some others have conjectur'd from this place) that the Name *Jehovah* was wholly unknown to the Patriarchs before *Moses* for that Text in *Gen.* 22. 14. is a confutation, where *Abraham* names the place where he offer'd up his Son *Isaac Jehovah-jireh*, i. e. *Jehovah will see or provide.* That he was expessly known to *Abraham* and *Jacob* by this Title is most apparent from Gen. 15. 7.——28. 13. And *Isaac* calls him by it, Gen. 26. 25. So that it cannot be denied that the *Patriarchs* were acquainted with this Name: Wherefore the Vanity of the forementioned Conjecture is evident.

That we may then rightly understand the Text above named, we ought to have this Apprehension of the Name *Jehovah*, that it expresses God's *Truth* and *Faithfulness* in effecting what he hath promised. *I was not known*, saith he, *to them by my Name* Jehovah, *i. e.* (as I conceive) I made not my self known to them by the fulfilling of my Promises. God had not in the Patriarchs days, given *Being* and *Effect* to those things which he had graciously told them should come to pass: Which

which *Being* and *Effect* are signified in the word *Jehovah*. It is true, he had performed some particular promises, as to *Noah* in saving him from the Floud, and to *Lot* in delivering that Righteous Man out of *Sodom*, and to *Abraham* in the Birth of his Son *Isaac*. But in respect of the main promise of delivering *Abraham*'s posterity from Bondage, and giving them the Land of *Canaan* for an inheritance, he was not yet known by the Name *Jehovah*, i. e. he had not actually given *Being* to this general Promise. But the *Posterity* of *Abraham* were to *know him* to be *Jehovah* by the accomplishing of it, they were to Experience and Acknowledge his *Truth* and *Faithfulness* in making this Promise effectual. And accordingly you see the Reason of the Name in the following verses (*viz.* 6th and 8th) of this Chapter, where the *Israelites* are assured of their *being Redeemed with a stretched out Arm*, and *being brought into the Land, concerning the which God had Sworn to give it*. This renders the forementioned place very plain and intelligible: *I was known*, saith God, to the Patriarchs by the Name of *Almighty*, i. e. they believed and imbraced my Promises, depending on my Omnipotency and All-sufficiency for the accomplishing of them: *but I was not known to them as* Jehovah, *i. e.* I had not as yet given *Existence* to those things which I told them should afterwards be: I had not *fulfilled my promise* concerning their deliverance from the *Egyptian* Slavery, and the instating them in the Land of *Canaan*; but I will make my self known to them who are the *Offspring* of the Patriarchs by my Name *Jehovah* in really effecting what I promised. I was known to their Forefathers by *Revelation* and *Foretelling* of great things to them, but these shall know me by my *fulfilling* of them, by the *realizing* of what was promised to them. Thus God is known to be *Jehovah*: his *Truth* is discovered and signalized, by delivering and rescuing his Servants out of dangers, according to his Gracious *Word* to them. He is *Just* in being Faithfull and keeping his Word.

And this he hath shewed himself to be in all the Ages of the World. He hath promised to help and succour the Afflicted, *Call upon me in the day of Trouble, and I will deliver thee*, Psal. 50. 15. whence the Psalmist prays, *In thy faithfulness answer me, and in thy Righteousness*, Psal. 143. 1. And this *Righteousness* is seen in accomplishing not only Temporal but Spiritual Promises. *He is Faithful and Just to forgive us our Sins, and to cleanse us from all Unrighteousness*, 1 John 1. 9. That is, God the Father having had Satisfaction from Christ our Sponsor, doth not require the Debt of those for whom he hath satisfied, but on the very Principle of *Justice*, entirely forgives and absolves them, and by his Holy Spirit Cleanses and Sanctifies their Natures, and grants to them all those other Privileges and Blessings which the Son of God hath purchased for them. Among these Blessings are to be reckoned the *Afflictions* which they are exercised with, for these are of singular Advantage to them, and they cannot be without them. Wherefore God who hath engaged to bestow all good things upon them, denies them not these. Whence 'tis easy to understand what the Psalmist means, when he speaks thus to God, *Thou in Faithfulness hast afflicted me*, Psal. 119. 75. And the great Apostle gives a particular proof of it, 1 Cor. 10. 18. *God is faithful who will not suffer you to be Tempted*, (i. e. to be afflicted) *above what you are able*. So as to those things which are Eternal, *viz.* the Endless Glories of a Future State, they are promised to us from mere *Grace* and *Bounty*; but God, as he is *Righteous* and *Faithful* will not fail to bestow them upon us, because he never breaks his word.

Again in his *Threatnings* no less than in his *Promises*, he is *Jehovah*. Whatever Evils and Plagues are denounced against Sinners, whatever Curses are found in the Book of God against them, they shall be verified and fulfilled, and that to the utmost. For the *Faithfulness* of God respects Punishment as well as Reward. Thus he is *known to be* Jehovah, as you will find it confirmed by Ezek. 6. 13. *Then shall ye know that I am* Jehovah, where the following words sufficiently shew that he was *known to be so*, by the *Judgments* which he executed on Sinners, by the actual inflicting of those *Plagues* which he had threatned. *Jehovah* (as I have proved already) is a Title of Being and Reality, and denotes God's accomplishing his Word, whether it be of Mercy or Wrath. God's word is as his Essence, Stable and Firm; and therefore he cannot but confirm his Word by the Event. He makes himself known to be *Jehovah*, not only by giving a *Being* to his Promises, but also to his severest Menaces. You find both these joyned together in *Deut.* 7. 9, 10. *Know therefore that the Lord thy God, he is God, the faithful God, who keepeth Covenant and Mercy with them that love him, and keep his Commandments, to a Thousand*

Generations: and repayeth them that hate him, to their Face, to destroy them. Thus God is *Righteous* and *Faithfull*; and whatever else he hath said he will do, shall most certainly be effected. Hence you may observe that in the Style of Scripture the Prophets oftentimes speak of things Future, as if they were past, because they shall as certainly be accomplished as if they were so already. The *Justice* and *Righteousness* of God require this.

If we enquire into the *Grounds* of this, we shall find it Established on these three Foundations, 1. The *Nature* of God, which is such that he cannot Falsify and Deceive, and therefore it must needs follow that he is Faithful. Some err themselves, and deceive others because of their Ignorance; but God is Omniscient, and on that account cannot be liable to any Error or Mistake. Others wilfully and designedly pervert the Truth, and impose upon those they converse with; but God's Purity and Holiness suffer him not to do any such thing. So that if we respect the Nature of the Divinity, he is (as the Apostle styles him) *God that cannot Lye*, Tit. 1. 2. 2. His Faithfulness is Grounded on his *Word*. *The Lord hath spoken* is Warrant sufficient for the *Prophets*, whatever they deliver: for the Divine Testimony is Infallible, and whatever depends upon it is of the greatest Certainty. For *God is not a Man, or the Son of Man, that he should repent*, i. e. that he should not keep his Word, and perform whatever he hath said: as it follows, *Hath he said it, and shall he not do it?* Numb. 23. 19. 3. To God's Promise is added his *Oath*, which is a farther assurance to us of his Faithfulness. Though there is no reason to distrust his bare Word, yet he is pleased to confirm it by *Swearing*, that (as the Author to the *Hebrews* saith) *by two immutable things, in which it is impossible for God to Lye, we might have a strong Consolation* administred to us, *Heb.* 6. 18. Thus we see there are three Obligations (as I may so speak) on God to be True, his Omniscient and pure Nature, his Word, and his Oath.

There are proper *Deductions* that may be made from what hath been said on this Head.

First, If God be True and Faithful, how great reason have we to believe in him and rely upon him? Shall we not credit all his Promises, and be throughly perswaded of all his Threatnings, both which he is able to accomplish, and he hath said he will? *Faithfulness* is the ground of *Reliance*: therefore let us trust and depend on Him. With respect to this St. *Austin* hath this passage, * *God hath made himself, not only a Debtor to himself, but to Christ, and to us, so that we may say to him, give us what thou hast Promised, we having done what thou hast Commanded.* Which latter Clause may seem too Bold and Presumptuous, but 'tis likely the Good Father meant no more than this, that we ought with great Confidence to rest in the Promise of God, because he hath thereby made himself a Debtor to us, and he will not fail to discharge his Debt, because he is Faithful and Just, because (as the Psalmist saith) *He keepeth Truth for ever*, Psal. 146. 6. We may for the same Reason with a firm Affiance depend on the Son of God, for he hath solemnly engaged and undertaken for us, and therefore will not fail us; whence *he is called Faithfull and True*, Rev. 19. 11. We have it from his own most Blessed Mouth, that though *Heaven and Earth shall pass away, yet his Words shall not pass away*, Mat. 24. 35. And his inspired Apostle hath assured us (2 Cor. 1. 20.) that *all the Promises of God are in him, yea, and in him Amen*, i. e. they are most True and Firm. And farther we know that it is the particular work and province of the Holy Spirit to *Seal* and *ratify* all Heavenly Truths, and even our Salvation it self, *Eph.* 1. 13.---4. 30. So that we see here the grand Basis and Foundation of our Faith, Trust, and Confidence, *viz.* the *Veracity* of the Sacred Trinity. We may rely on whatever they have said, and assure our selves of the certain Accomplishment of it, for this Attribute is our Security.

*Serm. 16. in 2 Tim. 4. 8.

Secondly, This also ought to be an Encouragement to Repentance and a Holy Life. *I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, saith the Lord God; wherefore turn your selves and live:* Ezek. 18. 32. Here is the solemn declaration of God's willingness to save us, and we are sure that he will not violate his Word; we are sure that nothing can frustrate it, and render it ineffectual. This therefore is a strong Motive to *turn* unto God, and to become Religious and Vertuous. God hath bound himself by Promise, to shew himself Gracious to those that Repent, *He that confesseth and forsaketh his Sins, shall find Mercy*, Prov. 28. 13. God can no more deny the True Penitent Mercy and Forgiveness, than he can deny himself, and be Unfaith-

unfaithful and unjust. This should powerfully excite all Persons to reflect on their sinful ways, and to humble themselves before God, and to hope for Mercy and Favour, for he that is Truth it self cannot lye; the eternal God will assuredly perform what he hath said. This must needs administer solace to all that have a deep Sense of their Offences against God, and are asham'd of them, and are fill'd with regret and anguish of Spirit for them. This cannot but be a cogent Invitation and Allurement to them to abandon their Follies, and to betake themselves in good earnest to Religion and their Duty. When *Moses* had suggested to the *Israelites*, that *God is a faithful God*, he presently adjoyn'd this, *Thou shalt therefore keep the Commandments, which I command thee, to do them*, Deut. 7. 9, 11. And this is not only an encitement to Obedience, but to Perseverance in it, and a constant Profession of Religion and Holiness; according to that of the Apostle, *Heb.* 10. 23. *Let us hold fast the Profession of our Faith without wavering, for he is faithful who hath promised.*

Before I dismiss this Attribute, it will take me up a considerable time to return a full and satisfactory Answer to this following *Objection*, How can God be said to be *True* and *Faithful*, when there are several Promises made to the Godly which are not fulfill'd? As in *Job* 5. 19, &c. *He shall deliver thee in six Troubles, yea, in seven there shall no evil touch thee: in Famine he shall redeem thee from Death, and in War from the power of the Sword: thou shalt be hid from the scourge of the Tongue: neither shalt thou be afraid of Destruction when it cometh.* Psal. 41. 1, &c. *Blessed is he that considereth the Poor, the Lord will deliver him in time of trouble: the Lord will preserve him and keep him alive, and he shall be blessed on the Earth, and thou wilt not deliver him to the Will of his Enemies.* Psal. 91. 1, &c. *He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty*, and so be secure: *surely he shall deliver thee from the Snare of the Fowler, and from the noisom Pestilence: thou shalt not be afraid for the Terrour by Night, nor for the Arrow that flieth by Day, nor for the Pestilence that walketh in Darkness, nor for the Destruction that wasteth at Noon-day. A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand, but it shall not come nigh thee. There shall no Evil befall thee, neither shall any Plague come nigh thy Dwelling: for he shall give his Angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways: they shall bear thee up in their Hands, lest thou dash thy Foot against a Stone.* And more to the same purpose in the following Verses. Psal. 112. 3. *Wealth and Riches shall be in his House.* Psal. 119. 165. *Great peace have they which love thy Law, and nothing shall offend them.* Prov. 3. 16. *Length of Days is in her Right-hand, and in her Left-hand Riches and Honour.* And our blessed Saviour confirms all these Promises, when he saith, *All things shall be added unto you*, Mat. 6. 33. And the Apostle's Words are large and comprehensive, *Godliness is profitable to all things, having the Promise of the Life that now is*, as well as of that *which is to come*, 1 *Tim.* 4. 8.

But, alas! how seldom are these Promises made good to holy Men? How is *Godliness profitable* to them, as to the things of *this Life*, when they are pined with Hunger and Thirst, when they are exposed to all Dangers and Calamities, when they are malign'd, reviled and persecuted? Do we not see, that many who make Godliness their chief and principal Business, want the good things of this World, are not fed nor clothed, nor provided for, but are forlorn and destitute, and reduced to great Streights and Necessities, and suffer all manner of Evil? How then are the foregoing Promises of Freedom from all sorts of Danger, and of Safety, Peace, Riches and Honour made good? To resolve this Problem I will propound these four things, 1. It is one thing to *delay* the Performance of a Promise, and another thing to *fail* in the Performance of it. 2. The Promise may be fulfilled either *in Kind*, or as to some other thing which is *Better*. 3. We must not judge of the Breach or the Performance of a Promise, till we have examin'd whether the *Persons* concerned in it have kept the *Conditions*. 4. We must know that all the Promises concerning outward and temporal Things are *not absolute*, but have certain *Restrictions* and *Limitations*, and I shall particularly set down what these are. I hope these four things will give abundant Satisfaction, and take off all Scruples that lie on Mens Minds, and which are wont to hinder the full Belief of the *Truth* and *Faithfulness* of God.

First, I say, it is one thing to *delay* the performing of a Promise, and another thing to *fail* in the performing of it. God may *deferr* to bestow these outward things for a time, as he may *take them away* for a time, that afterwards he may make amends by doubling and redoubling his Mercies in this kind: and thus we read he was pleased to deal with that holy Man *Job*. He therefore that is well perswaded of

the Faithfulness of God, will not be too forward to urge the actual and present Performance of the Promise: he will be afraid to limit and confine the Holy One of *Israel*. He will patiently wait on God, and be contented to receive these Mercies from him *when* he thinks fit. *In due season we shall reap if we faint not*: in that time which is most suitable and congruous we shall be possessors of these temporal Blessings, but we must not desire to *reap* before the *Harvest*, we must not think of enjoying those things till we are Ripe, till we are Ready for them. Now, it is certain that God knows the best Seasons, he perfectly understands what is the *due* Time. It is probable, that if we had these things *now*, they would prove mischievous to us, and be Curses rather than Blessings. We have no reason then to be hasty, and to charge God with Unfaithfulness and breach of Promise. But let it be remembered how we have delay'd our Duty, how we have put off our Repentance, how we have deferr'd our turning unto God, and to the ways of Godliness. Was it not a long time before we attended to God's Call, and are not we still backward to improve it, and yet do we complain that God stays so long before he rewards us with temporal Favours; nay, do we question the Truth of the Promise? This is very unbecoming our Circumstances. We are obliged rather to wait with Patience and Contentment, and not in the least to doubt of his Faithfulness in performing his Promise, tho' he doth not presently, and as soon as we call for its Accomplishment, actually perform it. *Ye have heard of the patience of* Job, saith the Apostle, *and have seen the end of the Lord*: the former Clause of which Words reminds us of our Duty and Behaviour, when ever God is pleased to *deferr* the bestowing of temporal Favours on us: we are obliged to demean our selves submissively and patiently: and the latter Clause suggests to us, that God doth frequently recompence the patient Expectation of his Servants: *the end of the Lord*, the Close and Issue of his afflicting them proves very welcome and joyful. It is not unusual with the great Disposer of all things to bless the *latter end* of his Servants more than their beginning. Be content then to wait still on the Almighty, to expect with Faith and Patience the *due season* of his conferring temporal Kindnesses upon you: but do not impeach God of Unfaithfulness.

Let me here mention a remarkable Instance; God promis'd the *Israelites* that they should possess the Land of *Canaan*, whence it was called *the Land of Promise*: but the accomplishing of this Promise was suspended a long time. First they were to be Slaves in *Egypt*, then to pass thro' the *Arabian* Wilderness, (as many of them as were not cut off there for their Infidelity and Disobedience) then after their Entrance into that Land they were seven Years in conquering it, and there were seven Years more spent in setting out to every one his Lot and Portion. In short, no less than four hundred and thirty Years intervened between the Promise and the actual and complete Fulfilling it. So we read that God promised the Priesthood to *Aaron*'s Line, *Numb.* 25. 13. yet the Priesthood was translated to *Eli* and his Sons for a considerable time. But afterwards it return'd to *Aaron*'s Race, by *Solomon*'s giving the Priesthood to *Sadoc*, who was of *Phineas*'s and consequently of *Aaron*'s Race. God will not violate his Word, tho' there seems to be a breach of it, by reason of the several Intervals and Interruptions which happen between the first uttering and the fulfilling it. Remember then this, that there is a vast difference between the *not fulfilling* of a Promise, and the *delaying* the fulfilling of it for a time.

Secondly, Tho' what I have said under this foregoing Head be in some part satisfactory, yet I am sensible that it is not a full and entire Answer to the *Objection*, for God is pleased sometimes not only to *deferr* the Collation of worldly and bodily Favours on good Men, but he wholly *denies* them to them. They labour under a continual Distemper of Body, they labour under perpetual Poverty, they are Strangers to outward Peace, they cannot obtain the Respect and Esteem of the World. They are environ'd with Sorrow, Trouble and Calamity, and languish under the Miseries of this Life, and they find no alteration of this distressed State. To the Objection, thus framed, I return this Answer, That there is a twofold fulfilling of these Promises which relate to the things of this Life: for they are either fulfilled in *specie*, in *the same kind and manner* werein they are expressed, or else *in another and better kind*. If the very thing which is promis'd be not accomplish'd, yet something which is equivalent is perform'd. And if this latter be done, it is as much as if the former were. I desire it may be well weigh'd, as a thing that is very useful for the right understanding the matter which is before us, that these Promises concerning the good things of this Life are not always to be understood and interpreted in the

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primary, formal and literal Sense, but in a secondary and vertual one: that it seems good to the divine Wisdom that such Promises should sometimes be fulfilled as to some other thing.

That this may not seem strange to us, and that we may have a full apprehension of what I now propound, I offer that Text in *Heb.* 11. 13. and in ver. 39, 40. to be considered, *These all* (that is, *Abraham* and his Posterity till *Joshuah*'s time) *died in Faith, not having received the Promises, but having seen them afar off, and were perswaded of them, and embraced them.* Observe here, that *Abraham*'s Seed had a Promise from God that they should possess the Land of *Canaan*, and enjoy the Accommodations and Blessings of that Country. But notwithstanding this, many of them possess'd not a foot of Ground in that pleasant Land; nay, they were not suffer'd to come in sight of it. It is expressly said, *they all died, having not receiv'd the Promise.* How then was this Promise made good? If we consult those two forementioned Verses in the close of that Chapter, we shall meet with a resolution of this Difficulty, *And these all* (where the Apostle takes in not only the People of God from *Abraham* to *Joshuah*, but also all the Worthies in succeeding Ages, who underwent Dangers and Hardships, and even loss of Life for Righteousness sake) *having obtain'd a good Report thro' Faith receiv'd not the Promise*, (here still he maintains what he had said before) *God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect.* As much as to say, tho' they receiv'd not the Promise concerning the good things of this World, in the primary and literal Meaning of it, yet *in effect* they receiv'd it: God did *vertually* make good the Promise, tho' not *in the very same kind* which was express'd. He perform'd his Word in *providing some better thing* for us as well as for them. Tho' we are denied entrance into the temporal Rest, yet *there remaineth a Rest for the People of God*, an everlasting Rest, the heavenly *Canaan*, the new *Jerusalem.* This is the *Provision* which is made by God, that so neither they who liv'd under the Law, nor we who are of the Gospel-Dispensation should think our selves *perfect* in this World, and take up our Rest here, and consequently not press forward, toward the attainment of that entire and absolute Perfection, which is the Portion of the Saints in Heaven. This I conceive is the genuine Sense of the Apostle's Words, and it appears from hence, that it may seem good to the All-wise God and Governour of all things, not always to perform his Promise in that very particular and precise way which the Letter of the Promise denotes, but in bestowing sometimes another thing which is as good, yea better: and this may be either something Spiritual in this Life, or Eternal in the next.

First, It may be thought good to conferr some *spiritual* Favour and Grace, in lieu of *outward* and *earthly* Enjoyments. Thus, when worldly Troubles, Losses and Calamities are the Portion of good and godly Persons, they are supported by the divine Power, and the Aids of the Spirit of Grace, and on that account their Condition is as eligible as if it were wholly devoid of those Calamities. It is the same thing with them as if they had the actual Enjoyment of Riches and Plenty, outward Success and Prosperity. If God strengthens his Servants with Faith, and Patience to bear the Cross, it is all one (I mean as to any real Disturbance and Trouble) as if he had not laid the Cross upon them. If the Almighty enables them to bear their Burden with Chearfulness and Rejoycing, it is to be reckon'd as no Burden. When those holy Champions of the Christian Cause, *Paul* and *Silas* sang in the Prison, was it not the same as if they had been set free from it? To be out of Prison, or to be able to sing in it are alike to every impartial Apprehension. To have such abundant Joy and Solace administred to them by the Holy Spirit, was as welcome to those Sufferers as if they had been actually deliver'd from their close Durance. Let me ask you, What think you of that *English* Martyr, who cried out in the Flames after this manner, I feel no more pain in this Fire than in a Bed of Down: it is to me as a Bed of Roses? Have you not reason to believe, that his Condition was as good and eligible as if he had really been lying upon a Bed of Down, as if he were reposing himself on a Bed of Roses? The divine Assistance and Solaces which he felt made his Flames to be easie to him. To be freed from Sufferings, and to be enabled to undergo them chearfully, are things equivalent. What a mighty Support is a good Conscience, even in the midst of Want and Poverty, Hunger and Thirst, and all the outward Miseries that can befall a good Man? This is *a continual Feast*, and supplies him with constant Refreshments, Joy and Peace. The Apostle assures us, that *Godli-*

Godliness with Contentment is great Gain, and it is as great *Pleasure* and *Delight*, even in the absence of all Worldly and Sensual Delights. Thus we see how God keeps his Promise by bestowing something which is far more desirable than what was specified in that Promise. He gives Spiritual Things in the place of Temporal, and thus (if I may so speak with Reverence) he is better than his Word, and our Condition is better than we could expect, and therefore we have no reason to complain of the breach of Promise.

Secondly, I am to add that God gives not only Spiritual Good Things, but those also which are *Eternal*, instead of things that are Temporal and Fading. And when he doth so, what Reason have Good Men to Murmur and Repine, nay, what great reason have they to bless the Almighty, that he is pleased to give them the one instead of the other? If he denies his Servants Health, and Length of Days, and removes them out of this Valley of Tears to the Mountain of Joy and Felicity; certainly their Condition is much exalted and amended. Was *Moses* wrong'd and injur'd because he was denied the favour of entring into *Canaan*, but was translated to Heaven? The Celestial *Canaan* was conferr'd upon him instead of the earthly one. This change could not be unacceptable surely, he thought himself no looser by it certainly. We cannot think that *Moses* repined at the performance of the promise which carried Earth in the letter of it, but Heaven and Eternal Glory in the full extent of it. We read that that Pious Father of the Church St. *Augustin* died in the City of *Hippo* whilst it was Besieged by the *Goths* and *Vandals* in their Incursion into *Africa*. Now, I would ask this question, which was most eligible, to die quietly and peaceably in his Bed, and to go thence to his everlasting Rest, or to indure all the Noise and Tumults which happened at the taking of City (which was the day after he departed, and to be exposed to unspeakable Dangers and Miseries under the Dominion of those cruel Invaders? Surely the former of these is to be preferred to the latter.

Or, suppose a Person to live in the actual Fruition of Health, Riches, and Honour, yet if God shall call him from among Men on Earth to himself in the highest Heavens, if he shall change this Life for an Eternal one in Glory, who will imagine that this is for the worse? Who will implead God of the violation of his Promise concerning worldly and earthly Blessings? Is not the Promise fulfilled because *Temporal* Honour is turn'd into that which is *Everlasting*, because Fading Riches are chang'd into those that are Durable and Perpetual, because Sensual Delights and Entertainments are commuted for those that are Divine and Heavenly, and because the Peace of this World is succeeded with a never failing Rest and Tranquility? Remember that the Apostle desired *to be with Christ*, which (saith he) *is far better*. So we translate it, but it scarcely reacheth * the Greek, which if you exactly render in English, it must be thus, *much rather better*, and so there are two *Comparatives* contain'd in it, which amount indeed to a *Superlative*. *Much rather better* is the same with *Best of all*: For there is no Comparison between being with Christ in Heaven, and being absent from him here on Earth. If therefore God thinks fit to remove his Servants from Earth to Heaven, to take from them the things of this World, and to bestow those of another upon them, they and we must needs conclude that they are unspeakable Gainers, and that the Promise is *abundantly* and *superlatively* made good to them. For this is the thing which I am maintaining, that the Promises of outward and temporal things may be fulfilled, (and consequently we may be put into Possession of the things promis'd) either *Formally* or *Vertually*, we may receive the things promis'd, either *in the same Kind*, or by way of *Equivalency*, that is, in a manner the same, as good or better than the very individual things which were promised. If God gives us something of as great or greater Value than these earthly Enjoyments, he keeps his Promise, and doth not falsifie in the least.

* Πολλῷ μᾶλλον κρεῖσσον.

For let us appeal to our selves, and the common dealing of Mankind, and by an Instance from thence illustrate this matter. As thus, if my Friend promise me such a Summ of Money in Silver, but pays it me in Gold, I have no reason to complain of him for breach of Promise: Or, if this my Friend in stead of such a certain Summ presents me with one Rare Jewel, little in Bulk, but great in Value, and far exceeding the Summ which he first promised me, I have much less reason to complain that I am wrong'd, for whereas I expected a smaller Gift, I now receive a Greater. And my Friend hath performed his Promise to the full, for he hath

hath not only done what he said, but hath overdone it. In a resembling manner God hath promised worldly and earthly Blessings to those that fear and serve him, but if Greater things be given them in stead of the Lesser; if Temporal Enjoyments be denied them, and Spiritual ones be granted them; if God suffers them not to possess the Earth, but gives them Heaven; if he cuts them short as to the World, and bestows himself upon them, who is the Fountain of all Blessings, and without whom all earthly Possessions are Curses; in brief, if he bestows upon them *abundantly more* than he promised them, he hath been true to his Word, and there are due from his Servants more Abundant Thanks for his extraordinary Bounty to them. So much for my second Answer to the Objectors.

Thirdly, I answer that we must not judge of the breach of the Promises relating to this Life, till we have examined whether the *Persons* concern'd in them have perform'd the *Conditions*. The Promises are not so Universal and Indefinite, as to reach to All, but to those Persons only who are *rightly Qualified*; that is First, they must be *truly Godly*; Secondly, they must *use the Lawful Means* for the obtaining of these Blessings.

1. They must be truly Godly. Many pass for such who are not. There is a great deal of Hypocrisie in the World. There are many Counterfeits abroad: All are not *Israel* which are of *Israel*. When we observe that those who seem to be Godly and Righteous are not blessed with outward Prosperity, we are not to call the Promise of God and his Faithfulness into Question, but rather question whether those Persons are sincerely Good and Righteous. God sees not as Man sees: Those who outwardly appear to be Godly, may be no other than Hypocrites: They may hide and disguise their inward Wickedness and Malice. Now, the Promises before recited are made to those who are truly and sincerely Good, and therefore it is no marvel that the other Persons have no benefit of them. Nay, let it be considered also that in those who are sincerely Godly, there are great Imperfections and Failings, and sometimes gross Miscarriages, and for these God may justly deny them, or withdraw from them the outward Blessings of this Life. *Seek ye first the Kingdow of God and his Righteousness*, saith our Saviour, *and all these things shall be added unto you*, who seek first the Kingdom of God and his Righteousness: *to you* restrictively, you may claim them as your proper due: *to you* exclusively, no others can pretend a Right to them. We are then to make our Judgment according to these Words of Christ; he tells us that the good things of this World shall be bestowed on them that make the seeking of the Kingdom of God their first and chief Care: But 'tis too evident that some Good Men are too cold and backward in this Seeking, and therefore they have no reason to expect the punctual fullfilling of our Saviour's Promise. There are other things wherein they often fail and offend; though they lament their own Sins, yet they are not sufficiently concern'd for those of others, but are rather apt to comply with the fashionable Vices of the Times, and thus they incurr the forfeiture of the Promise. Or perhaps they are defective in their relying on God and his Promise, in that manner which he requires of them. To which purpose are those Words of *Jehosaphat*, *Believe in the Lord your God, so shall ye be establish'd: believe his Prophets, so shall ye prosper:* Whence it is manifest that living by Faith is one Condition that may be demanded as requisite to the Success and Prosperity of worldly Affairs: And consequently unbelief and destrusting God, and his Word may produce a contrary Effect.

And in other respects it might be shew'd that there must be a performance of the Conditions which are required in those Persons who lay claim to the Promise, or else the fullfilling of it is in vain expected. Thus we may observe in the Composure of the Ninety First *Psalm*, which (as we have heard) describes the outward Safety and Security of Godly Men, their Exemption from Dangers and Calamities, their Protection against all Bodily Evils, that there are set down certain *Characters* and *Qualifications* of those Servants of God, who may expect to be sharers in these great Favours. They must trust in God only, for that I conceive is meant by the first words of the Psalm, *Dwelling in the secret place of the most High*, and so it is explained in the following Verse, *I will say of the Lord, He is my Refuge and my Fortress, my God, in him will I trust*. They must *make the Lord, even the most High, their Habitation*, v. 9. they must *set their Love upon him*, v. 14. they must *know his Name*, acknowledge him in all his Divine Attributes, and lastly, they must *call upon him*, v. 14, 15. Thus the Persons must be *rightly qualified*, who partake of these outward Blessings

Blessings mentioned by the Psalmist: but the best Men sometimes fail and offend, and thereby forfeit their Safety and Protection, and other Temporal Mercies: and then they cannot with any reason complain of God's violating his Promise.

Take this in a very Ancient instance, which I had propounded before, and gave an Account of it in another way; God promised *Moses* and the other *Israelites*, that they should enter into the Land of *Canaan*, and there be settled and prosper: and yet most of them never came thither. Then you will be ready to say, God kept not his Promise; Nay, but I say, *they* kept not his Laws, and that was the Reason why they were not suffered to possess that Land. They provoked God in the Wilderness, and for that God denied them an Entrance into that Temporal Rest. Shall we call this a Breach of the Divine promise? Indeed it seemed to be so, and God himself is pleased to express it thus, in Numb. 14. 34. *Ye shall know my Breach of promise*, that is, whereas, if you had not murmured and behaved your selves most unworthily, you should have entred into *Canaan*, according to what I promised, I have now determined that you shall not: which perhaps you will call a *Breach of promise*, but the plain case is this, you have broken my Commandments, the keeping of which was the Condition of your entring into *Canaan*. And as for those who did enter, we may observe that they met with great Troubles and Calamities. What disorders and distractions were they under in the *Judges* time? what dreadful Judgments and Plagues, befell this people afterwards in the Captivity, and at the Destruction of *Jerusalem* and the whole Nation? And at last we see the whole Race of them are Vagabonds. Shall we impeach God's Truth and Faithfulness? by no means, their *Sins* all along procured those Changes and Calamities, and their Sins at length brought them to this miserable Condition, which they are now in. It is plain then that the promise of Earthly blessings was not so made to them, as to entail them upon the *Israelites*, notwithstanding their continual Sins and Provocations, especially those high Provocations which they were Guilty of.

There is a large Catalogue of Temporal and Earthly Blessings in *Lev.* 26. and *Deut.* 28. but we may observe that they are all of them proposed as the Rewards of Holiness and Obedience. *If ye walk in my Statutes and keep my Commandments, and do them*, then you shall have *Peace*, and *Health*, and *Plenty*, and the like. Otherwise *Curses* in a plentifull manner will come upon you, and they are particularly set down in those Chapters. This gives us to understand that we must carefully observe the *Conditions* of these Promises, if we would reap the Fruit and Effect of them. And it teaches us also that we must not judge of the Truth and Faithfulness of God from the Issue and Event of what he hath promised, for we our selves put a bar to the fulfilling them, by our not being careful to keep the Conditions and Provisos contained in the Promises. *If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the Land*, Isai. 1. 19. ye shall comfortably Enjoy the Blessings of this Life: *but if ye refuse and rebel, ye shall be devoured*, &c. v. 20. by failing in the Duty which is the Condition of the Promise, you may reasonably expect that the Promise will not be accomplished.

2. The Promises I am speaking of are made to those *who use the means* which are proper in order to the accomplishing of them. We cannot on any tolerable Ground imagine that we shall enjoy the Accommodations and Comforts of this Life, unless we apply our selves to the fit Methods for *obtaining them*; or, having them conferred upon us, we be careful and industrious in *Preserving them*. The Idle and Slothfull Man doth in vain Flatter himself, that he shall be Master of these things: much less can that Person think he is in the way to Bodily Health, Peace and Safety, Plenty and Abundance, Credit and Repute, who spends his days in Riot and Drunkenness, in Lewdness and Wantonness, in unlawful Disports and Gaming, in all manner of Profuseness and Debauchery. These are Unhealthful, Unsafe, Impoverishing and Dishonourable Vices. They unavoidably carry with them their own Punishment, they are attended with Sicknesses and Diseases; with Want and Scarcity, with Infamy and Disgrace. That person then who would shun these Evils, must think himself concerned to use the Means conducing to it, that is, he must addict himself to Moderation and Sobriety; he must strictly observe the Laws of Continence and Chastity; he must be employed in lawful and honest Business; and that he may be Successful in all these, he must be very curious in the choice of his Company, for this always carries a great Biass with it, and powerfully enclines Men either to Good or Evil. This in brief lets us see that it is our own

own fault, that the Promises of Earthly Good things do not take Effect, and that we do not enjoy the Fruits of them. This we are sure of that God is Faithful, and his Promise is True, and therefore the Failure must be on Man's side, not on God's: and this is one particular reason of the Failure, because we neglect the proper Means.

Fourthly, There is yet another Answer behind, and that will fully satisfie all those other Scruples, which are yet remaining in our Minds. When we speak of the fulfilling of the Promises concerning the things of this Life, we are to remember that there are certain *Limitations* and *Exceptions* belonging to them. We must know that these things are promised with a Threefold Limitation, namely, 1. of the Cross, 2. of God's Glory, 3. of our Good.

First, I say, these Temporal and Earthly Good things are promised to us, with the Exception of the *Cross*. As is plain from our Saviour's words, *There is no Man that hath left House or Brethren, or Sisters, or Father, or Mother, or Wife, or Children, or Lands, for my sake and the Gospel, but he shall receive a Hundred fold now in this time, Houses, and Brethren and Sisters, &c. with Persecutions, and in the World to come Eternal Life*, Mark 10. 29. Christ promises a Recompence to those that abandon these Worldly Conveniences for his sake; even in this Life they have a Renumeration: they receive *a Hundred fold now in this time, Houses, and Brethren and Sisters*, &c. that is, (as I have explained this Doctrine before) either in the same kind, or in another that is of the same value, or greater. This Hundred-fold Compensation is made up in inward Contentment and Satisfaction of Mind, in spiritual Joy and Comfort. But still the Promise runs with the Exception of the Cross and outward Afflictions, *with Persecutions*. Let this then be remembred (which is a sufficient Check to the Objectors) that all Temporal promises and such as respect the Good Things of this Life, are to be understood with the Limitation of *Afflictions*.

Secondly, These Promises are to be understood, with respect always to *God's Glory*. If the Enjoyment of these Earthly things be conducive to that Great End, they shall be conferred upon us: and if they be not, why should we be desirous of them? Now, it is certain that the absence and want of these things, may sometimes conduce in a very high degree to the Glory of our Great God. That Holy Man *Job* may be a proof of this, whose afflictions were purposely designed for this End, that thereby he might give a Testimony of his Sincerity and Uprightness, that his Faith and Patience might be tried to the utmost, that he might commend these Graces to the Sufferers of Succeeding times, that the Devil and his Agents might be baffled and confounded, that the Divine Power and Strength might be manifested in the Weakness of God's Servants, and that by all these God's Glory might be advanced. So our Saviour acquaints us that *Lazarus*'s Sickness was *for the Glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby*, John 11. 4. It was the occasion of Christ's coming to that Family, and Conversing with *Martha* and *Mary*; it procured the Exerting of a great and astonishing Miracle; it ended in the Conversion and Belief of many of the *Jews*, and it every way conduced to the setting forth the Vertues and Excellencies of the Messiah: and in the whole it was serviceable to the Exalting and Magnifying the Divine Majesty. And is it not Evident that by the Sufferings and Persecutions of the Faithful, by the Death and tyrdom of Holy Men, the Truth of the Gospel is confirmed and established, the Christian Faith propagated and increased, Religion it self credited and honoured, and in short, the Lord of Heaven and Earth glorified? Is it not manifest that He is with his Servants in Affliction and Distress, to guide and conduct them, to protect and defend them, to comfort and refresh them, to shew his Power in their Infirmity, and oftentimes to rescue and deliver them? Thus their Sufferings redound to God's Glory. This Limitation then must be taken notice of in the Fulfilling of the Promises: and no Man of Reason and Understanding can object against it.

Thirdly, The accomplishing of them should consist with *our Good* and *Advantage*. This is so highly reasonable that it will be granted by all those who tender their own Interest. We shall have Health, Peace, Riches, Honour, and all other Earthly Blessings, so far as they are good for us. This certainly should satisfie any Rational and Considerate Man: let us consult Psal. 34. 9, 10. *O fear the Lord, ye his Saints, for there is no want to those that fear him.* The encouragement to Fear God and Serve him is, that those who do so shall not be denied the good things of this Life. But then observe how this promise is explained and limited in the next

words, *The young Lions do lack, and suffer hunger*, the brute Beasts may seem sometimes to be neglected (tho' as our Psalmist owns in another place, God preserveth them and provideth for them) *but they that seek the Lord shall not want any Good thing*. Say that any thing is really *Good*, for them in their present Circumstances, and they shall have it. This is what the same Holy Man asserts in *Psal.* 84. 11. *No good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly*. Prove this or that Earthly thing to be truly Good and Advantageous for them in their Condition, and undoubtedly it shall be conferred upon them. But it is certain that they are not for their Good at all times: and 'tis as certain that Distresses and Afflictions are good for them sometimes. You may as well say, that Bleeding and Purging, and some more uneasy Methods of Physick are not good for the Body on some occasions, as deny this. This thing then which I now offer to your Thoughts is very clear and plain; namely, That your Circumstances may be such, that some worldly Enjoyments will not be good for them, and then it will be unreasonable for you to claim the Promise of them. The Charter indeed is very large, *All things are yours*, 1 Cor. 3. 21. but yet let me tell you, tho' all things are yours, yet in some Cases you must not have them, you must be denied the Possession of them. And this is very reasonable and accountable, for who will give Wine to his Friend in a Fever, or who will venture a drawn Sword into his Friend's Hand in a Distraction, tho' that Wine and that Sword be his Friend's proper Goods? The reason why these are denied to them is because they are so far from being good for them, that they are exceedingly hurtful and dangerous.

Such may the things I have been speaking of prove to us, and therefore the wise and merciful God withholds them from us, and instead of them exercises us with Afflictions and Crosses, which undoubtedly are beneficial to us. Our good Physician, who tenders the Good and Welfare of his Patients, lets them not have what they extravagantly desire and call for, he bestows not upon them the things of this World according to their undue Appetites and Longings, but he gives them such a Portion of them, as he knows is most suitable to their Condition, and will be most serviceable to their spiritual Health. This then I advise to, Suspect these things to be *Evil*, rather than *Good*, when God denies them to you: however, think that they are not good for *you*, they will not suit *your* Condition and Circumstances. If you had these things, it is likely you wou'd be proud and haughty, and despise your Brethren who have them not; yea, you wou'd despise God, and forget that you are his Creature: It may be these things wou'd incline you to Sensuality and Lust, and hinder you from looking after Heaven and another World. And on the other side, it is likely, that Afflictions and Crosses are most profitable for you; you have need of Chastisements, you will thrive best under the Rod: hereby you will most successfully be instructed to subdue your evil Inclinations, to exert your Graces, and to conquer Temptations. If it be thus, Instead of repining at your Afflictions, you have great inducements to entertain them with Patience and Contentment, and to welcome them as the choicest Blessings. So then you see what is the third *Limitation* or *Restriction* of these temporal Promises; namely, That they shall be fulfill'd to us, so far as the things promised are *good for us*. And what can we desire more? Thus I hope I have return'd a satisfactory Answer to the *Objection* which is brought against the Doctrine which I have been insisting upon, the *Faithfulness* of God. And I have given the full Extent of the Divine Attribute to which this belongs, namely, *God's Holiness*.

There are now remaining two other Attributes, the IMMUTABILITY and the PERFECTION of God; which are, as I may so say, the Security of all the preceeding Ones; for from these we are sure that there can be no Defect or Failing in any of the Divine Excellencies. First, as to God's IMMUTABILITY, It is that excellent Property whereby he is the Same for ever, and admits of no Change or Alteration. *Thou art the same*, saith the Psalmist, *Psal.* 102. 27. And so that Word אתה, is used as God's proper Name in *Isai.* 51. 12. *I, even I who am the same*, or, who am *my self*, for so the Word imports. And I cannot but observe, that in another place, *Jos.* 24. 19. this very *Pronoun* is used, tho' neither the *Septuagint*, nor the *Vulgar Latin*, nor our *English Translators* take notice of it: but it is certain, that the Signification and Force of the *Hebrew* Word ought not to be omitted in our rendering of that place, and therefore thus we should translate it, *The Holy God Himself*,

self, He who is always Himself and the Same. And from this Word perhaps comes the *Arabick Hou*, which is the essential Name of God in that Language, and is frequently used in the *Alcoran*, and answers to the *Hebrew Jehovah*. It signifies *Being* or *Subsisting*, and is in higher esteem among the *Arabians* than *Alla*, for it is placed over all their Decrees, Patents, Statutes, and most of their Writings of any account. To this הוא and *Hou* answers *Plato's* τὸ αὐτὸν, *Idem ipsum*, which he makes to be an inseparable Epithet of the Deity. And *Virgil* applies this Name to *Jupiter*,

——— ——— *Rex Jupiter omnibus Idem.*

He is always the same and never changeth. This is the incommunicable Character which is given the true God in *Mal.* 3. 6. *I am the Lord, I change not.*

And by an evangelical Writer it is excellently expressed after this manner, *With him is no Variableness, neither Shadow of Turning*, Jam. 1. 17. παραλλαγὴ, (which is the Word that the Apostle here uses) as well as παράλλαξις, is an *Astronomical* Word: it signifies the several Positions in which the Sun appears to us when he Rises, when he is in his Meridian, and when he is Setting. With allusion to this, it is likely, the Apostle tells us that there is no *Parallax*, no diversity of Aspect, no variation of Sight in the Son of Righteousness, in God blessed for evermore. And as 'tis a Maxim among Mathematicians, concerning the *Parallax*, that the greater it is, the Thing is seen the nearer: and the lesser it is, the Object is the further off, (thus the *Fixed Stars* are so far off that they yield no *Parallax*) so the infinite Majesty of God, and that infinite Distance which is between him and us render him uncapable of *Variation*: he suffers no Change, he is not subject to Alteration. And it is said further, That with this glorious Sun there is *no Shadow of turning*, τροπῆς ἀποσκίασμα, there is not in God, as in the World's Sun, any *Tropick*, any Term or Boundary, whereby he is confin'd or any ways alter'd, whereby he doth as 'twere *turn* from us, and leave us in *Shadows* and Darkness, for any one may perceive, that there is here a manifest Allusion to the Sun's coming nearer or going farther off from us, and thereby varying its *Shadow*. And indeed, it is easily observable, that the Apostle's way of speaking in the whole Verse referrs to the *Phænomena* which are taken notice of in the Solar Body. All these Terms are *Astronomical*, saith *Grotius* on the place.

Here I will 1. shew, *In what respect* God is Unchangeable, 2. I will assign the true *Reasons* of this Attribute. 3. I will answer an *Objection* or two: And lastly, Briefly *apply* the whole. As to the first, God is Unchangable in whatever respect or consideration we can possibly apprehend him. First, He is so in regard of his *Decrees, Counsels*, and *Purposes*. They are all of them fix'd and irreversible; and it is impossible for a considerate Man to think them otherwise, because God had an universal Foresight and Knowledge of all things, and will'd and determin'd them with infinite Wisdom and Prudence: Upon this account he cannot change his Decree or Will. It is usual with ignorant and short-sighted Mortals to determine things rashly and imprudently, and thence upon deliberation afterwards they alter their Minds, and reverse what they formerly purposed. But 'tis impious as well as irrational to entertain any such thoughts of the *All-wise* Being, and consequently we must acknowledge his Decrees to be Immutable. *The Counsel of the Lord standeth for ever, the Thoughts of his Heart to all Generations*, Psal. 33. 11. *The Immutability of his Counsel* is expresly asserted by the great Apostle, *Heb.* 6. 17.

Again, God is Unchangeable in his *Covenant* which he makes with the Sons of Men: for that is the Style both of the *Old* and *New Testament*, to express his Transactions with Mankind, more especially as to Salvation and Happiness. This is done in a federal way, and is firm, unshaken and immoveable, and thence it is so often call'd an *everlasting Covenant*, as in *Isai.* 24. 5.—55. 3. *Jer.* 32. 40. *Ezek.* 37. 26. *Heb.* 13. 20. for God is unalterably constant to it, and will never swerve from it.

Next, This Unchangeableness is seen in the *Gifts* and *Graces* which he conferrs *He is not a Man* (i. e. a vain fickle Man) *that he should repent*, (Numb. 23. 19.) that he should retract his Kindness to those who are faithful to him. He being ever the same, there is the same Favour for them always. On which ground the Apostle declares, that *the Gifts and Calling of God are without Repentance*, Rom. 11. 29. that is, they are such as he will never change. They flow from special Love and dis-

criminating Mercy, and therefore can't admit of an Alteration. Grace is no temporary Benefit, and such as can be lost, for he that is the Author and Donour of it, will be the Preserver of it.

Moreover, He is Immutable in his *Acts of Providence*, either in way of Mercy or Vengeance. He hath ever defended and guarded his Church, so that the Gates of Hell have never been able to prevail against her, and he will always have the same Care and Concern for her. He hath in all Ages of the World shew'd his Displeasure against her Enemies, and by remarkable Instances hath made this a most manifest Truth; and he will never fail to do the like in all succeeding Generations; so that all Events and Occurrences in the World shall be serviceable to this.

Lastly, In all those *Attributes* and *Essential Properties* before insisted on he is Immutable. He is so in his Existence; in his Life, Spirituality, Simplicity, Infinity; in his Knowledge, Mercy, Power, Justice, in his Truth and Faithfulness, for the *Unchangeableness* of his Word is his *Faithfulness*. So that here we take the Attribute in the largest Sense, for the Unchangeableness of all his other Attributes, Excellencies and Perfections. I mention therefore this divine Excellency after all the rest, because it hath relation to them all, and may be discern'd in every one of them; and because (as I shall immediately shew) it depends upon several of them. Which shews the Reality of that glorious *Name* given to God by himself, *I am that I am*, Exod. 3. 14. God is what he always was, and what he ever will be: In a word, He is unchangeable in Himself, in all his Intentions, Purposes and Actions, and in all his Attributes, and consequently is free from all Mutability whatsoever.

Secondly, If we enquire into the *Reasons* on which this Attribute is grounded, we shall find them to be many and great. 1. God *exists necessarily*, and cannot but be, and therefore his Being is unchangeable, and it is impossible it should be otherwise. 2. God's Unchangeableness results from the *Simplicity* of his Nature. He must be exempt from all Change, because there is no Principle of it in him. He being void of all Parts and of all Mixture is impassible, and consequently Unalterable. He being Uncompounded, there is nothing to occasion or work an Alteration. 3. As there is nothing within himself to do this, so he being *Omnipotent* nothing without him can act any thing towards it. Immutability depends upon and naturally flows from the Almighty Power and Soveraignty of the Deity. God is superior to all, and therefore nothing hath Power over him, and consequently nothing can work any Change in him. The Sovereignty of the Divinity excludes all Alteration. 4. God's Unchangeableness proceeds from his *Spiritual* and *Incorporeal* Nature, which is not subject to Mutation as Body or Matter is. The very Notion of this (it being compounded of Parts) implies Divisibility, which makes way for Corruption, for this is the Result of the separation of the Parts of a Body. 5. This follows upon his being *Self-existent* and *Independent*. The first Cause, that which hath no Dependency on any other, and on which all others depend, cannot but be Immutable. God is such, and so cannot fail to be, yea, to be what he is. Thence we may gather, that God's *Name of Essence* spoken of before, and which was found to signifie his *Self-existence* and his *Faithfulness*, denotes also his *Unchangeableness*, for because he exists of himself, he must exist always, and is the same: and if he be the same, he changeth not. 6. Immutability follows upon *Eternity*. What is altogether, and as it were in one Point, is not obnoxious to Change, and such is that which is Eternal. The Deity only is properly and strictly so: whence *Plato* rightly saith, * *That Being which is always, remains ever in the same State, and is not liable to vicissitude*; after Millions of Revolutions it is the same. God's *Immutability* then is to be referr'd to his *Eternity*, or this to that: for what is Immutable is Eternal, and *vice versa*. Therefore you find these are joyn'd by the Psalmist, *Thou art the same, and thy Years shall have no end*, Psal. 102. 27. Thou art Unchangeable, and thou art Everlasting, for these mutually result one from the other. He that changes not is for ever: and if he be for ever, he changes not. 7. God's Immutability is founded on his *Omniscience*. God foresaw and predetermined all things, and therefore as he wills them to be, they shall ever be, and he will not alter them. He perfectly knowing all things before, hath no occasion to act contrary to it afterwards; as among Men (which I observ'd before) Ignorance is the ground of their changing their Minds. They find things to be otherwise than they at first took them to be, by reason of something intervening which they thought not of before: thence they change their first

* Τὸ ὂν ὄν, ἀεὶ ἀεὶ κατὰ ταὐτὰ ὄν. *In* Timæo.

first purposes. But it can't be so with God, because he foreknew all things, and every Circumstance of them. Hence it is that he can never change, he can never begin to will that which he did not will before.

Lastly, I argue thus, if God can be changed, then that change is either for the worse, or for the better: But to assert either of these is Absurd and Blasphemous. For if he could be changed to the impairing of his Nature, he would cease to be God. Nor can he by alteration attain to a more perfect State, because what is infinitely perfect, cannot be more so. Wherefore he is uncapable of all Change; he can neither suffer in his Nature, or have any of his excellent Properties taken from him: Nor can he have any Accession made to him, for what is Compleat admits of no Addition. This was the very argumentation of the Gentile Philosophers, * *That which is Fairest and Best, remains simply in its own Native Form*, saith Plato. † *Every thing that is changed*, saith another, *is changed either into better or worse; if into the latter, then it is made Evil; if into the former, it was at first bad. Neither of which can possibly be said of God.* It were easie to shew, not only from this, but other Passages in the *Pagan* Writers, that this was a Notion constantly entertain'd by them that God is Unchangeable. I will only add those memorable Words of the Great *Aristotle*, * It *it frequently declared and owned, saith he, even among the Maxims of Vulgar Philosophy, that God is Unchangeable.*

* Κάλλιστον καὶ ἄριστον μόνον ἁπλῶς ἐν τῇ ἑαυτοῦ μορφῇ. De Repub. l. 2.

† Πᾶν τὸ μεταβαλλόμενον, ἢ ὑπὸ τοῦ κρείττονος, ἢ ὑπὸ τοῦ χείρονος· εἰ μὲν ὑπὸ τοῦ κρείττονος, κακοῦνται, εἰ δὲ ὑπὸ τοῦ κρείττονος, τὸν ἀρχῆν ἦν κακόν. Sallust. De Diis.

* Ἐν τοῖς ἐγκυκλίοις φιλοσοφήμασι περὶ τοῦ θεοῦ πολλάκις προφέρονται τοῖς λόγοις, ὅτι τὸ θεῖον ἀμετάβλητον. De Cœlo, l. 1. c. 9.

But Thirdly, There are some *Objections* to be answered, as first it will be said, How can we reconcile this with those Places of Holy Scripture, where it is said, that *God Repented him of what he had done?* Thus *God Repented that he made Man*, Gen. 6. 6. and that *he made* Saul *King over Israel*, 1 Sam. 15. 35. And we read of his *Repenting* in Job 3. 9. Jer. 42. 10. Joel 2. 14. Now, *Repentance* is a *Change* of the Mind and Actions; how then is it consistent with God's Immutability? I Answer first in General, It is certain that God's *Repenting* cannot be understood of his altering his Decrees, or falsifying his Word, or being displeased with himself for any thing that he hath done. In this Sense there is an utter impossibility of his *Repenting*. *God is not a Man that he should lye: Neither the Son of Man that he should Repent. Hath he said, and shall he not do it? Or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it Good?* Numb. 23. 19. And in that very Chapter, where it is said, *The Lord Repented that he made* Saul *King over* Israel, 'tis expresly said before, *The strength of* Israel *will not Repent; for he is not a Man that he should Repent*, v. 29. Nay, we are told, and that rightly, by the Platonist, that † to be changed, or to Repent is not only unworthy of God, but of a Good Man. For if this latter be drawn off from his Purposes and Alters his Mind, it is either from evil to good, or from good to evil: If the one, it is a Sign he unadvisedly proposed at first: If the other, 'tis evident that his last resolves were blamable. Neither of these can be applied to God, and therefore *Repentance* (in the strict and genuine Sense of the Word) is not incident to him, and consequently he remains Unchangeable. *The Lord hath sworn* (he hath solemnly protested, and declared his Mind) *and will not Repent*, Psal. 110. 4. Yea, he *cannot*, for 'tis repugnant to his Nature, as I have shew'd before.

† Μετατίθεσθαι καὶ μεταμελεῖσθαι προσήκει μὴ ὅτι θεῷ, ἀλλ' οὐδὲ ἀνδρὶ ἀγαθῷ. Max. Tyr. Dissert. 30.

The particular Answer then is, that when 'tis said in Holy Writ that *God Repents*, this manner of Speech is to be understood in a way of Condescension to our Weak Capacities, and Shallow Understandings. As before it was observ'd that in the Style of Scripture, God is represented as *Angry*, because, as those that are *Angry*, he shews his Displeasure against the Offenders, and severely animadverts upon them; so *Repentance* is attributed to him, because he seems to do what *Repenting Men* do, for when they Repent of a thing they act contrary to what they did before. And this will give you the true Account of any other Humane *Affections* or *Passions* which are ascribed to God in Scripture; that is, God sometimes doth as *Men* do, who have the Affections of *Delight*, *Joy*, *Grief*, *Anger*, &c. he gives or takes away, he Rewards or Punishes. So as to *Repentance*, it doth not properly belong to God, but because *Repentance* causes Men to undoe what they have done, and to act otherwise, therefore when God doth so, he is said to *Repent*. Thus *it Repented God that he had made Man*, i. e. whereas before he had made and preserved Mankind, he intended now to destroy him from off the Face of the Earth by an Universal

versal Deluge. *It repented him that he made* Saul *King*, i e. it was God's purpose now to depose him, and to set up another. Thus he *Repented* of the Doom pronounced against the *Ninevites*: He would not destroy them, he prevented their Ruin and Overthrow. He did as *Men do* when they *Repent* of a thing, they *undo* it. So then God's *Repentance* is no other than a Diversity of Administrations, a doing things differently from what he did before. *Theodoret* expresses it thus, * *God's Repenting is no other than a changing of his Dispensation.* • And in another place he calls it the † *Difference* of his *Dispensation.*

* Ἐπὶ θεοῦ μετάμελεια ἡ τῆς οἰκονομίας ἐστὶ μεταβολή. Quæst. 32. in 1. Reg.

† Οἰκονομίας διαφορά. Quæst. 52. in Gen.

But though this Answer rightly states the case of *Repentance* as 'tis attributed to *God*, yet it strikes not at the main Difficulty, which is, how God can *Repent*, and yet (according to the Doctrine we have before establish'd) remain *Unchangeable*. For if God acts contrary to what he did before (which is the true Notion of his *Repenting*) it may hence be inferr'd that he sometimes changes his Purpose, and doth contrary to what he intended, which proves him to be Changeable. As to instance in that Sentence against *Nineveh*, *Yet* 40 *Days and* Nineveh *shall be destroyed*, if it was God's Pleasure that that Great City should be ruin'd within that space of time, how came it to pass that it was not? Doth not this proceed from a Change in God? Do not such Events prove him to be Mutable? The *Schoolmen* assoyl this Difficulty by a nice Saying, *viz.* that it is one thing for God to change his Will, and another thing to will a Change; meaning hereby, as I suppose, that the Matter and Object of God's Will may be chang'd, but God himself and his Will (which is indeed himself) is not altered. Others as Scholastically tell us, that God changes his Sentence pronounced, but not his Counsel and Will intended. And here the Distinction lies between the Revealed, and the Secret Will of God. If any Persons can make use of these Notions to the present purpose, it is very well, and I shall not be offended at it.

But I will fix upon this as the best and plainest Answer to the Objection, *viz.* that in most of the Promises and Threatnings in the Book of God there is always a *Condition* expressed or implyed. Sometimes it is plainly *expressed*, as in *Gen.* 20. 3. God tells *Abimelech* that he shall die for his detaining of *Sarah*, *Thou art a dead Man, for the Woman whom thou hast taken.* But this was with a Condition, *viz.* unless he *restored Sarah* to her Husband, as you read in the 7th ver. So in Jer. 18. 8. *If that Nation against whom I have pronounced, turn from their evil ways, I will repent me of the Evil which I thought to bring upon them*, it is evident that turning from their Evil Ways is the Condition annexed. If they Repent, then God Repents. But sometimes this Condition or Qualification is not expresly set down, but is to be *understood*, as in that instance of *Hezekiah*, Isa. 38. 1. *Set thy House in order, for thou shalt die, and not live*, i. e. unless thou dost by Praying and Repenting obtain a Prorogation of thy Life. And thus it is in the instance before named, *Yet* 40 *Days, and* Nineveh *shall be destroyed*, i. e. unless that City Repent of their Sins. Now suppose, or rather say that that People did Repent of their Evil Ways (as we are told they did, though afterwards they Revolted) how was there any disappointing and frustrating of God's Will, although he did not destroy them? The Sentence of Destruction was not Absolute, but Conditional, although it was absolutely expressed. But this doth not prove that the *Decree* concerning *Nineve* was Conditional: Yea, the *Event* shews that the saving of *Nineve* for that time was absolutely Decreed, and so were the Conditions in order to it, namely, *Jonas's* Preaching, and their Repentance. These were absolutely, that is, unalterably determined by God, as is clear from the Issue, for that demonstrates the unchangeableness of the Divine Decree. Wherefore this Conditional Commination against *Nineveh* is no argument of the Conditionality, that is, the uncertainty of the *Divine Decree*, and consequently it is no proof of the changeableness of God. So that you see God's Purpose or Will stands inviolable, and is not at all shaken by the Cavil which was raised against it: And it remains still an irrefragable Truth that God is Unchangeable. In all these Events (and others of the like Nature) God changeth not his Decree, for he decreed to do those very things.

Secondly, Some by way of *Objection* suggest that when God first began to act Externally, there was a *Change* in him: Thus there was a time when the World was not Created, therefore when he Created it, he was that which he was not before, *viz.* a *Creator*. I answer, no Mutability that argues imperfection is in God: Therefore if

if his Creating the World seems to be accompanied with some Change, *i. e.* some Relative Change, and if any Man will call it so, I can be Content, seeing it implies no Imperfection. Yea, to have power to produce things out of nothing, and to Create a World argues the greatest Perfection. But moreover, I say that the *Creation* of all things is no argument of a *Change* in God, for the World was from Eternity design'd to be Created, and as to God's Will and Decree it was Eternal, but the Decree was that it should be created in Time, and therefore that Creating it in Time argues no Change in God. And so in all the Changes that happen in the World, in the several Ages of it, the case is the same. It is the permanent, and unchangeable Will of God, that he will act and influence on his Creatures, especially Men, as there is Occasion. It is his immutable Decree that he will produce such and such Alterations in the World, and at such a time. God himself is Immoveable and Unchangeable though he moveth and changeth all things. *We* move, not *God*: *We* are changed, not *He*.

But thirdly, it will be urged by some busie *Objectors*, that God's *different* and *Various dispensations* towards men argue him to be Changeable. For we read that he dealt with them in the way of a Covenant of Works before the fall of *Adam*; then after it there was introduced by him a Covenant of Grace. And under this there were several Administrations of a different Nature. The old *Patriarchs* were bred up under the Law of Nature, with a mixture of Divine Revelation. The *Jews* who succeeded them, were Educated under certain Rites and Ceremonies, which were peculiar to them. The *Gentiles* in the mean time, were left to their Superstitions and Idolatry, yet so as that some of them were not denied the knowledge of the True God. Lastly, *Christianity* took place in the World, and is an Institution that is different from all the rest. Thus God hath acted in Sundry manners, even in the way of Religion: and we are not to think that this *Variety* of *Oeconomies* is a proof of his *Changeableness*? St. *Chrysostom's* excellent words shall be the Answer to this Cavil, * *This we ought to know in the first place*, saith he, *that God is not changed or removed, from one Mind and Opinion to another: but he remaining immoveable accommodates himself to the weakness of Mankind. God at Sundry times speaks and prescribes Laws, not according to what he is able to do, but according as we are able to bear and receive them.* And again, in another place he sums up all thus, † *God administers all things for the good and advantage of Mankind, but this he doth according to the variety of Times and Seasons, and with a successive Correction and Emendation of the weakness of every Age.* Mankind was not always alike *capable* and *disposed*: and therefore the infinitely Wise Governour of the World, adapted his several Dispensations to the *Temper* and *Disposition* of the different Ages of it. It was certainly best to have this diversity of Means and Methods: the *manifold Wisdom of God* was eminently displayed in this Mixture and Variety of Administrations. And accordingly he decreed to govern the Church in such and such a manner, till such Periods of Time were expired, and then to introduce other Oeconomies and Administrations; so that these Changes were from the Unchangeable Decree and Purpose of God. In a word, this Variety was some argument of the changeable and different Capacity of Men in the World, but none at all of the mutable Nature of God. This remains what it was, and shall do so for ever. We have all the Reason imaginable to subscribe to *Philo's* Divine Maxim (on which he presents us with an Excellent Discourse) that ‖ God is Irreversible and Immoveable.

* *Homil. in Psal.* 95.

† Κατὰ καιρὸν πρὸς τὸ συμφέρον, ἕκαστα οἰκονομεῖ ὁ θεός, τὴν ἀδίνειαν ἑκάστης γενεᾶς διορθούμενος. *In Psal.* 109.

‖ Ὅτι ἀτρεπτον τὸ θεῖον.

Having thus established this Doctrine, it remains in the Fourth place, that we make some *Reflections* upon it. And first, this may lead us to a Contempt of the World, and the shifting Pageantry of it. It is in nothing more unlike to the Divine Being than in this Property, that it is given to Changes. *The world passes away*, saith St. *John*, 1 Ep. 2. ch. 17. v. and another Apostle more fully expresses the same experimented Truth, *The Fashion of the World passeth away*, 1 Cor. 7. 31. which, as some Criticks deem, is a Metaphor taken from the *Theater*, where the Parts and Actors, and the Scenes are often changed. The Apostle allows it no better Name than σχῆμα, a Vanishing *shew*, an imaginary *Figure* of things: and he further acquaints us that this Vain *Scheme*, this Specious *Flourish*, this Idle *Scene* soon *passes away*; it disappears and comes to nothing. But the World above is Stable and Immoveable, Firm and Unshaken, because the Author and Founder of it is much more so. He is the same to Everlasting Ages, and is not any ways capable of Variation. These different Ideas concerning God and the World, should be serviceable

to

to inhanse our Adoration of the former, and our disreguard and contempt of the latter.

Secondly, It might be shewed how unwelcome and dreadful the Doctrine of the *Divine Immutability* is to such as continue in the Love and Practice of their Sins. when they consider that God is the same, and changeth not, and consequently that he hates and abhorrs all Impiety, and will ever do so; when they consider that there is no Alteration in him as to his severe Menaces, and his severer Judgments; but that what he hath done against refractary Offenders, he will do again, these Apprehensions and Reflections may be made use of to create Terror in their Minds, and to excite them to a speedy change of their Lives and Manners, which are so hatefull to the Divine Purity.

Thirdly, The Premises will suggest to us how exceeding wellcome and acceptable the consideration of this Divine Property must needs be to all persons of Sincerity and Integrity, and whose Lives are conformable to the Laws of *Jesus*. God cannot Change, all his Attributes are the same that they were from Eternity: therefore in all bodily Afflictions and worldly distresses this yields solid Consolation. God always governed the World, and ever will do so. The same Laws of Righteousness and Justice are observed by him in all Ages. *He will Judge the cause of the Oppressed: for their sakes he will return on high*, Psal. 7. 7. he will ascend the Tribunal again, he will always Judge their Cause with impartial Righteousness. Therefore let us have the same Hopes and Confidence in God, that Good Men at all times have had; His former dealings with his People ought to be a support to us. He that of old rescued his Servants out of their distresses, will be the same Deliverer to us that he was to them. Whatever changes and revolutions happen in the World, let us remember that God is Unchangeable. In all Calamities and Miseries let us recall this to Mind, that he is still Mercifull and Benign, that *his hand is not shortned that he cannot save and deliver us*, that we may expect the like Favours that others before us have had experience of. God himself makes this the Basis of a comfortable Reliance on him, *I am the Lord, I change not: therefore the Sons of* Jacob *are not consumed*, Mal. 3. 6. Again in Spiritual Afflictions and such as concern the Souls of Men, this administers abundant Comfort. He is the same Unchangeable Being, whose years have no End. The same inexhaustible Fountain of Love is still open, and still flowing. *The everlasting Covenant* hath no period, *the sure Mercies of David* cannot be frustrated. *The foundation of God standeth sure*, 2 Tim. 2. 19. *Christ having loved his own, loves them unto the End*, Joh. 13. 1. They shall never fall from his Grace and Favour: for the Promises of God are unchangeable, and *his Compassions fail not*. These are the rich Treasures of Joy and Solace that are contained in this Doctrine.

Fourthly, Above all things strive to purchase the Favour of God who is Unchangeable. The World is Uncertain and Transitory: things are not long what they were, Creatures are corruptible and vain. *They shall perish, but Thou shalt endure*, saith the Psalmist, *Psal.* 102. 26. Thou art a Friend and Benefactor that will never fail us. Wherfore let us be extreamly sollicitous to gain the Good will of this Best Friend: and to this purpose let us assure our selves that nothing (on our part) can conciliate it but our uprightness towards God; as on the other hand it is wilfull and unrepented Sin alone, that can debar us of the Divine Favour.

Lastly, Therefore let God's Unchangeableness encourage us to persevere in our Duty; He being *the same*, will never leave or forsake us, wherefore this powerfully obliges us to adhere to him, and never to abannon him or his ways, but *to be stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, for as much as we know that our Labour shall not be in vain in the Lord.*

The next Attribute, and that which is the Summ of all the rest, is God's PERFECTION, *As for God, his way is perfect*, Psal. 18. 30. And this is ascribed to him in Mat. 5. 48. *Your Father in Heaven is perfect*. Of this Attribute I need say little because all the Attributes which I have distinctly treated of, are but thus severally Varied and Modified. Thus he is Perfect in his *Essence*, and *Life*; in his *Simplicity* and *Spirituality*; in his *Knowledge*, *Power*, *Justice*, *Goodness*, *Faithfulness*, *Immutableness*. In brief, *Perfection* takes in all the Attributes, for if God be *Perfect*, he must needs *Exist*, *Live*, be a *Spirit*, be *Uncompounded*: he must be *Omniscient*, *Omnipotent*, infinitely *Mercifull*, *Just*, and *True*, and *Unchangeable*. He hath all in him

him, in which we can conceive any Perfection. Nothing can be added to him: nothing can be taken from him. He is an Essence absolutely Consummate: and whatever argues *Imperfection* or *Defect* appertains not to him. This is the Notion we are to have of God: yea, we may conceive this Notion of *Perfection*, though we knew not what are the *particular* things that make up *Perfection:* for 'tis enough to say that 'tis void of all Imperfection. This briefly comprehends all that can be said of God. If it be asked, What is the *Foundation* of this Complicate Attribute? The Answer in short is, That that Being which is of *it Self* cannot but be *Perfect*, for it will not deny it self those Excellencies and Accomplishments which it is in its own Power and Choice to bestow upon it self. This our unbias'd Reason dictates to us, and therefore we may assign this as one ground of the Divine Perfection. Another is suggested by the great Apostle in his Oration to the learned *Athenians*, wherein he reminds them of this grand Truth, That God *needeth not any thing*, Acts 17. 25. which is the same as if he had said, He is *Perfect*; and he proves it hence, *seeing he giveth to all Life and Breath, and all things.* As much as to say, He on whom all Creatures depend, not only for their Existence and Life, but for whatever they have, cannot but be absolutely Perfect himself: and what Excellencies he imparts and communicates to others, he must needs have in the utmost degree and heighth in his own Person and Nature. These are the Grounds on which is established the Divine Perfection, besides some more particular ones which relate to the Nature of God, as he is *Infinite* and *Immense*.

To this may be referr'd the HAPPINESS or BLESSEDNESS of God, though some make it a distinct Attribute, but I shall not contend about that. This Excellency is ascrib'd to him in 1 *Tim.* 1. 11. where he is call'd, *the blessed God:* and in chap. 6. ver. 15. he is styl'd *the blessed Potentate.* Which Property was also own'd by all the wise Heathens that had attain'd to true Notions of a God. Πολύολβος is the Epithet given him by *Phocylides.* And *Aristotle* confesses, That 'tis * supposed concerning the Deity, that he is Happy. And it must needs be so, because *Happiness* arises from *Perfection*; or rather, because it is but another Name for it. Whence *Plato* said rightly of God, that † his Self-sufficiency makes him Happy. And he is back'd by his Scholar, as great a Philosopher as himself, who declares, that * *God is most Happy, because he is Sufficient in himself, and stands in need of nothing.* With which agrees that of *Tully*, † *Nothing is so happy as the Divine Being, because nothing abounds with all manner of good things but he.* It is evident then, that *Blessedness* is the result of God's *Perfection.* For seeing Blessedness is such a Perfect State as is made up of the accumulation of all Good, it undeniably follows, that he who is Perfect is absolutely Happy. Thus we see what is the ground of this Attribute; and we see likewise, that Happiness is essential to the Divine Nature, and cannot be separated from it.

* Τὸν θεὸν μάλιστα ὑπολαμβάνομεν μακαρίον καὶ εὐδαίμονα εἶναι. Ethic. l. 10. c. 8.

† Αὐτάρκης πρὸς εὐδαιμονίαν.

* Aristot. Ethic. l. 7. c. 15.

† De Nat. Deor. lib. 1.

Now, as I have already made *particular Inferences* proper to the several other Attributes, so I will conclude with some *general ones* from this Perfection and Happiness of the divine Nature, and from all the rest of the divine Excellencies before treated of. First, let us frame our Apprehension of God according to this Idea of a most perfect Being, and as I have display'd it in treating on the several Attributes. If you fall short of this, you entertain a wrong Conception of the Deity. And truly the World hath very grossly fail'd in this one thing: Men have taken up imperfect Ideas of God, which hath been the Source of Idolatry and Superstition, and at last may prove the Parent of Atheism. As God at first made Man after his Image, so now since the Fall Men make God according to their own Image, they endeavour to make him like themselves. There was a known Emperour that erected an Image to his God *Jupiter*, and placed upon his Shoulders a Head and Face very like his own, intending by that Artifice to share in the Honour done to *Jupiter*; this is frequently imitated in the World; they affect to make God resemble themselves. Ask a *Negro* what Colour his God is of, and he answers, *Black*; for they atttribute the same things to the Deity which they see and like in themselves. The Creature hath too often created his Maker, and Fancy hath given Being to the Divinity. Many have dealt with God, as those in *Isaiah* with their *Wooden Deities*, who retain'd a *part* which they hew'd and shaped into what Figure they pleas'd, and *part* they cut off and threw away, as not considerable, and the *rest* they consum'd in the Flames,

Isai. 44. 15, 16. Such a maim'd and patch'd Notion do some frame of the divine Being, adding and taking away as their fancies suggest to them. It was no uncommon thing of old to represent their Gods according to their own Humour, and what was most delightful to themselves. Thus the *Moabites* were great keepers and breeders up of Sheep, and accordingly represented their Goddesses in form of Sheep, as *Grotius* well observes in 2 *Kings* 3. 4. The *Phœnicians*, a Trading and Covetous People, pictur'd their Gods with Purses, thinking there is no greater Symbol of Divinity than Money. The *Tartars* before they eat, smear the Mouths of the Images (which they keep in their Houses and count for Gods) with the fat of their sodden Flesh, for they imagine that their Gods are delighted with the same that they are. The famous Limner, who drew the Picture of *Venus* by the Face of his own Mistress *Gratina*, did thereby tell us, that 'tis the corrupt Opinion of Mankind, that the Deity resembles what they most love and affect. This hath been the Root of the vilest Practices in the World, that Men fansie God like themselves; they think he must needs be pleas'd with what they like.

Hence it was, that the *Pagans* represented their Gods guilty of all manner of Vice and Villainy, Patrons of all Lewdness and Debauchery: hence it was that *Homer's Jupiter* is Obscene and Lascivious, Lustful and Adulterous, False and Perfidious, a Make-bate, and a common Barreter among the other Gods. And he and other Poets tell us Stories of the bickering of their Gods and Goddesses. *Ate* forsooth was wont to sow Dissention among them, and then they fell together by the ears, and alarm'd the World with the noise they made. They introduce God's fighting also with Men, and sometimes wounded by them. Sometimes they bring them in stealing and thieving. And as for *Bacchus*, *Venus* and *Mars*, and some other of their Deities, their is scarcely any Wickedness or Enormity which they do not make them guilty of. *Plato* and *Porphyry* complain'd of this, and were apprehensive how it gave Encouragement to Lewdness and Impiety: for it could not be expected that Men should live better and more orderly than their Gods. *Seneca* speaking of these lewd and debauch'd Deities observes well, that * there could not be a greater Incentive to all manner of Vices, than to make the Gods the Patrons and Authors of them. And therefore in another place he puts this material Question, † What difference is there between denying the Gods, and representing them as thus lewd and infamous? Is it not the same thing to be an Atheist, and to believe that there are such scandalous Deities? Yes surely, for there are no such things in Being as Gods of this vile Character. On this occasion * *Plutarch* professes, that it is hard to tell which is worse, *Atheism* or *Idolatry*; to hold no Gods, or to hold them to be such as are not worthy of that Name: as this grave Writer adds, He had rather it should be said, There is no such Man as *Plutarch*, than it should be said, *Plutarch* is an inconstant, angry, debauch'd Man, and the like.

* *Quid aliud est vitia incendere quàm auctores illis inscribere Deos?* De brevit. vit.

† *Quid interest utrùm Deos neges an infames?* Epist. 124.

* *De Superstitione.*

This shews how necessary it is, that we should have right Conceptions of the Godhead, and that we should be extraordinary carefull not to mistake here. This sound Apprehension and Knowledge of God is * *the greatest and highest Learning*, saith *Plato*. The Opinion Men entertain of him is the principal and chief thing to be minded, saith * another of the Ancients: and it is the more important, because it is the Foundation of all other Divine Knowledge. For till we know the Author of our Nature and Beings, we can't tell what we are our selves, nor what we were made for. And 'tis also the Ground-work of all our Religion and Worship. The *Pagan* Moralists inculcate this, That * to have true and right Conceptions concerning God is absolutely requisite to Religion. And the † *Christian* Writers are much more earnest in pressing this grand Truth, because the true worshipping and serving of God depend upon this. This is that which I have endeavour'd to promote, and this is it which I now urge upon the Reader, that he would conceive aright of God, that he would fix on his Mind a worthy Idea of him, *i. e.* such as I have offer'd to him in these Discourses, *viz.* A Self-existing, Incorporeal, Eternal Being, infinitely Wise, Powerful, Good, Just, Holy, Faithful: In a word, A Being absolutely Perfect and Consummate, most Happy and Blessed.

* Μέγιστον μάθημα. *In Politic.*

† Πρῶτόν ἐστιν ἡ περὶ θεῶν δόξα καὶ μέγιστον. Plutar. *Moral.*

* Ὀρθὰς ὑπολήψεις περὶ θεῶν ἔχειν. Epictet.

† *Opinio Religionem facit & recta de Diis mens.* Arnob. l. 7.

Secondly,

Secondly, After we have attain'd to Right, and worthy *Apprehensions* of the most Glorious Nature and Attributes of God, in the next place let us be filled with Holy *Affections* agreeable to them. This also I have laboured to advance in the Applicatory part of what I have said, but I will here more briefly and summarily shew what particular Dispositions of Mind, the several Attributes call for. The Consideration of God's singular way of *Existing* and *Living*, excites us to think meanly of our poor Derivative Being, and our languishing dying Life. His *Simple* Nature teaches us to have low Thoughts of our different Composition: His *Spirituality* shames our mixture and allay of Flesh: His *Ubiquity* slurs our narrow and contracted Locality. His *Eternity* may cause us to Blush, that *we are but of yesterday.* The Consideration of his infinite *Knowledge* and *Wisdom* may justly make us sensible of our shallow Reach. His absolute *Power* calls for our lowest Submission, together with a sense of our own Weakness and Impotency. His *Holiness* and *Purity* command our Admiration and Love: His *Mercy* requires our Thankfulness: His *Justice*, our Fear and Dread: His *Truth* and *Faithfulness*, together with his *Unchangableness*, our firm Affiance and Trust in him. And finally, let the thoughts of the *Divine Perfection* humble and debase us, and bring us to becoming thoughts of our selves. It is true, when we look upon some of our Fellow Creatures, we may seem to be considerable; and by comparing our selves with them we may perhaps arrive to a good Opinion of our Accomplishments and Endowments: But when we look to God, who infinitely surpasses us in his Nature and Excellencies, we cannot but pronounce our selves very mean, deficient and sorry Creatures. If the Glorious Angels are impure and defiled in his Sight, certainly we are much more so, we whose Nature is so corrupted and polluted, so prone to all Vice and Folly. This should effectually teach us Humility, and inspire us with a low and mean esteem of our selves. But yet,

Thirdly, Seeing we were originally made for God, and great and worthy things, let us strive (with a Sacred Emulation) to imitate him in those forementioned Excellencies of his which we are capable of, and as far as we are able. I have taken notice already how pernicious it is to represent God like our selves. Therefore let us be careful that we take the right method, *i. e.* fansie not God according to what we are, or are pleased with, but frame our selves to be as God is. It is part of the Character which *Quintilian* gave of *Phydias* the famous Statuary, that * he was better at shaping the Gods than Men. Let our chief Skill lie here, let it be our main Care to form God aright in our Minds, to make him the Patern to Men, and not them an Example to him. Study we the Divine Attributes, that we may thereby arrive in some measure to what God is, for he himself hath said, *Be ye Holy, for I am Holy*, Levit. 11. 42. And accordingly St. *Peter*'s Exhortation is, *As he who hath called you is Holy, so be ye holy in all manner of Conversation*, 1 Pet. 1. 15. For we must remember this, that our *Knowledge* of the Attributes (which I have been describing) is in order to our *Imitating* of them: for, as *Hierocles* long since observ'd, *These* two make up Religion or True † Honouring of God. And admirably to this purpose *Arrianus.* "‖ Know, *saith he*, what a kind of Being God is, be well ac- "quainted with his Nature, for such as God is found to be, "such must he that would please him endeavour to be: If God "be faithful, he must be so too: If God be bountiful, he must labour to be such, "*&c.* This is the grand Use and Design of the Doctrine of the *Attributes*, to instruct us in the Nature of God, in order to our imitating of it. See what Excellencies are in God, and make it your great work to copy them out into your Hearts and Lives. Think not to be Happy without doing this: Yea, assure your selves that this is the very heighth of that Happiness which is attainable by us, either here or hereafter. To be *God-like*, is our utmost Felicity, to Resemble him in those Divine Perfections which we are capable of is our highest Perfection and Glory.

* *Diis quam hominibus conficiendis melior.*

† Ὀυσίας (sc. θείας) τῶν μορφωθέντων γνῶσις, καὶ ἡ πρὸς αὐτὴν κατὰ δύναμιν ἐξομοίωσις. In Pythag. Carm.

‖ Lib. 2. Cap. 14.

The Third Discourse

ON

The First *Article of the* CREED,

WHEREIN,

The Doctrine of Divine Providence is Explained, Asserted and Vindicated, from some Topicks that are Unusual: with the Natural *Inferences* appertaining to this Doctrine.

A Discourse of God's Providence,

Grounded on Mat. X. 29, 30. and 1 Pet. V. 7.

It is not difficult to shew the *Connection* between my preceeding Discourses and this which I am now entring upon. For having asserted a *God* and explained his *Attributes*, we naturally fall into the consideration of his *Providence*. First, this necessarily flows from his *Being*. If there be a *God*, verily he is one that *judgeth in the Earth*, Psal. 58. 11. *He that comes unto God*, saith the Apostle, *must believe that he is, and that he is a Rewarder of them that diligently seek him*, Heb. 11. 6. That is, a Man that would be a true Christian (that is the *coming unto* God) must first be resolved of these two things; namely that there is a God, and that he takes care of his Worshippers, distributing Rewards and Punishments according to the behaviour of Men in the World. The latter depends upon the former; if the first be true, the second is necessary. The belief of the being of God inferrs that he takes care of the World, that he punishes Evil doers, and that he recompenses those that seek him. It is true, there have been those, as the *Epicureans*, who have acknowledged a *Deity*, yet have disowned his *Providence*: but if they had spoken rationally, and argued truly, they must necessarily have own'd the latter upon their granting the former. If there be a God, a Providential care of the World must be concluded thence. Whosoever acknowledges the one, cannot but make the other an Article of his Creed: for indeed the same Arguments which prove the *Being* of a God, prove a *Providence*. And therefore having spoken of *that*, under that Head, I repeat it not now, but referr the Reader thither. And so on the other side, all the Topicks that prove a Providence, prove a God: and therefore if I was defective in my Arguments for a Deity, you may make use of all these for Providence.

And the connection between God's *Attributes* and his *Providence* is as Evident: for it is certain that God governs all things by the diverse Attributes of his Godhead. As he influences upon the World by one or more of these, he hath the several Names and Titles of Self-existent, All-wise, Omnipotent, Just, Good, &c. ascribed to him. He is *from himself*, and is the *First Cause* of all, and therefore all other Causes depend upon him, and are governed by him. By vertue of his infinite Knowledge, he sees and discerns all things that are said or done in every place of the World, yea and hath a perfect insight into all mens Thoughts and Intentions: and therefore he cannot but be able to order and regulate the Affairs of the World, with unparallell'd Wisdom and Prudence. Again by his *Power* he is able to Affect and

and accomplish what he pleases: by his *Justice* he is obliged to Animadvert on Offenders: by his *Goodness* and *Mercy* he is always Beneficial to the World. And so if I should instance in his other Attributes, it would appear, that they prove and necessarily inferr a *Providence*. Yea, to confess the one, and yet to disown the other, is Absurd and Contradictory, and therefore highly contumelious to God. It is asserting a Power, Wisdom, Justice and Goodness in him, and yet at the same time denying them: it is ascribing all these Excellencies to him, whereby he is capable of ruling the World, and yet taking them away from him. Thus we see that those who deny the *Providence* of God, deny his Attributes also. And this must needs be because that depends upon these, and flows from them. Or, to speak more fully, and thereby to give the general Notion of *Providence*, it is made up of the Divine Attributes. *These* are so many *single* Excellencies of the Deity, but *Providence* is the *joynt Exertment* of them all in his dealings towards his Creatures. And therefore it was requisite, when I discoursed of the several *Attributes*, to mention some of those Particulars, which I must now be forced to insist upon in a more *peculiar* manner, under this Head of *Providence*.

Of the Nature of which I hope to give a complete account by shewing what are the distinct *Parts* and *Acts* of it: these are either *Internal* or *External*. First, Providence may be considered as to its *Internal* Acts: and so it comprehends these two things,

First, *Foresight*, a foreknowing what shall be, for seeing is knowing. This is the first and principal act of *Providence*, and therefore in the three Learned Languages it takes its * Name from *foreseeing*, because it is a perceiving and discerning of some Future things before they come to pass. Though Futurities are hidden from Mankind, yea from the Notice of Angels, because they are but Finite Creatures as well as Man, yet God who is of an Infinite and Immense Nature, hath a Foreknowledge of all things, Persons and Actions that shall ever be through the several Ages of the World. And these he distinctly knew from all Eternity, even before they had any Existence. This I have proved from several express Texts of Scripture, when I discoursed of the *Divine Knowledge* under the *Attributes*, and therefore there is is no need of repeating them here. This is the singular Perfection of the most High, and it is the very Basis of his *Government* of the World. He that foresaw all things must needs Rule and Manage them with unspeakable Wisdom and Prudence. Therefore Providence hath fitly its denomination from this one part of it, namely, God's Precognition or Foresight. But words of *knowledge* are usually extended to the *Will*, and so we find that προβλέπειν signifies not only to *Foresee*, but to *provide for*, Heb. 11. 14. Accordingly,

* Heb. *Hashgachah*, à *shagach prævidit*. Gr. πρόνοια à προνοεῖν, *ante mente percipere, prævidere*. Lat. *Providentia*.

Secondly, the word πρόνοια *Providence*, implies the *Decree* and *Determination* of God. Whence the Christian Philosopher defines Providence thus, † it is God's Will and Counsel whereby all things are duly and fitly administred. For as God doth foresee and foreknow things, so he wisely decrees them. Both these are joyned together by the Apostle, in Acts 2. 23. *Him being delivered by the determinate Counsel and Foreknowledge of God ye have taken*. *Counsel* here precedes *Foreknowledge*, to let us know that the former is the foundation of the latter. And these are call'd God's *Hand* and *Counsel*, Acts 4. 28. Thus *Predestination* is part of *Providence*, and a very signal part of it: and accordingly Providence, with respect to this part of it, is God's determining according to his Good will and pleasure, what shall be the Event of his Creatures. It is no other than that Eternal, Free and Immutable Decree, whereby whatever is Good is effectually brought to pass, and whatever is Evil is permitted, and whereby both are directed to God's glory. But of the *Foreknowledge*, and *Decrees* of God I have already largely treated in my Discourse; entituled *Veritas Redux*, and therefore disminiss them now.

† Πρόνοιά ἐστι βούλησις θεοῦ δι' ἣν πάντα τὰ ὄντα τὴν πρόσφορον διεξαγωγὴν λαμβάνει. *Nemes. de Nat. Hom. cap.* 42.

Thirdly, Providence is to be considered as an *External* act, and so 'tis no other than God's actual Administring of things according to his Foreknowledge and Will. Words of *knowledge* are usually extended not only to the *Will* and *Affections*, but to *Actions*: and thus the word *Providence* doth denote God's Actual providing for his Creatures, his wise managing of all things for them, according to the Tenour of his Eternal decree and counsel. Providence is not only Intuitive and Cognoscitive, not only Decretive from Eternity, but it is Executive in time. Now, this *Actual Providence* consists in these two things, 1 *Preserving*. 2. *Governing* of all things.

First,

First, The Almighty Power which made all things, doth preserve and uphold them. I know *Creation* is reckoned by some as a part of Providence, and so *Lactantius* took it, who gives us this definition of Providence; namely, that 'tis that Divine Energy, * by virtue of which all things are made and govern'd. But I conceive this is not a true and strict Account of *Providence*, because *this* supposes Creation, for Things and Persons must *Be*, else they can't be *provided for*. But even herein we may be satisfyed that in Conservation is included a Creation, for, as the Schoolmen say, and not amiss, it is a continued Creation. Independently to exist, belongs to God alone; but as for Creatures, they are not able to uphold and preserve themselves in Being. They continually stand in need of the Divine Manutenency. God only and truly deserves the Name of *Stator*, as *Seneca* saith excellently, because † it is by his help that all things subsist. As a Modern Author Philosophizes concerning Motion in the World, that God at the first Creation indued the whole with a certain Motion, which he still preserves: And although some parts of the Universe lose their Motion, yet others get it, and so the same Measure and Degree of Motion is kept up always: So doth God in respect of all the other Qualities and Vertues which he hath endued any part of the World with, he constantly maintains them, and keeps them up, otherwise they would cease to be. From this exertment of Providence it is that Nature is not impar'd; that the World doth not decline and decay; that though it grows old in respect of Years, yet it is not so as to any of its parts, the Heavens, the Earth, the Seas, or any things contain'd in them. This is the work of *Providence*, and is also a convictive Argument of it, for no finite Being can subsist by its own Strength. Created things can't hold their Existence, unless kept up by an extraordinary Hand. The Deity is the basis on which they Lean. They will relapse into their first Chaos without this Sustentation.

* *Cujus vi ac potestate omnia quæ videmus & facta sunt & reguntur.* De irâ Dei, cap. 10.

† *Quod stant beneficio ejus omnia.* De Beneficio, l. 4. c. 7.

To make this manifest, observe the Nature of the *Duration* of things, which is such that its parts depend not at all upon one another, and they never exist together: and therefore from our present being and existing it follows not that we shall exist in the next following Moments, unless some Cause, namely the same which first produced us, doth as it were continually reproduce us, that is, Conserve us. For we may plainly perceive that there is no power in us, by which we can preserve and uphold our selves, and therefore if we be preserv'd, we are wholly indebted to the Divine Power for it. Thus the Duration of our Existence, the Continuation of our Being flows from, and at the same time proves a God and Providence. If we consider the Nature of living Creatures, and their essential composition, 'tis likely there is a Physical Possibility of their continuing to many Generations without Decay, if all hurtful accidents whatsoever from within and from without could be prevented: but we can't tolerably suppose that this will be so, considering the State of this World, and the Body of Man in particular, which of it self is subject to so many changes and shiftings. So that it depends entirely upon the Divine Disposal whether Creatures shall have a longer or a shorter Existence. If the Almighty substracts his Power, that is sufficient to make any Being cease to be. All things would immediately perish and be annihilated, if he conserv'd them not. Seeing they do not necessarily and independently subsist, we must acknowledge that it is he that keeps them in Being; and that if he should withdraw his Hand, their Existence would have a Period, and they would sink into nothing.

And that is the reason why this act of Providence, whereby all things are continued in their Being, is so often taken notice of in the Sacred Writings. God is emphatically styled *the Preserver of Men*, Job 7. 20. and the Psalmist goes farther, *O Lord, thou preservest Man and Beast*, Psal. 36. 6. Of both which he speaks again, 104. 27. *They all* (i. e. all the Creatures of the World, Men and Brutes, for he had mentioned both) *wait upon him, that he may give them their Meat in due Season*, that they may be sustain'd. And more particularly yet, *Thou hast made Heaven and Earth, and the Sea, and all things therein, and thou preservest them all.* Neh. 9. 6. This admirable act of Divine Providence is thus expressed by the Apostle, *In him we live and move, and have our Being.* Acts 17. 28. And of God the Son it is said, *he upholds all things by the Word of his Power*, Heb. 1. 3. and *by him all things consist*, Col. 1. 17. He that gave Existence to all things sustains them in their Being. As they

they could not exist without him, so they cannot continue and subsist without the same Aid and Power. And here it would be endless to enumerate the remarkable instances of this Divine Perswasion which we are every moment beholding to. In great Cities and Towns where the Houses are close to one another, and where so many of the Inhabitants sit up Late, and where there are so many negligent and so many Drunken People, it is a wonder that there are so few Fires that prove Destructive. If we look into our Bodies, and consider how many ways Death may enter in upon us, we cannot but reckon it almost a Miracle that we live so long, and so seldom fall into Diseases. And if we would observe, we might take notice of abundant Examples of this kind. This is the first External Act of Providence: And as I mentioned it in my Discourse concerning God's *Goodness*, to be the result of that Attribute, the effect of that *Paternal Kindness* which brought us and all other things into Being: So it is likewise the effect of the Divine *Power* and *Wisdom* which display themselves in the World, and which altogether make up *Providence*.

The second External Act of Providence is the *Government* of all things. This follows upon the other, for Preservation is in order to Gubernation. God upholds the things that he made, that he may dispose of them, and manage them as he pleases. To which purpose the excellent *Philo* speaks well, * the Author always takes care of his Work by the Law of Nature, as Parents take care of their Off-spring. And again, in another place, † reason dictates that a Parent or Workman should be concern'd for his Work: For a Father of Children, or a Workman doth for that purpose study the Conservation of what he hath produced. The infinite and Omnipotent Operator having created the World, carefully looks after it, and takes order about it. He every where commands, and efficaciously Acts and Executes. He every moment rules and administers all things with infinite Wisdom and Prudence. In short, he disposes of all things according to the Counsel of his own will, and he infallibly directs every one of them to the best ends, the chief and ultimate of which is his own Glory. For the grand end of God's Providence is his own Honour and Glory. *The Lord hath* not only *made all things for himself* (Prov. 16. 4.) but *Governs* them to that end.

* Ἐπιμελεῖται γὰρ ἀεὶ τοῦ ποιήματος τῷ ποιοῦντι φύσει νόμοις καὶ θεσμοῖς ἀναγκαῖον, καθάπερ καὶ γονεῖς τέκνων προμηθοῦνται. Lib. 1. Leg. Allegor.

† Τῷ μὲν γὰρ γεγονότι ἐπιμελεῖσθαι τὸν πατέρα καὶ ποιητὴν ἰσχυρὸς λογισμός· καὶ γὰρ πατὴρ ἐκγόνων, καὶ δημιουργὸς τῶν δημιουργηθέντων σπουδάζει τῆς διαμονῆς. De Opific. Mundi.

Now, because this *governing* part of Providence is the chief thing to be consider'd in it, I will amply insist upon this, and shew the *Extent* and *Universality* of it: which at the same time will explain the *Nature*, and demonstrate the *Truth* and *Reality* of it, and consequently establish and confirm us in the *Belief* of the Doctrine of Providence, which is so useful and necessary through the whole course of our Lives. That this Wise, Powerful, Just and Merciful Conduct, which we are to treat of, is of an Universal Latitude, and extends itself to all Things and Persons, and all Actions, Events and Circumstances, will manifestly appear from these two Considerations, 1. That it reaches to the smallest and vilest Things. 2. That it over-rules the most Contingent and Casual.

First, I say, nothing, be it never so *Little* and *Vile*, is hid from the inspection, or exempted from the care of Divine Providence. There are some matters and occurrences which seem to be very mean and minute, but they are not in the least excluded from the Universal Concern of the Deity. This Proposition will not be entertain'd by some Men of narrow Thoughts; as *Cotta* in *Tully* is of Opinion that God takes no care of lesser Matters: ‖ He despises such things as "these, *saith he*, and doth not concern himself for every Coun-"tryman's Grounds and Vineyards, nor takes notice of the da-"mage they receive at any time by blasting or hail, or the like. "These are poor inconsiderable things, and not worth the care "of the Supreme Being. But this is a very irrational Thought and Assertion, and proceeds from the want of a right Knowledge of the Deity, and due Apprehensions concerning his excellent and transcendant Nature; which is not, like ours, finite and stinted, but is infinite and immense, and thence it is most reasonable to inferr that his *Providence* is so too, and that it spreads itself as wide as the Universe, and consequently the *least* and *lowest* matters are under the Divine Inspection and Government. Nothing is more expresly confirm'd by Scri-

‖ *Minora Dii negligunt, nec agellos singulorum nec viticulas prosequuntur, nec si uredo aut grando quidpiam nocet, id Jovi animadvertendum fuit.*

ture

ture than this; especially in *Mat.* 6. from ver. 25. to the end of the Chapter. And again, in chap. 10. ver. 29. where our Saviour assures his Disciples, that *a Sparrow falls not on the ground without their Father.* The Life of a Sparrow, a sorry half-farthing Creature, is under the Care and Tuition of Heaven. He adds in the next ver. *The very Hairs of your Heads are all numbred*; to signify to us, that the least things, and such as are of the meanest Consideration, participate of Divine Providence; for as it was his Will that these should be, so it is his Pleasure that they shall not be neglected, or perish, for we *number* things that we may not *lose* any of them.

Under this Head might be mention'd, how the divine Care extends it self to the least Portions of Time, not only Months and Years, and the long durations of Ages, but Weeks, and Days, and Hours, and lesser Parcels of Time are under the divine Disposal and Government, as is clear from these express Texts, *Ex.* 13. 4. *Rev.* 9. 15. and several others. The shortest Periods of Time are set and appointed by God, as well as the longest: and he manages every Minute, yea, every Moment. That such and such things come to pass at such a *precise Time*, and not at *another*; that such a *particular Instant* produces this or that Occurrence, is wholly from the providential Care of Heaven, which interests it self in the meanest and lowest Affairs here below. We read in *Luke* 2. 36, 37, 38. that not only the Prophetess *Anna*'s *great Age*, *viz.* of *fourscore and four Years*, and the *seven Years* she lived with her Husband, but the very *Instant* of Time, when she happily came into the Temple and saw the Child *Jesus* there, and gave Thanks to God for him, are particularly taken notice of, as being of God's particular appointment and ordering.

Secondly, Providence is extended to the most *Contingent* and *Accidental* Things. Of this kind *Lottery* is esteem'd to be, which was used of old (and is practis'd at this day) in the deciding of Controversies. Even this the Wise Man and Inspir'd Writer determines to be from God, *Prov.* 16. 33. *The Lot is cast into the Lap, but the whole disposing thereof is of the Lord.* That this particular Lot is drawn rather than another, is not by Chance, but from the divine Providence. Yea, even those Deaths which are thought to be most Casual, are by God's particular Appointment. For which there is a very clear Text in *Exod.* 21. 13. compared with *Deut.* 19. 4, 5. which is a parallel place. Observe it, when a Man was slain by another accidentally, as by the slipping off of the Head of an Axe, which another was lifting up to cut down a Tree, *God* is said *to have delivered him into his hands*, Exod. 21. 13. Whence it is incontrovertible, that *God* is to be own'd in all Casualties whatsoever, and that those things which to us appear to be most fortuitous, are by the particular disposal of the Almighty. When King *Ahab* was slain by *a Man's drawing a Bow at a venture*, it is said, *it was according to the Word of the Lord*, 1 Kings 22. 34, 38. Though his Death was, what we commonly call it, by Chance, yet we are assured by the infallible Spirit who dictated the Scriptures, that the Event was by divine Ordination: and so is any other ones End, however fortuitous and accidental it may seem to be. It is *God that turneth Men to destruction*, Psal. 90. 3. And so are all other Actions and Events over-rul'd by him, though in respect of the Circumstances, they are said to be by Chance. Those that are the most accidental are under the insensible sway of Providence. When *Zanchez* a *Spaniard* first found out *America*, not by *Design*, but by being driven by a *long Tempest* on those Coasts; when Gun-powder was invented by a *Casual Experiment*; and (to mention something of an higher Nature) when the People of *Friesland*, in the *Low Countries*, were converted to the Christian Faith by *Wilfride*, a *Saxon* Bishop, who was cast on that Shore by a great *Tempest* at Sea, we are to attribute these Events to the Divine Disposal and Will, tho' they seem to be merely *Casual*. In respect of Second Causes they are so, but not in respect to the First, or divine Providence. Having thus briefly shew'd, that the Providence of God extends to the *smallest things*, and to those that are *contingent*, it will undeniably follow, that it is universal: for if it reaches to *these* things, we have all the reason to think that it takes in *all others* besides. And this I will now more distinctly and fully make good.

First, All *inanimate* Beings share in this Providence. The Earth, on which we tread and live, yields abundant Proof of this, for here God's Wisdom, Goodness and Power are very clearly discern'd. *He hangeth the Earth upon nothing*, Job 26. 7. as that ancient *Arabian* Philosopher long since observ'd. This prodigious *Pendulum*, which is so exactly balanced and poized, is the wonderful Contrivance of the Almighty. And whatever you see here below is an amazing Proof of the wise and mer-

ciful

ciful Superintendency of Heaven. It is significantly said in *Mic.* 5. 7. that *the Grass tarrieth not for Man, nor waiteth for the Sons of Men.* It grows and sprouts up in the wide Fields, and in Desarts and desolate Places; yea, and on the most mountainous Ascents, where 'tis not taken care of by Man's Hand, but is wholly nourished and maintain'd by Dew and Rain which fall from Heaven. Therefore it is emphatically said, with reference to this particular Care of the All-wise Being, that *he clothes the Grass of the Field,* Mat. 6. 30. and *he maketh Grass to grow upon the Mountains,* Psal. 147. 8. where it is beholding only to the Moisture that is derived from the Clouds, or from the liquid Nourishment which the subterraneous Cells and Chanels in those high places do furnish it with. For though some have unadvisedly asserted, that the Mountains are but deform'd Excrescencies, and useless Wens and Tumours in the earthly Body, yet others, who have penetrated further into these Secrets, have made it evident, that these are of very great use in this lower World, and are such necessary Conveyances as we could not be without. As to the Fruits of the Earth, they all on one account or other proclaim a wise Disposer, but some of them more especially do so, as the Tree that bears *Cacao*, or the *Indian Nut*; out of which is yearly drain'd a great quantity of Juice, which according to the Season it is drawn in, and the different way of preparing it, tasts exactly like Oyl, or Butter, or Milk, as also like some of the best sorts of Wine, and therefore serve instead of all these: and being dried and condensed, it imitates Sugar. Of the Fruit of it there is usually made Bread, and the Leaves serve as Paper to write upon. The Rind affords Materials for Cables, Sayls, *&c.* As for the Trunk of the Tree, it is used in building both of Houses and Ships. So bountiful is Providence in one single Tree. And we may find *other Instances* of the like Nature if we consult the Writings of modern Botanists. And even as to those Products of the Earth, which are chiefly for Sight and Ornament, our Saviour hath instructed us, that these depend upon the Providence of Heaven, and are taken care of by the Governour of the World, *Mat.* 6. 28, 29.

Much more then these great and glorious Bodies of Heaven, the Sun, Moon and Stars (which influence on these below, and on which the several Seasons of the Year depend) are under the Divine Conduct. Which is thus express'd by the Psalmist, *Psal.* 74. 16, 17. *The Day is thine, the Night also is thine: thou hast prepared the Light and the Sun. Thou hast set all the Borders of the Earth*; (according to the different Position of the Heavens) *thou hast made Summer and Winter*, by the proximity or distance of the Sun. And it is worth our remarking, that *Europe*, that part of the World wherein we are, is all of it situated in the *Northern* Temperate Zone: and that this *Northern* Hemisphere hath more fixed Stars than the *Southern*, and the Sun tarries some days longer in that than this: and that there is more habitable Earth in this Division of the World than in any other that we know. Which may be look'd upon as a very Providential thing, for thus the Better Part of the World is allotted to the Choicest Part of Mankind. And it was fit that that Hemisphere should be most Habitable and Populous which was design'd for the greatest Transactions.

I pass on to some other Remarks; Here it might be observ'd, that in most of the Countries in *Africa* and *America*, that are scorch'd with the Sun, the Heats, which otherwise wou'd be intolerable, are allay'd by refreshing Showers that fall in the Night, and by Morning Dews in great abundance, and by cool Breezes in the Afternoons, which fan the Air, and correct the sultry Influences of it. Particularly it is observ'd in *Barbadaes*, that the Breezes of Wind in the hottest Months rise with the Sun, and grow fresher as the Sun ascends. We are informed, that in those very hot Seasons of *June*, *July* and *August*, there are in *Syria* cool *Westerly* Blasts from the *Mediterranean*, that qualifie the Heat of those Climates. And so in other Countries, that lie under the vehement Rays of the Sun, those Parts that are next the Sea are cool'd with the Winds that come thence. It is plainly Providential, that the Sea-port Towns, where the great Trafick and Commerce is, are thus refresh'd.

That all the Sublunary Bodies, the Clouds, Winds, Rain, Thunder, Lightning, and all other Meteors, and the vast Ocean it self, are subject to the Divine Command, and entirely order'd and dispos'd of by it, we may satisfy our selves from *Job* 9. 7---26. 10—38. 26, 28. *Psal* 18. 13, 14---37. 7---107. 25--135. 7---147. 8, 16---148. 8. *Jer.* 5. 24---10. 3---14. 22. It is all summ'd up in those comprehensive Words of Holy *David*, Psal. 135. 6. *Whatsoever the Lord pleaseth, that doth he in*

Heaven and in Earth, in the Seas, and all deep Places. Providence shews it self every where, it pervades all places and things.

Under this Head it may be pertinently observ'd, That tho' Countries have their natural Defects, yet *Providence* makes them amends, by supplying them some other way. Some of the largest and most spacious Kingdoms in the World are the most barren, fill'd with Marshes and unwholesom Lakes, with unpassable Hills and formidable Mountains, and the Soil is otherwise dry and sandy: but they are furnish'd with Commodities of such Value that compensate all the foresaid Inconveniencies. *Norway* is cold and barren, abounding with inaccessible Rocks and Mountains, and vast Forests: it yields no Corn, and is destitute of other Necessaries of Life: yet the Inhabitants have plenty of good Fish, rich Furs, Deal-boards, Pitch, Masts, Cables, and other Tackling for Ships, *&c.* which being exported supply all their natural Wants.

There are other Countries which have little to commend them of their own Growth, but they are as rich and great as those that have abundance. *Holland* is not above seventy Miles in Length, and forty six in Breadth, and the whole Compass is not above a hundred and eighty *English* Miles, not so large as some one single County in *England*. The Earth of this place, like the Primitive one, is naturally cover'd over with Waters, but they drain it, or separate it by Dikes, and Sluces, and continued Chanels. Notwithstanding this, it is not free from deep Fens and Marshes, and it is not so firm as to bear Trees, and yield Timber: It affords little or no Corn, the great and necessary Support of Life. And the Air is thick and foggy, and can't tempt any Man to inhabit there. They have not of their own Growth, and within themselves any thing considerable, either of Victuals or Merchandize. It is from foreign Countries that they fetch the very Materials out of which they make their Manufactures. They have no native Commodities, either for their own Use, or for Trafick with their Neighbours, besides Earthen Wares and what their Kine afford them. And yet see how this Country is advanced by Providence: the Inhabitants are Wealthy at home and Powerful abroad. By Art and Industry they have climb'd to a great Heighth, and carry on a Trade all the Worldover. All that the Ocean can bring them in is their own. They make all Parts of the World theirs by Trafick: the *Indies* are brought to their Doors, and they are at present rich to a Prodigy.

And here further it might be noted, That no Place, no Country whatsoever is furnish'd with *all Conveniencies*. The best have something wanting, that they may not be proud: the worst have something to commend them, that they may not be dejected. There is not the meanest Country but is serviceable to some others, and yields them what they stand in need of. It is on *some* account better than another, and hath something *peculiar*, which that other hath not. This apparently is from *Providence*; that one Country should be beholding to another, and that we may strive by Industry to improve the worst; that People may see the need they have of one another, and that they may cultivate Friendship, and Commerce, and keep up Society.

Here we might take notice likewise, that those things in Nature which seem to be very Inconvenient and Disagreeable, have some Convenience and Advantage attending on them. Thus tho' *Nile*'s violent Streams are for the present troublesome, by overflowing such vast Tracts of Ground, yet they afterwards make amends for this trouble by the Fruitfulness which they are the cause of: and the *Egyptians* became very skilful in measuring of Ground, and other parts of the Mathematicks on this occasion. *Ætna*'s Flames are unacceptable to the neighbouring Towns and Villages, because they are so hot and scorching, but afterwards the Inhabitants and Owners of the Lands, have a considerable Compensation from the Ashes which fall upon them, and are serviceable to Manure them. Thus there is nothing that we can mention, but is made use of by Providence to some good end. Whence it was no contemptible Remark of an ancient Writer, That God made use of all the Elements and natural Bodies to plague the *Egyptians*, that he might thereby shew he was * Lord and Disposer of them all.

* Στοιχείων ἁπάντων δεσπότης. Theodoret. Quæst. 21. in Ex.

Secondly, As *Inanimate* Creatures, so those that are endued with *Life* and *Sense* are the Charge and Care of God's Providence. Here,

1. I will instance in those Animals which are merely sensitive, and have not the use of Reason. These are order'd and disposed of with singular Wisdom and Conduct.

duct? We are told by our blessed Saviour himself, that *our heavenly Father feeds the Fowls of the Air*, Mat. 6. 26. Whereupon *Luther*, after his blunt way, saith, *It costs God yearly more to maintain the Sparrows, than the yearly Revenue of the* French *King amounts to.* It is wonderful to observe, how he provides for these and for all the other Ranks of Sensitive Creatures, whether they belong to the Earth, or to the Seas and Rivers. He is their great Purveyor, and plentifully supplies them with Food and Sustenance, and he takes care of them, and directs them to those Ends which are most suitable to their Nature. That is very remarkable which is told us concerning the *Camels*, which travel through the *African* Desarts, where Water is seldom to be met with, that they take in so large a Portion of it before-hand, as sufficeth them for several Days. And this sometimes hath happen'd to be of great advantage to the Travellers, who when they are like to perish with Thirst, are forc'd to kill one of these Camels, and satisfy their Thirst with drinking the Water which they find in his Stomach. They have likewise in those Countries *Dromedaries*, a sort of swift Beasts, that will go a hundred Miles in a Day, and live on a small quantity of Food, and without Water, which is of singular and wonderful Advantage in those Desart parts, where is no Provision for Man or Beast.

Concerning rapacious Birds and ravenous Beasts, I might observe, that they are generally solitary, and go by themselves, and not in Herds, which is a great Instance of the divine Providence and Goodness. That some Brutes are not acquainted how strong they are, and what mischief they are able to do, is an Argument of the same: and we see the good Effects of it, for though they excell Men in Strength, yet they seldom or never exert it to the utmost, and with advantage: but they stand in awe of, and submit to those who have not that degree of Power and Ability which they are Masters of. Whereas, if there were an Instinct in them, whereby they were sensible of the Power they have, there would be no dealing with them, and Mankind would be ruin'd instead of being serv'd by them.

What is related of the amphibious, but destructive Animal belonging to *Jamaica*, call'd the *Allegator*, is worth taking notice of; his Motion on the Land is very swift when he is going on streight forward: but he is very slow in turning, and seems to do it with great difficulty: by which means he is easily avoided by those that meet him. The *Rattle-Snake*, especially that of *Brasil*, the most noxious of all its kind, (for its Bite is certainly Mortal) gives timely warning to Travellers to escape him, for he makes a great noise with his Rattle, as soon as he perceives that any Person is approaching towards him. There seems to be Divine Care and Caution in this matter.

Here it might be remark'd, That God's *Providence* extends to the most groveling Insects, as well as the most stately and towering Animals: his Care reaches to the lowest as well as the highest, *to Worms and feather'd Fowls*, as the Psalmist excellently expresses it. And 'tis observable, that many of the meanest and most despicable Creatures are by the Divine Disposal made to be as useful as some others of a nobler Rank and Figure: thus the poor contemptible Silk-worm is as serviceable to Mankind as the vast Elephant or Whale: and several other sorry Insects are of greater advantage to Mankind, than the soaring Eagle, and other Animals of a very eminent Make and Aspect.

Further, We may take notice, and attribute it to Providence, that some of the vilest and most sordid Parts of Creatures are beneficial in a high degree to Man. The Dung of Beasts in Husbandry is almost as useful as the Beasts themselves. Though it be the Dross and Refuse of those Animals Nutriment, yet it affords a generous Nourishment to those Grounds where it is bestow'd. It might be added, That some Beasts Excrementitious Parts are refreshing, and afford an excellent Scent and Spirit. And by Chymical Skill there are produced excellent Spirits, Essences, Oils, and Salts, even from human *Fæces*. Moreover, There are Antidotes made out of things that are Poisonous: and in many Instances it might be shew'd, that proper Remedies are convey'd to us from those Creatures that are most hurtful.

Lastly, As to the Creatures themselves, we can't but acknowledge, that tho they are void of Reason, yet they act for some *End*, which End they generally attain. They can't do this of themselves, because this can't be done without Knowledge and Counsel, especially when we see that these Ends ar[illegible] and certain, and always happen. Therefore there is a provident and wise [illegible], who directs these Agents to their End. But I have prevented my self a[illegible] in a former Discourse,

course, and therefore shall not now add any thing more, but only remind the Ingenuous Reader that there is Great Learning in the study of these Works of the Wise God of Nature, and it will be worth his time to apply himself to it.

2. As Irrational Creatures, so much more *Rational ones* are under the Providence of God. And here I will distinctly shew that *Angels* and *Men* are entirely subject to it, and that the ordering and disposing of both of them, are Arguments of the Divine Conduct in the World. First, I will argue from the administration of *Angels*, and make it appear that the Wise management of the World is Evident from thence: for God governs the World by the Agency of these Spirits, and they have a special influence on the chiefest things that are done in it. I intend first to speak of *Good Angels*, and then of the other sort of Angelick Spirits, that is *Devils* or Evil Spirits, and I doubt not but I shall shew that the Providence of God is apparently seen even in his permitting and over-ruling of these latter.

I begin with the Ministry of *Good Angels*, and that we may the better understand and discern the Province of the Almighty with relation to these Heavenly Creatures, I will premise some things by way of Introduction to that main design. We may take Notice then that though the Books of *Moses*, and most of the other Writings of the Old and New Testament, make frequent mention of *Angels*, yet there is no express relation of the Creating and forming of this Rank of Creatures, in the account that *Moses* gives of the *Creation*. Whence * some have rashly, and without any shew of Consequence inferr'd that the *Angels* and the uppermost *Heavens* were not Created, but were from Eternity. St. *Augustine* and some other Fathers thought that the *Angels* are mentioned by *Moses* in *Gen* 1. 3. under the Name of *Light*, and so were the production of the first day. *Gregory Nazianzen* and other Greek Fathers, together with St. *Jerom* among the Latin ones, held that these Spirits were Created (though not from Eternity, yet) before the World was made. And this opinion is taken up by † some of the *Racovian* way, because they do not find the Creation of them mentioned by *Moses* in his Narrative of the Worlds Formation. But all these Assertions appear to me, to be very idle and groundless; the first, because none was from Eternity but God; the second, because the *Light* in the first days Creation, is opposed to *Darkness*, and is called *Day*, v. 4. which may convince any one that it is not spoken of the *Angels*, but strictly and properly of a Luminous Body; the third, because *Moses*'s not mentioning the Production of Angels is no argument that they were created before the general formation of the World. You may as well say the same of *Metals* and *Minerals*, because there is not a word of them in *Moses*'s History of the Creation.

* *Stench. Eugubin. & Mercer. in* Gen. 7. 7.

† *Smalc. de Verbi Incarnat. cap.* 7. *Volkel.* l. 2. c. 2.

It seems most probable to me (which I submit to the Judgment of others) that these Glorious Creatures were made on the sixth day of the Creation, immediately after Man: and my Reason is this, because we find that the rest of the Creation ascends *by degrees*, and the more imperfect Creatures were first Created, and then those that were Perfecter and Nobler. And accordingly we are told that Man was formed on the last day of the Creation, as being perfecter than all those that went before. And to consummate the whole Creation, it is likely that the *Angels*, who are perfecter than Man, were Created the same day with him, but after him, to put a final close to that day: 'Tis true they are not expresly mentioned, and there is a good Reason for it, because *Moses* designed only to give an account of the *Visible* Creation, but Angels do not belong to this. These are the *Morning-Stars*, and *the Sons of God* spoken of in *Job* 38. 7. *who sung together* at the consummation of the Creation. Some of these Celestial Spirits fell from their Happiness in a short time after, for though there is not any particular mention in the *Mosaick History* of their defection (no more than there is of their Creation) yet we are expresly informed there that one of their Order (and it is likely others with him) tempted our first Parents to apostatize from God, and prevailed with them actually to do it: weence it is evident that they were Apostates themselves. But there were others of them that were not concerned in this wicked Enterprize, but stood Firm and Immoveable, and retained their primitive Innocence and Integrity, and do so to this day. These are called *Elect Angels*, 1 Tim. 5. 21. because they were Eternally appointed and chosen to be Heirs of Glory and Happiness, and never to be deprived of them.

We may further inform our selves, as to the Nature of these Heavenly Creatures, that they being a degree Superiour to Man, are not tied to sluggish Bodies, and

and have not a Sensitive Nature, and an Animal Life, as he hath. Not but that they assume Bodies, and appear in Humane shape when they please: as we find they did frequently to the Patriarchs of old, whence 'tis probable the Ancient Poets feigned the appearing of their *Gods* in sensible Shapes. We read that an Angel appeared to *Daniel* in the High Priests habit, *Dan.* 10. 5. and 'tis not to be doubted but they can assume what Figure and Resemblance they think fit. Perhaps the *Pillar of Fire*, and of a *Cloud*, and the *Burning Bush*, and several other Appearances which the Sacred History mentions, were Angels in disguise and masquerade. But generally they take upon them the Shape of *Men*, and for the most part *Young men*, and thence are so called in Scripture. But whether they assume these Bodily vehicles for a time only, or have some congenite Bodies which they never lay aside, is a question. The former seems to be most probable, but this is beyond all question, that it is their Prerogative to have no such Bodies of their own as we have, that is, heavy and dull Bodies, and subject to disorders: but that corporeal Cloathing which they have is Fine and Easy, Nimble and Active, Shining and Glorious. Therefore *Good Angels*, to distinguish them from others, are styled by the Apostle (2 Cor. 11. 14.) *Angels of Light*, that is of Splendor and Glory. St. *Stephen's* Face shone *like the Face of an Angel*, when he was brought before the Council, and there falsly accused. Which great Lustre and Brightness renders the sight of them very Awful and Terrible to beholders, especially when it is sudden and unexpected. *His Countenance was like the Countenance of an Angel, very Terrible*, Judg. 13. 6. For which reason we may observe that the Angels generally, to take off that Awe and Trembling which is wont to possess those to whom they appear, use that encouraging Language, *Fear not*, Gen. 21. 15. Dan. 10. 2. Mat. 28. 5. Luk. 1. 13, 30. Mat. 27. 23.

Next, it may be proper to observe that, because there is great use of these Angelick Spirits, their Numbers are very great. *The Chariots of God* (which is the periphrasis of Angels) *are twenty Thousand, even Thousands of Angels*, Psal. 68. 17. *Thousand Thousands ministred unto him, and ten Thousand times ten Thousand stood before him*, Dan. 7. 10. *More than twelve Legions of Angels* were at Christ's command. *Mat.* 26. 53. *A multitude of the Heavenly Host* celebrated the Glories of his Nativity, *Luke* 2. 13. That of St. *Jude*, *v.* 14. is spoken of these blessed Attendants, *The Lord cometh with ten Thousand of his Saints*. In Rev. 5. 11. *the number of the Angels that set forth the praises of the Lamb, was ten Thousand times ten Thousand, and Thousands of Thousands*. Thus the vast *Number* of these Good Angels is expressed by a Certain number, to condescend to our Capacities: but it is so great and swelling that it can't be reduced by us to a set Computation: though the *Talmudists* (who are a bold sort of Men) attempt to do it. But he only who *numbers the Stars*, can assign the true and exact number of the Angels.

But this further we may inform our selves of from the Holy and inspired Writings, that these great Instruments of *Providence*, for the better discharging of their Ministry, are distributed into several distinct Orders. Some of the *Hebrew* Masters tell us that there are four Orders of Angels, the First is of *Michael*, the Second of *Gabriel*, the Third of *Uriel*, and the Fourth of *Raphael*. But according to * *Maimonides*, there are Ten distinct Degrees of these Heavenly Ministers. Among Christian Writers † *Dionysius* the Areopagite (as he is called) was the first that positively asserted nine Orders of Angels; and the main Ground he goes upon is that there are so many Words used to express Angels in Scripture. From this Author some others of the Ancients have divided the Angels into three Hierarchies: to the first of which belong *Seraphim*, *Cherubim*, *Thrones*; to the second *Dominions*, *Vertues*, *Powers*; to the third *Principalities*, *Arch-angels*, *Angels*. Which distribution of the Celestial Hierarchy is generally held and maintained by the Doctors of the *Roman* Church. But though it be difficult, if not impossible, to prove this very particular Division of the Angelick Orders, because we can't from different *Titles* and *Expressions* used concerned Angels and applied to them, inferr so many different *Orders*, yet this we may safely and on good Grounds assert from that Light which the Holy Scriptures afford us, that there are different Degrees and Orders of Good Angels, according to the different Power, Dignity, and Station, which God hath honoured them with. This may be gathered from what is said of *Michael*, Dan. 10. 13. that he is *one of the chief Princes*, and v. 21. he is Emphatically called the *Prince*; and he hath the Title of *Arch-Angel* given him,

* *Tract. de fundamen. Legis* c. 11.

† *De Celest. Hierarch.*

Jude 9.

Jude 9. And we read of *Arch-angels*, 1 Thess. 4. 16. which shews that some of the Celestial Spirits and Ministers are Superior to the Rest. As is also manifest from these Epithets given them, *Thrones*, *Dominions*, *Principalities*, *Powers*, *Authorities*, Col. 1. 16. Eph. 6. 12.---1. 21.

We have no reason then to doubt that there are different Ranks of Angels: But how many they are, and how particularly distinguish'd we can't tell; for the Scripture is silent in this matter. As to the *Names* of Angels, there are but two in the whole Old Testament and New, *viz. Gabriel* and *Michael*. And the *Apocryphal* Books mention only *Uriel* and *Raphael*. The Canonical Writings, especially are so far from giving us a distinct Account of the Orders of the Heavenly Tribe, that they rather discourage us from enquiring into these Secrets. Those Persons are blamed who *intrude into those things which they have not seen*, Col. 2. 18. This Apostle checks the vain Curiosity of such as *invaded* as it were the Doctrine of *Angels*, and too boldly pried into the Polity of those exalted Creatures: And this he lets them know becomes them not. But we have enough to satisfie us, if we will be Sober; the Sacred Writ hath sufficiently instructed us in the Nature of Angels, and acquainted us with this in general, that they are differenc'd among themselves as to their Ranks and Stations. Which indeed is very requisite, for they being very many, if they were not distinguish'd into their particular and peculiar Ranks, their Multitude would cause Confusion. This heavenly Host would be full of disorder, if it were not marshall'd into its several Squadrons and Divisions. It is this, among other things, which makes them serviceable to the great end and purpose of their being Created.

And so I shall directly proceed (without premising any thing further) to treat of that great End for which they were made; namely, to be the *Ministers of God's Providence* in the World. This I will fully effect by shewing what is the *Office* which they were ordain'd to, and which they constantly perform. Here we have sure footing, for the Scriptures both of the Old and New Testament bear Witness to all that I shall produce under this Head. From them we are informed that their Office consists in these following things:

1. In immediate attending on God, and receiving his Commands. This is the meaning of our Saviour's Words in *Mat.* 18. 10. who speaking of the *Apostles* saith, *In Heaven they always behold the Face of God*, that is, they continually attend upon him and wait his Pleasure. They have the honour to be near him, and to be employ'd about him. So the great *Persian* Lords and Princes were said to *see the King's Face*, Esth. 1. 14. that is, they had continual access to him, and stood before him, and were employed by him in Services of special trust and dignity. Thus, but in a higher manner, the Angels *behold God's Face*, they stand before the Throne of the Divine Majesty, and are his special Attendants. There they receive injunctions and orders for the declaring of God's Will on Earth, for the protecting and guarding of such and such particular Persons, and for the inflicting Judgments and Punishments on others, as I shall distinctly shew afterwards. These Glorious Attendants are rightly styled *Hagnomadim*, Zech. 3. 7. those *that stand by*, because it is their Office to wait on God, to stand by him, as it were, that is, to be ready to execute his Commands. Of *Abraham* 'tis said, when he entertain'd the Angels, that he *stood by them*, Gen. 18. 8. he waited on them whilst they sat at Table. So the Angels themselves are said to *stand by* the most High, as Servitors, and Waiters; they constantly attend on him, and therefore both the *Chaldee* and *Hebrew* Word for *Standing*, signifie *ministring* or *attending*. This was the Notion of the Platonists, they looked upon the δαίμονες or good Angels as the * *Servants* of the Deity. And this is confirmed to us, and more fully expressed in the Sacred Writings, which (as we have seen) represent these Celestial Spirits as *Ministers* of the Divine Majesty. Which is further attested and explained by the Great Apostle when he gives them the Name of λειτουργικὰ πνεύματα, *ministring Spirits*, Heb. 1. 14. Which is a very Emphatick Expression, because λειτουργεῖν and λειτουργὸς, according to the known acception of the Words, denote a publick Office and Administration, they signifie such a Work, Service or Employment as is for the General Good: And thence the *Greek* Church call'd all her Publick Service of God the *Liturgy*.

* Θεῶν ὑπηρέται. Max. Tyr. Dissert. 26.

Thus the Angels are Publick Ministers and Officers: they are appointed for the universal good and benefit of Mankind, and in order to that give constant attendance in the Court of Heaven, that they may know what is the Divine Pleasure concern-

concerning the Inhabitants of this lower World. To this purpose they have at certain times some more solemn Meetings and Assemblies to which they all come, as we may gather from Job 1. 7. *There was a Day when the Sons of God*, i. e. the Angels, *came to present themselves before the Lord*, they came to give an Account of their Messages, and particular charges they had lately been intrusted with, and to receive farther Orders. This then I justly reckon to be the first part of the Angelick Office, to wait and attend upon God, and, though he needs not their Assistance and Service, to pay their humble Homage to him, to appear before him, and stand ready to obey his Injunctions. Which is briefly, but fully expressed by the Psalmist thus, *they hearken to the Voice of his Word*, Psal. 103. 20. And this *hearkning* is in order to something yet greater, as it follows in the next Verse, which further describes the Office of Angels, *ye Ministers of his that do his Pleasure.* Which brings me to the next thing I am to speak of.

2. Then, as these Intelligent Creatures receive God's Commands, so they execute them. As soon as they have their Commission, they are sent away to act according to the Tenour of it, and they readily imbrace the Motion. This *sending* is implied in their Name, for this is the true import of the Hebrew Word *Maleach*, which signifies a *Messenger*, that is, one that is sent on God's Message. And the Greek Word ἄγγελος answers exactly to it, and signifies a *Nuncio*, an Embassadour, a Messenger. So that it is the proper Office of a Good Angel to do the part of a Messenger from Heaven, that is, to declare God's Will and Pleasure to us. Which is taken notice of even by Pagan Philosophers, and particularly by *Hierocles* on *Pythagoras's Golden Verses*, who there tells us that Good Spirits are called *Angels*, because they *declare* and *denounce* to us the Divine Will. This hath been their constant Employment ever since they were Created: in all Ages of the World they have been sent on Embassies from above. One of these Messengers came with seasonable Advice to *Hagar*, when she was in the Wilderness, bidding her return to her Mistress and submit her self; and he comforted this afflicted Refugee by telling her what a numerous issue should proceed from her Son with whom she was then with Child, *Gen.* 16. 9, 10. It is true the Scripture makes mention of the early appearing of *Cherubims* that guarded lost Paradise with a flaming Sword, *Gen.* 3. 24. But the first time that we read of this sort of Heavenly Creatures coming with a Message, is that before mentioned, in *Abraham's* time, to the distressed *Hagar*. After this, they appear'd very frequently as Intelligencers and Messengers, to inform, instruct, forewarn, advise on weighty and emergent Occasions. Before the overthrow of *Sodom*, *Lot* was forewarn'd of it by those heavenly Envoys, when there were none on Earth fit for that purpose. It was an Angel that deliver'd the Decalogue to *Moses* and to the People of *Israel*, saith * *Josephus*: But a more Authentick Author assures us of it, Acts 7. 38. — *the Angel that spake to them on the Mount Sina.* And in the same Chapter we are told that the Old Law was deliver'd *by the Disposition of Angels*, v. 53. *by the Command* and *Order*, given by God to them, as the Greek Word signifies, and therefore διαταγαὶ is the term for the *Imperial Decrees and Edicts.* What is decreed and determined in Heaven with Relation to the Sons of Men, hath been usually publish'd and proclaim'd by these Celestial Heralds. *Daniel* had his discoveries by an Angel, *Dan.* 8. 16.——— 9. 22, 23.——10. 11. *Zachariah* was instructed in the same way. *Zach.* 1. 9. 14, 19.——2. 3, 4.

* *Antiq.* l. 15.

So in the New Testament Angels brought Tidings to another *Zachary*, Luke 1. 13. and to the Blessed Virgin, *Luke* 1. 30. The Gospel, as well as the Law, was divulged first by those glorious Preachers from Heaven, *I bring you good Tidings of great Joy*, saith one of them, *which shall be to all People, for unto you is born this Day in the City of God a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord.* Luke 2. 10, 11. And the blessed Result of these Evangelical Tidings is summ'd up by the heavenly Quire, v. 14. *On Earth Peace, Good Will towards Men.* It is observable that the Angels were made use of at all the great Transactions relating to our Saviour, they brought the Tidings of his Conception, *Mat.* 1. 20. of his *Birth*, in that forementioned place, *Luke* 2. 10. of his *Resurrection*, Mat. 28. 6. in order to which an Angel roll'd away the Stone from the Mouth of the Sepulcher, v. 2. At his *Ascension* likewise two Angels attended, *Acts* 1. 10. And 'tis Dr. *Hammond's* Conjecture that by the *Cloud which received him out of their Sight*, v. 9. another Angel is meant.

In

In the same inspir'd Writings we meet with many seasonable Instructions and Warnings from these happy Messengers, as that to *Philip*, Acts 8. 26. and that other to *Cornelius* Acts 10. 3, 4. So St. *Paul* was preadmonish'd concerning his Voyage, and the dangerous Circumstances of it, and the means of escaping Acts 27. 23. The Christian World is forewarn'd by Angels in the Book of the *Revelation*; for though it was but a Vision, yet it represents and foretells a Reality; namely, Judgments that shall be inflicted in the Church. The believing *Jews* had a timely admonishment of their approaching danger by that Angelick Voice which was heard in the Temple, * *Let us depart hence.* And several other Instances might be produced out of the Sacred Records, and those that are Ecclesiastical of the Messages brought from Heaven by these blessed Nuncio's.

* *Joseph. de bello Judaico.* l. 7.

And that they may be fit for this part of their Office, their Make is such that they are able to dispatch their Errand with Speed and Expedition. They are Spiritual and Immaterial Substances, and have no heavy Carkases (as the Inhabitants of these lower Regions) to clog them. God is said to *make his Angels Spirits* (that is, they act as Spiritual, not bodily Agents) *and those his Ministers a flaming Fire*, that is, quick and active, *Psal.* 104. 4. For which cause they are call'd the *Chariots of God*, Psal. 68. 17. Accordingly we may observe that the *Cherubim* are represented as on a *Chariot* and *Wheels*, Ezek. 1. 4, 18. And the Ancient Fathers by *Chariot* and *Horsemen*, 2 Kings 2. 12. understood Angels that carried *Elias* up into Heaven. And they are deservedly called *Fiery Chariots*, because they are inflamed with heavenly Zeal, Ardour and Vigour. Hence they had the Name of *Seraphim*, that is, *Fiery* or *Burning*: And therefore a *Flaming Sword* was not an unfit Symbol of the presence of Angels, *Gen.* 3. l. v. All this lets us know that they are fitted for their Office of Messengers and Heralds: They can dispatch their Business, which is to declare and divulge God's Will to the World, with Speed and Expedition. Hence they were anciently represented with *Wings*, Isaiah 6. 2. Ezek. 1. 6. and we read of Angels *Flying*, Dan. 9. 21. So that it is no wonder that the Poets among the Gentiles, who alluded to and imitated several things in the Sacred Books, decypher'd *Mercury*, the Messenger of the Gods, with Wings; to intimate that he performed all his dispatches with Celerity.

3. The next Office of these Angelical Spirits is to prevent and avert Dangers, to shield and protect those whom the Divine Commission directs them to be favourable to. They carefully pitch their Tents about such, and hinder the approach of Mischief. They shrowd them under their Wings, and kindly shelter them from the Storm which they foresee is coming. They resist the Evil Angels that would hurt them, and (as we have reason to believe from what is Recorded in *Rev.* 12. 7, 8.) they encounter sometimes those Malicious Foes, and hinder them from accomplishing their wicked Designs against the Servants of God. In brief, they are a constant guard to those whom the Almighty will preserve, as is evident from *Psal.* 91. 11, 12. *He shall give his Angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways; that they bear thee up in their Hands, lest thou dash thy Foot against a Stone.* This is their work and task set them by God, and they perform it with the utmost faithfulness and diligence.

4. When Persons are actually involved in Dangers and Calamities, their Business is to help and succour them, and to be helpful in delivering them out of their Distresses. The Psalmist reckons it among the Privileges of the godly, that *when they cry, the Lord hears them, and saves them out of all their Troubles*, Psal. 34. 6. And he gives this as an Account of it in the next Verse, *The Angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them.* These blessed Envoys of Heaven not only warn'd *Lot* to come out of *Sodom*, but when they saw him Linger, *lay'd hold on him, and brought him forth, and set him without the City.* Gen. 19. 16. They sustain'd the *Israelites* with *Manna* in the Wilderness, and therefore 'tis call'd *Bread from Heaven*, Exod 16. 4. and more expresly 'tis styled *Angel's Food*, Psalm 78. 25. because it was that Food which was brought to the *Israelites* by Angels. When the *Hebrew* young Men were thrown into the Fiery Furnace, an Angel came and hindred the Flames from seizing on them: This was *the fourth that was loose in the Furnace, whose form was like the Son of God*, Dan. 3. 25. When *Daniel* was cast into the Lions Den, *God sent his Angel, who shut the Lions Mouths, that they could not hurt him*, Dan. 6. 22. From *Dan.* 10. 13. we may gather that these kind ministring Spirits help and assist the Pious, and *fight for them*, if there be occasion.

Whne

When the Apostles were imprison'd, *the Angel of the Lord by Night open'd the Prison Door, and brought them forth*, Acts 5. 19. When St. *Peter* was imprison'd by *Herod*, *the Lord sent his Angel, and deliver'd him out of the Hand of* Herod, by knocking off his Chains, and safely conducting him out of durance, Acts 12. 7, 12. *An Angel of God stood by St.* Paul (as he tells us himself) to dispel his *Fears*, and to *chear* and *comfort* him, upon the approach of his dangerous Voyage, *Acts* 27. 23, 24. And the same Angel or some other without doubt were assistant to the Passengers, when the Shipwrack afterwards befell them, by whose help they were brought safe to Shore. Thus these glorious Creatures are Deliverers, as well as Protectors, in time of Distress and Danger.

5. They not only deliver and rescue the Distressed from Dangers, but moreover they procure good things for them. They are never so pleas'd as when they can be beneficial to Mankind, and conferr some positive good upon them. Though it is the Opinion of a learned Man of our Church, that ἄγγελος, mention'd in *John* 5. 4. was a Man, some Officer or Messenger, that was sent at certain Seasons of the Year (especially at the Feasts) to *stir the Waters* of the *Pool of Bethesda*, and so they became sanative: yet 'tis most probable, that it was an *Angel*, properly so call'd, that moved those Waters, and gave them that healing Vertue. I do not see any reason at all to depart from that plain acception of the Word in this place: though I am not backward to joyn this with what is said by some curious Persons, that in this place, where the Sheep's Entrails in order to sacrifice were wont to be daily wash'd and cleans'd, was a House built, call'd, *Beth chesdah*, that is, *the House of Mercy*, because the Sick and Maimed lay there to be cured, by stepping into the Pool at the stirring of the Waters, which had a *medicinal* Vertue, from the fresh warm Blood of the Entrails with which they were impregnated. This and the *Angel*'s moving the Waters may be joyn'd together, for 'tis usual for *natural* and *supernatural* Causes to concurr, as when *God caused the Red Sea to go back*, it was *by a strong East Wind*, Exod. 14. 21. So the *Plagues* of *Egypt* were *Miracles*, yet in some of them natural Causes were employ'd. And this I could shew in abundance of other Instances.

It is certain that these blessed Spirits take delight in such charitable Employments as I have before mention'd, and love to convey Mercies to Mankind. What * a learned and inquisitive Writer saith is not altogether to be rejected, That many Discoveries in Arts, several Inventions of use and profit are from these good Spirits. Many unknown Favours are done us by them: and they constantly watch over us for good. And in order to this, and what was said before; namely, The preventing of Dangers, or the delivering out of them, they take their *Circuit* through the several parts of the World, or those particular Provinces assign'd them, and so acquaint themselves with the Conditions of Persons. *These are they whom the Lord hath sent to walk to and fro through the Earth*, Zech. 1. 10. As the Evil Spirits do this (for 'tis the same *Hebrew* Word with that in *Job* 1. 7.) to find Matter for their wicked Designs and Enterprizes, so the Holy Angels walk about, attentively observing and seeking occasion of doing good. To this end they are indued with a great natural Knowledge and Sagacity, which are improv'd and cultivated by long Experience. And their Power is as great as their Knowledge, therefore they are said to *excell in Strength*, Psal. 103. 20. and they are call'd *mighty Angels*, 2 Thes. 1. 7. And upon many other accounts they are fitted to discharge their Office, successfully to aid and succour the Afflicted, to relieve the Distressed, and to shew themselves serviceable to Mankind. And upon these very Accounts they are made use of as the principal Instruments of Providence in the World. They are *God's Ministers*, Psal. 104. 4. they are † *Overseers of humane Affairs*, and transact in all the great Events of Life, whether with respect to Persons or whole Nations.

* Brown's *Relig. Medici.*

* Τῶν ἀνθρωπίνων πραγμάτων ἐπίσκοποι. Plut. περὶ εἰμαρμένης.

Perhaps here it may be ask'd, Whether every one hath a *peculiar individual Angel* to wait on him, and to be helpful and assistant to him, and to do kind Offices for him. This seems to have been generally believ'd of old: thus when *Homer* gives the great Hero's, as *Ulysses*, *Achilles*, *Agamemnon*, *particular Gods* to guard them, and assigns them peculiar assisting Deities, which they pray to in their Distresses, it comes very near to this Sentiment, and it is likely that at the bottom of all it is no more: for very often their *Gods* and their good *Dæmons* (who with us are styl'd *Angels*) were all one. But to come closer, The *Pagan* Moralists, especially those of the *Pythagorean* or *Platonick* Sect, asserted, that every Man from his Cradle had his Genius: nay, some of them held, that there was a Good one and a Bad one that attended

† Ὅσας φύσεις ἀνδρῶν, τοσαῦτας καὶ δαιμόνων. Max. Tyr.

tended on every Man. † As many Natures and Qualities of Men there are in the World, so many Dæmons there are: and each Man hath one of them to attend him. *Arianus* on *Epictetus* frequently mentions the Guardian Genius's of Good Men: and *Socrates* is thought to have had the constant fruition of one. The *Jews* (as appears from some of their most authentick Writings) had a Belief of this Associate. And the *Mahometans* teach the like, yea allow every Man a pair of these Companions, a Good one and an Evil one: and they would perswade us, that they sit on Men's Shoulders with Table-books in their Hands: the one writes down all the Good, and the other all the Evil a Man doth.

Some *Christians* (as well as *Pagans*, and those of other Perswasions) are not backward to own Tutelar Angels, appropriated to particular Persons, and set over them from their Birth. Those pious Fathers, * *Basil* the Great and St. † *Chrysostom*, acknowledge this Doctrine. And so do *Theodoret*, *Theophylact*, *Justin Martyr*, or whosoever it was that writ the *Questions and Answers to the Orthodox*. Quæst. 30. *Psellus* the Platonick Monk and Philosopher is very positive, * Every Man, saith he, hath his assisting Angel. The Divines of the Church of *Rome* hold this very stiffly. And among foreign Protestants *Zanchy* declares himself of this Opinion.

* Cont. Eunom. lib. 3.

† Homil. 3. in Epist. ad Colos. & Hom. 14. in Epist. ad Hebr.

* Ἅπαντι δαίμων ἀνδρὶ συμπαρίσταται

The Texts that are brought for it are these two: that in *Mat.* 18. 10. *Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones, for I say unto you, that in Heaven their Angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in Heaven.* The other place is in *Acts* 12. 15. *Then said they, It is his Angel.* But because these Texts are not a direct Proof of the Matter in hand; namely, That a particular Genius or Angel attends on every Man, as his inseparable Companion, thereupon the generality of those of the Reformed Churches are of another Opinion. The first place is interpreted by some of them concerning *Infants* and *little Children*, for of those our Saviour speaks in the 3d and 4th Verses of that Chapter. But if it should be granted that there are particular Guardian Angels belonging to *these* whilst they are weak and shiftless, it will not follow thence, that all Persons, and through their whole Lives, have such a particular Helper and Assistant assign'd them. But others, and with greater probability, understand this Text concerning the *Faithful*, especially those that are *weak in Faith*. These are *the little ones*, for it can't be meant of little ones in Age, that is, Children and Infants, for these can't be *offended* or *scandalized*, as 'tis expressly said of the *little ones* in the 6th Verse of this Chapter. These little ones then whom our Saviour speaks of are those that are little and feeble in Grace, and therefore are the more especial Care and Charge of Providence, and accordingly good Angels wait on these in a more particular manner, and take them into their peculiar Tuition. So that the meaning of our Saviour's Words is not that some particular individul Angels are set over these Weaklings from their Birth, but that these blessed Messengers are sent to defend and protect them, to assist and aid them, when they are in danger of Scandal and Temptation. Then these little Ones, these humble and innocent Souls, but who are not yet confirm'd in Faith, nor have made any considerable Progress in Vertue, are more especially look'd after and taken care of by these heavenly Keepers and Tutors. And as for that Expression, *their Angels*, it signifies no more than this, Those Angels are at such times particularly appointed by God to guard these little Ones. Which doth not in the least imply, that every weak Believer, or any other Person hath a *particular* Angel to attend upon him.

The other Text in the *Acts* hath met with various Interpretations: for though St. *Chrysostom* and some others of the Ancients understood it of a Tutelar Angel, yet most of the modern Interpreters take it in another Sense. * One or two of them will not have it spoken at all of an Angel, but of some *Messenger* only, whom St. *Peter* sent of an Errand to his Friends, who at that time were met together to pray for him. † Another is willing to interpret it of an Angel, properly so call'd, who came to give them notice of St. *Peter*'s Death to be near at hand. * Another thinks that it was an Angel that assum'd *Peter*'s Shape, and stood at the Door in his Likeness: for the *Jews* held, that these Spirits usually assum'd the Shape of Men, and so they *took* this for such a one. And this directs me to the true and proper resolution of this Text; namely, That it gives no Countenance to the Doctrine of Guardian Angels, but only acquaints us what some of St. *Peter*'s Friends *said* and *thought* concerning that

* Salmeron. Hammond.

† Aretius.

* Dr. Lightfoot.

that unexpected Appearance, *they said, it is his Angel.* It was their opinion (as it was the received opinion of the *Jews*) that his assisting Angel appeared: for the *Jews* generally thought that every Faithful Man had his Guardian Angel in particular. But it follows not hence that the thing is really so, and therefore this Text can't be made use of to the purpose for which it is brought by some Writers.

And as for those *Instances* and *Examples* which are produced by *some, to produce the Presidence of a particular Angel, they reach no further than this, that Good Angels upon occasion attended on some Persons, and admonished them, and assisted them, and vouchsafed to direct them in several things. This is no more than what the Scripture informs us of, that they are employed in their Ministry ordinarily, not for the Service of bad Men, but for the Benefit of the Good, *those that are Heirs of Salvation*, Heb. 1. 14. Those that live in defiance of God and his ways, can't be thought to be assisted by these Heavenly Spirits; at least they can't expect it. Though this must be said that for the sake of the Righteous even these sometimes enjoy the benefit of the Angelical protection. When the wicked are serviceable to the Cause of the Good, when the safety of these is involved in that of the other, then without doubt they share in that Protection. But ordinarily it is otherwise, and their Commission directs them to aid and help the Religious only. Nor are these always attended upon, as if those Glorious Watchmen and Sentinals were every moment present and assistant, but when there is need, when Good Men want their help. For the Angels are said to be *sent to minister*, Heb. 1. 14. therefore they are not always present with the Godly: they are dispatched to them upon occasion, they do them good offices when they most want them, and that makes them the more acceptable. But as for the opinion of those who affix a particular Angel, as a constant Guardian, to every individual Man, at least every Good Man in the World, the Holy Scriptures are not express in the Point, and therefore (seeing 'tis a matter that depends upon Revelation) I can't determinine in the Affirmative.

*Dr. More's *Antidote against Atheism.* Mr. Aubrey's *Miscellanies.*

And so for that other question, Whether every Country and Kingdom, every Church and Nation hath a particular Tutelar Angel and Director set over it, I say the like. Though I deny not that this hath been the opinion and belief of *Jews*, Gentiles and Christians, especially of the last. Many of the Fathers both Greek and Latin, thought that every Kingdom and Nation had their peculiar Supervisor. And one of them Grounds it upon Scripture, as is clear from those express words of his, * The Holy writ saith that a particular Angel presides over every Nation. Nay, this Presidency is † not only over Nations, but Cities, saith another. The chief Text that this Opinion is built upon is Dan. 12. 1. *Michael the great Prince who standeth for the Children of thy people.* But the Answer is easy, namely, that though the *Jews*, God's peculiar People, had at *that time* (which is spoken of there) one of the chief Angels of Heaven transacting for them, yet it doth not thence follow that all Nations and Countries, and at all times have a particular Angel assigned them for their Guardian and Protector. No Man can make that inference, and depend upon it as valid.

* Ἑκάστῳ δὲ ἔθνει ἄγγελον ἐφεστάναι φησὶν ἡ θεία γραφή. *Theodoret. in Gen.*

† Κατὰ ἔθνη καὶ πόλεις τοὺς τῶν ἀγγέλων προεστάναι. *Clem. Alex.*

But they tell us that it appears from *Dan.* 10. 13. that other Countries and Kingdoms had their standing Tutelar Angels, for we there read of *the Prince of the Kingdom of Persia*, who, say they, is the Guardian of that Kingdom. But this is a mistake, and they may as well say *the Prince of Grecia*, *v.* 20. is the Angel of *Grecia*, whereas it is plain that this *Prince* is *Alexander* the Great. And so it is as plain that by *the Prince of the Kingdom of* Persia, is meant the *Persian* Monarch that was at that time, who 'tis likely was *Cambyses*. There is nothing therefore to be collected from this place in favour of a distinct Tutelar Angel, over every particular Empire and Nation. But this we willingly grant, that it hath pleased God to constitute the Angels not only private but publick Ministers in this Lower World. They take care not only of single Persons, but whole Communities. They are appointed and sent by God to defend, assist and deliver these, as he thinks fit. For (as I have shewed under this Head) it is their business to do kind and friendly Offices to the World and Mankind. They are always in readiness to Sally forth out of their Starry Mansions, where, according to their different Ranks and Classes, they are placed, to attend the Divine Call, in order to the Benefit of those that stand in need of their Aid.

6. It is part of their Employment to execute Vengeance on the Wicked. This perhaps is a particular Office which belongs to one Rank of them only. Some, it is likely, are employed altogether in Protecting and Preserving Men, and doing kindnesses to them: but others it may be, are Ministers of Punishment and Vengeance, and are made use of to bring Plagues upon hardned Sinners. Perhaps, I say, these are distinct Angels, and those that are Ministers of Mercy, are not Inflicters of Judgment on the World: which I ground upon the difference of Ranks and Orders that is among these Blessed Spirits. But whether this be really so or no, I can't affirm, the Holy Scriptures having not decided it. But this we are sure of, that some of the Angelick Spirits are used as Executioners of God's wrath on the Wicked. Of this number were those who struck the vitious Sodomites with Blindness, *Gen.* 19. 11. and were afterwards instrumental in destroying them, and the whole Country with Fire and Brimstone, *v.* 24, 25. Of this Rank were those Angels, who Smote all the First-born in the Land of *Egypt* with death, *Ex.* 12. 29. Of the same Classis was he, that destroyed in one Night a Hundred and Fourscore and five Thousand Fighting Men, in the Host of the *Assyrians*, 2 *Kings* 19. 35. God is frequently called *the Lord of Hosts*; and these Angels in a special manner belong to these *Hosts* or *Armies*, and thence are called the *Host of Heaven*, 1 *Kings* 22. 19. because they are Marshal'd, and drawn forth like an Army in Battle array, to Encounter and Vanquish the Enemies of God. Many a wicked Design and Enterprize, and the Authors of them are confounded by the Happy Ministry of this powerful Host. We read that *Herod* was immediately struck by an Angel, and thereupon died miserably, *Acts* 12. 23. And we find that this rank of Angels shall be the last Executioners after the final Judgment, Mat. 13. 41, 42. *The Son of Man shall send forth his Angels to gather those that do Iniquity, and shall cast them into a Furnace of Fire.* Thus you see they are made use of to inflict Judgments and Plagues, both in this World and in the close of it, upon Profligate and Impenitent Criminals, and so are the great Instruments of God's Providence.

7. Another, and higher Employment of these Heavenly Agents is to excite and stir up to Vertue and Holiness. We read of several of their pious Advices and Counsels tendred unto persons for their Spiritual Good and Advantage. And it is not to be doubted that they are enabled likewise by God to work upon the inward Faculties and Minds of Men. *Socrates* in his *Apology* declares that he was pushed on to say and do as he did, in opposition to the depraved Sentiments and practices of the Vulgar, by his good Genius or Dæmon. Whether there be any truth in this or no, I shall not now dispute: but this is certain, the Good and Holy Angels are beneficial to the Servants of God, by reminding them of their Duty on some great Occasions, and by prompting them to the performance of it. No one, I am perswaded, will deny this, when he considers that it is part of the employment of *Evil Angels* to tempt Men to Sin, and to stir them up to the Commission of it. It is unreasonable to think that *Good Angels* are not able to do something of the contrary Nature, and that they don't actually do it, according to the Order and Appointment which they have. It is not to be questioned but that they sometimes insensibly guide and direct Men to the means of Religion and Vertue, and that they stir up in their Minds, by the mediation of the Blood and Spirits, and finer parts of the Body, an inclination to what is Good and Holy: they powerfully impress the Ideas of what is Good upon Mens thoughts, and thereby excite their Affections, they kindly work upon their imaginations, and insinuate into them perhaps by some other ways, that we know not. The short is, these invisible Ministers are assistant to our Souls, as well as our Bodies, and delight to help and forward us in our course of Vertue. Upon this account then they are very useful and eminent Instruments of God's Providence, and they serve the designs of the Almighty in the World.

8. They are yet further employed in attending on the publick Assemblies of God's Servants. This will very easily gain our Belief, if we consider what hath been said under the last Head: for if these Divine Angels make it part of their work to stir Men up to Vertue and Goodness, then we can't doubt of their doing this when there is the greatest need of it, that is, when Persons are engaged in the solemn Worship and Service of God; for then the greatest warmth of Devotion is requisite, and their Minds ought to be inflamed with a more than ordinary Sense of Religion and Piety, and a love of God and his Worship. Upon which account it

it is not to be questioned, but that the Holy Angels wait upon the sincere Worshippers of God in the publick Congregations, and are serviceable in exciting their Devotion. Besides, these Heavenly Embassadors are pleased to concern themselves, in the great and wonderful Mysteries of our Religion, they are forward to acquaint themselves with these important Matters which relate to Christianity, as the Apostle assures us, *These things*, saith he, *the Angels desire to look into*, 1 Pet. 1. 12. They *bend* their Glorious Heads, and *Stoop down to pry* into these Sacred Mysteries (as that word properly denotes.) Wherefore it is no wonder that they are present in all solemn Meetings of God's People; which is the meaning of the Apostle's Words *because of the Angels*, 1 Cor. 11. 10. A late bold * Critick reads the Words διὰ τὸν ἀγγέλους, and accordingly interprets it thus, The Women were to be Reverent in their Behaviour whilst they were delivering their ἀγγελία, whilst they were *prophesying*; but he that demands proof of others Conjectures, gives none himself, and therefore this impertinent changing of the Words is to be rejected. The other interpretation which I have mentioned, and is embraced by *Estius*, *Grotius*, *Mede*, and several other Learned Commentators, is plain and easie, and very natural and genuine, and exactly agreeable to what hath been said before concerning Angels. Seeing they are pleased to interest themselves in our Wellfare and Happiness, and delight to pry into the Mysteries of our Holy Religion, and seeing likewise they are ambitious to assist us in our Devotion, and to stir it up, it cannot seem strange that they give their presence at the publick Exercises of Religion, and that where the Faithful are met, they come and attend. For this reason the Apostle in the forenamed place exhorts us to behave our selves Reverently at the publick Devotions of the Church, and do nothing unbecoming the Presence of the Angels.

* Mr. Le Clerc.

9. These Glorious Messengers of the most High do most heartily desire and long for the Conversion and Repentance of Sinners. Luke 15. 7. *I say unto you* (saith Christ) *that Joy shall be in Heaven over one Sinner that Repenteth, more than over ninety and nine Just Persons who need no Repentance.* They take pleasure in the Holy Lives and Conversations of the Righteous, and it delights them exceedingly to see that they are confirm'd in the way of Godliness: But they are transported with greater joy than ordinary, when those that have lived wickedly and prophanely, and as without God in the World, are through the powerful Grace of God reclaim'd from their Wickedness and Prophaneness, and sincerely turn unto him, and embrace the Ways of Holiness. This causes an unspeakable Rejoycing and Exultation in these blessed Creatures. And it must needs be so, for this naturally follows from what we have already premised, for if they concern themselves in the Redemption of Man, and the great Mysteries and Transactions of Christianity, and endeavour to excite and kindle in Men's Minds sparks of Religion and Devotion, we cannot but inferr thence that it must be great matter of Rejoycing to them when they see that what they have desir'd and endeavour'd is accomplish'd, and that the Grace of God hath effectually taken hold on Men's Hearts, and transform'd and renew'd their Lives. This is a most certain and unquestionable Truth, and therefore we may observe that our Saviour is pleased to repeat it with some little Variation v. 10. *I say unto you there is Joy in the presence of the Angels of God over one Sinner that Repenteth.* At the first Creation, *when the Foundations of the Earth were laid*, these blessed Spirits *Sang together*, *these Sons of God shouted for Joy*, Job 38. 4, 7. Much more do they Rejoyce at the second Creation, which is the Conversion of Sinners. This is acceptable Tidings to them, that Rebels lay down their Arms; that Prodigals return to their Father; that lost Sinners are found; that thereby the Church is increas'd and God Glorified; this is Heaven's Jubilee.

10. Another part of their work is to guard the Dead Bodies, and the departed Souls of the Saints; of the former we have an instance in *Jude* 9. *Michael the Archangel contended with the Devil about the Body of Moses.* For though † some Learned Men referr this to *Zech.* 3. 2. &c. and understand by *the Body of Moses* the Jewish Temple that at that time was Rebuilding, which Satan hindred and opposed; yet it is more Natural and Obvious to referr it to *Deut.* 34. 6. which speaks of the *burying of Moses's Body.* And then ‖ some understand it after this manner, the Devil and the Good Angels disputed about the Body of *Moses*, i. e. about the discovering of the place where 'twas buried. Some think the Quarrel was upon another Account, *i. e.* the Devil would have his Corps, and carry them away, to have those

† Junius and Dr. Hammond

‖ Estius, Vorstius, Grotius.

those Reliques worshipped and adored. But I rather think that the Controversie was this, Satan resolved to do some harm to the Dead Body of *Moses*, that Man of God, which *Michael* and his Retinue perceiving watch'd over it, carefully defended it, and would not suffer the infernal Spirits to seize on it, and hurt it. Whereupon arose a sharp Scuffle; and it was decided and ended at last, by the Lord's burying of *Moses*'s Body; which was done in an unknown place, and so the Malicious Design of Satan was hindred. This, it is likely, was mention'd in some Ancient *Jewish* Writers, which the Apostle *Jude* had met with, and thence borrow'd it, and inserted it into this Epistle. And this very Office of the Good Angel is still continued without doubt, they guard the Saint's Bodies, of some especially, who in their Lives were Eminent Opposers of Satan's Projects, and therefore at their death would certainly be attack'd by the Spirits of Darkness.

The latter, *viz.* the Angels carrying of the Souls of the Saints into Heaven, is plainly to be inferr'd from *Luke* 16. 22. where 'tis said that *when Lazarus died, he was carried by the Angels into* Abraham's *Bosom*, i. e. into the place of the Blessed, for that was the known manner of expressing the State of the departed that went to Heaven. And this is their Employment at this very day, they attend the Pious at their last Hour, and take their Souls into their Embraces, and safely convey them to the Mansions of Happiness; that they may not be set upon by the Prince of the Power of the Air, or by any of his Black Guard, as they pass through the airy Regions towards Heaven. These Celestial Attendants are their trusty Guard, and either protect them from the insults of those implacable Adversaries, or bring them safe off from them, and conduct them to the Gates of the New *Jerusalem* which is above. And other Angels come and meet these Holy Pilgrims, as they are entring into that Glorious City, and bid them wellcome to that place of Rest and Happiness after all their restless Motions, and toilful Labours in this World. So that what the Poets feign'd of *Mercury* the Messenger of the Gods, that his Business is to * *lodge and reposite Pious Souls in the joyful Seats above*, is really true of these heavenly Messengers of the Deity, which I have been speaking of. It is no mean part of their Work to be the happy Convoys of Righteous Souls.

* *Tu pias laetis animas reponis Sedibus.* ——— Horat.

Lastly, They help at the Resurrection, and last Judgment. For we are told Mat. 24. 31. that *he (namely Christ) shall send his Angels with a great sound of a Trumpet, and they shall gather together his Elect from the Four Winds, from one end of Heaven to the other.* And in the next Chapter ver. 31. *when the Son shall come in his Glory, all the Holy Angels shall come with him.* So that we see from the very beginning to the end of all things, God makes use of these Angels of Heaven in all his Administrations in the World. They are continually coming and going, *descending and ascending*, as they are represented to be on *Jacob*'s Ladder. And thus I have finished what I undertook to make good, that this heavenly Host are employ'd by God in the Government of the World, they are the great and noted Instruments of the Divine Conduct with respect to the Sons of Men.

I have only one *Objection* to reply to, and then I shall think of concluding. It will be said perhaps that all which hath been said is to little purpose, because things are not now, nor shall be afterwards, as they have been of old. Then it is true Angels were made use of by God in the Government of the World, and of the Church; these Celestial Apostles, these Divine Legates were frequently sent abroad: But now we find no such thing, they never visibly appear to us, and hold Correspondence with us. Which shews that they have left us, they have nothing to do with us in these Days; nay it hath been a long time since there hath been any such Angelical Correspondence as was heretofore; and therefore though the appearing of *Angels* was of old an argument of *Providence*, yet now seeing that appearing ceases, we can no longer make use of it for that purpose.

To which I answer, their not appearing in these days is no argument of the Cessation of God's *Providence* as to the Ministry of Angels: For there is no good reason why they should not make a visible Appearance so frequently as formerly; but there is the same reason now that there was in former days, why they should help and assist us in time of Need, and be sent by God to that end. Angels appear not now, as before, because the God-head dwelt bodily in Christ Jesus the Angel of the

the Covenant, who is come, and hath visibly appear'd. Jesus hath been manifested in the Flesh, having taken on him our Nature, and hath convers'd with Men on Earth, and hath fully declar'd the Will of God the Father to Mankind, and all the great things of Eternity, and given us the greatest Demonstrations imaginable of *another* World: So that on this Account the visible and sensible Appearance of Angels is not Requisite. Those usual Envoys and Embassadours of Heaven may be spared, for we have had the *Appearance* and *Cohabitation* of the Son of God. Wherefore we are not to expect the Converse of Angels now, we are not to desire the Attestation or Confirmation of any truth in this way. For the Dispensation is *in part* changed, and our Case is not the same with Relation to these blessed Spirits as it was before.

Which may be the meaning of Heb. 2. 5. *Unto the Angels hath he not put in Subjection the World to come*, that is, the Kingdom of the *Messias*; for 'tis rightly observ'd by several Judicious Writers that the Ancient *Jews* us'd to call the future State of the *Messiah*'s Kingdom the *World, to come*, in contradistinction to the then present Constitution and Dispensation of the *Jews*. Now saith the Apostle, in this *Evangelical World*, the Kingdom of the Gospel, things are not put into Subjection to Angels, in that manner as they were heretofore under the *Judaical* Oeconomy. In this Age of the World wherein the Gospel is preach'd, and Salvation by Christ proclaim'd, and wherein Christ's Kingdom is set up, there is not the *same* Ministration of Angels that there was before: For now the Affairs of Kingdoms and Churches are more immediately manag'd by God himself, and by the Ministry of the Holy Spirit on the Hearts of Men. In the times of the Gospel, we are not under the same Guardianship of *Angels*, that the *Jews* were. Now the Great Angel of the Covenant hath the principal Rule, and presides over those Spirits: And therefore they have not that occasion to appear now *so commonly* as heretofore. Since Christ is made the Head of the Church, and exalted above all Principalities and Powers, the Ministration and *Government of Angels* is decreased, and in some measure eclips'd. We have *Moses* and the Prophets, and the Writings of the Evangelists and Apostles, and the Church of Christ is fully confirm'd; wherefore the Apparition of that heavenly Host is not so needful now.

But, notwithstanding this, we have no ground to assert that the *Angelical Dispensation* hath its Period. Though they do not appear now, yet they assist us, and do us kind Offices. Not that I wholly exclude their visibly appearing in the times of the Gospel; this may be vouchsafed even now upon unusual Occasions and Emergencies, as Ecclesiastical History informs us. An Angel may shew himself visibly to some Holy Man in time of Persecution and Temptation, and Succour, and Relieve him. But this is extraordinary, and is not to be expected. Wherefore I am speaking now of what is usual and ordinary, and which all Holy and Righteous Men may look for; namely, that though the Angels come not visibly to instruct them, and to reveal God's Will to them, as they did of Old: Yet they may come invisibly to help and succour them, to defend and deliver them. And that they do this still, under the Gospel, is evident from those Words of the Great Apostle Heb. 13. 2. *Be not forgetful to entertain Strangers, for thereby some have entertain'd Angels unawares*, meaning, I suppose, *Abraham* and *Lot*, who practising of old the Vertue of Hospitality, receiv'd Angels into their Houses, as you may read *Gen.* 18 and 19. Now from this way of reasoning we may gather that under the Gospel Angels do visit us sometimes: For else the Apostle's Argument would have no force at all now, but would only be an Old Testament Exhortation. Certain it is then, that we enjoy the Presence and happy Conduct of Angels; they visit us sometimes unawares, and are Beneficial; though they seldom appear, yet they do us Service, they discharge their wonted Office still under the Gospel. Which may also be gather'd from another Passage in this Apostle, which I have already cited, 1 *Cor.* 11. where the Apostle commands Reverence, and comely Behaviour in the Publick Assemblies *because of the Angels*, who are present there, and observe our Deportment. Wherefore the Angels are not fled from us, they have not wholly forsaken us. Though they do not grant us their visible attendance, yet their main Office remains still; they are sent to do us some good, and to be some ways advantageous to us Thus we see the Correspondence between Men and Angels is not stopt; nay (because the *Objection* shall be fully and amply discover'd to be groundless) I will prove that Angels have reason now under the Gospel to be more concern'd in us, and for us than they were for Mankind under the Law, and in the time before that:

that: For the Benefit of the *Redemption* that is wrought for us by Christ Jesus redounds even to them. Which is evident from these four things. 1. There is a happy Reparation by this Redemption: their Ruins are made up by it: for many Men are saved instead of the Angels that fell. 2. Their Office is now enhans'd as they are ministring Spirits, for they are the Redeem'd of Christ that they wait upon. 3. Their Knowledge of divine Mysteries is encreas'd by that Commerce which they have with the Church, as may be collected from *Eph.* 3. 10. *To the intent that now unto the Principalities and Powers in heavenly places might be known by the Church the manifold Wisdom of God.* 4. Their Joy is advanc'd, for if they rejoyce at the Conversion of one Sinner, how much greater will their Joy be for the universal Redemption of the Elect?

Nay, this is not all: they have an immediate Share themselves in Christ's Mediation and Redemption. For, 1. They are confirm'd, so that they cannot fall. This is the meaning of what is said concerning them in *Col.* 1. 20. namely, That God did *by Christ reconcile unto himself things in Heaven.* Which Phrase, though it doth not import such a Reconciliation of the Angels as of Men; yet it denotes thus much, that Angels, by vertue of the Reconciliation made between God and Man by Christ Jesus, were made sure of their Perseverance, which they had not by Nature; for they were created free, else some of them could not have fallen. The same Grace, which *restored* Man, *establish'd* them. 2. They, as well as Men, upon this Reconciliation of Mankind to God, become one Body under Christ, as the Apostle saith, *Eph.* 1. 10. *That he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in Heaven, and which are on Earth*, that is, Angels and Men. Those are all now united into one Body, whereof Christ is the Head. *Angels* are now in a more especial manner Members of the Church, and they are our Brethren, and of the same *Family*, Eph. 3. 15. And, lastly, By vertue of our Saviour's Undertakings they are confirm'd, as in their State of Integrity and Holiness, so in their Glory and Happiness, 1 *Cor.* 5. 24.

These things being thus, the Angels having this Benefit and Advantage by the Mediatory Office of Christ for Mankind, it undeniably follows, that there is a *greater Correspondence* now than ever, between these happy Spirits and the redeemed of God, tho' the visible Descent of them be not continued as formerly. Thro' Christ Jesus it is, that this Converse is still kept up, for if these glorious Ministers of Heaven did in such a signal manner pay their Service to our blessed Lord and Redeemer, (as it may be observ'd, that at all times, and on every solemn Occasion they constantly attended on him, even from his Conception to his leaving the World; if these things be so, I say,) then their Respect and Concern *for us* are proportionable, for they must needs take care of us, if they did so of him: especially if we consider, that all those Undertakings and Transactions of our Saviour (at which they gave their attendance) were for our sake and upon our account. Which will induce us to believe, that they do most officiously attend and wait upon us for our good. If *Angels came and ministred unto Christ*, when he was tempted in the Wilderness, *Mat.* 4. 11. those Servants of God that are under Temptation may expect the like Support when their Condition is of a resembling kind. If *there appear'd an Angel from Heaven strengthening our Saviour*, when he was in his Agony in the Garden, those that trust in him may look for the like Assistance in their pressing Grievances and Perplexities, either of Mind or Body, and (in short) they shall not fail to find these kind Messengers to be their Guardians and Protectors, their Supporters and Deliverers. Thus I hope I have given full satisfaction to the *Objection* which hath been rais'd by some Men; and I question not but that our former Assertion is thereby corroborated; namely, That the Angelick Host of Heaven are the great Ministers of God's Kingdom on Earth; that the All-wise Great Manager of the Affairs of the World hath made them his Deputies and Vicegerents to act here in his stead, and to procure the good of Mankind, but especially of the chosen Servants and Friends of God.

Before I pass to the next Head of my Discourse, I will add these two *Inferences* from the Premises, 1. Let us believe, acknowledge, and assert this Doctrine. 2. Let us be thankful to God for the Benefit which redounds from it. First, Let us not be backward to give a full Assent to this Truth, which I have been discoursing of; and let us not forget to own and assert it. This is become a very seasonable Exhortation, because there is so great a number of Men of Atheistical Spirits, who deride this

this Doctrine. And truly 'tis no wonder that they reject all Belief of God's governing the World by the ministring of Angels, when they have the face to disown and deny the very existence of these Spirits. But if these Men had not abandon'd all Shame, they might be confounded by the Testimony of mere *Pagan* and Prophane Writers, who readily acknowledge the Being and Ministry of Angels. The *Pythagoreans* and *Platonists* did see, and call'd them Angels, Heroes and Dæmons. These three Names they gave them; but the latter was the most usual one, as *Genii* was the received Name among the *Latine* Philosophers. *Plato* places these good Dæmons between God and Men. For he holds that they are of a * *middle Nature* between both these. † *Maximus Tyrius* improves this Platonic Notion, and tells us there must necessarily be *a middle* sort of Creatures between God and Men, whereby God may be join'd with Man, and Man with God. Hence it is, that there are these blessed Dæmons, who are a *mixture of God and Man*; or, as he saith in the same place, This sort of Creatures is * below the Divine Being, but superiour to the Nature of Men. † *Plutarch* represents this kind of Beings *as Interpreters and Ministers between God and Man.* And all the old Philosophers held, that they were Understanding and Immaterial Substances presiding over Human Affairs, and attending the Deity as Ministers. Thus by the Confession of the *Gentiles*, there were such Beings as good Dæmons, and *Genii*, i. e. as we term it, *Angels*; whom tho' they had not seen, yet their Office and Use was known and experienc'd by them.

* Πᾶν τὸ δαιμόνιον μεταξύ ἐστι θεοῦ τε καὶ θνητοῦ. Plato *in Sympos.* 27. *Dissert. Quis sit Deus* Socrates.

† Τὸ δαιμόνων γένος ἐπιμικτον θεοῖς τε καὶ ἀνθρώποις. Max. Tyr. *Dissert.* 26.

* Οὐσία κρείττων μὲν ἀνθρώπου, θεοῦ δὲ ἐλάττων. *Ibid.*

† Ἑρμηνικὸν γένος καὶ διακονικόν. *De Iside & Osiride.*

But the Holy Scriptures give us the best account of the Nature of those blessed Spirits; their distinct Character is set forth in these sacred Records, so that we who own these Writings cannot be excus'd from believing and asserting such a Rank of Beings. We cannot doubt of the Existence of these in the World, since God hath in this inspired Volume so plainly discover'd and reveal'd this Truth to us. The thing is now made so clear from the Manifestations of it in the Bible, that we must be very obstinate indeed, if we make any demurr to it. Therefore it is observable, that Mr. *Hobbs*, who once thought and declar'd, that Angels were *Apparitions of Fancy*, and no real Substances, at last in his *Leviathan* saith, he is *convinc'd from the New Testament* that there are Angels Substantial and Permanent. And truly, from the *Effects* and *Phænomena* in the World, any rational Man might be induced to believe, that there is such a distinct Rank or Order of Beings really different from that of Men, and that they have a Power, Vigour, and Sagacity far surpassing that which is humane. Many wonderful things have been accomplish'd, which must needs be attributed to such Agents as these. In *Plutarch*'s Life of *Paulus Æmilius*, there are several Examples of News and Tydings strangely convey'd; particularly one I remember, the Fame of a Victory came to *Rome* the very Day it was gain'd, tho' the place was from *Rome* more than 2500 Miles. And many such things have been done and come to pass beyond the Power of sublunary natural Agents and Bodies; which proves both good and bad Spirits.

My second Inference is this, Thank God for those useful Messengers, the good Angels. The Benefits that we are continually receiving from them are to be own'd with very grateful Resentments, and with paying our Respects to those kind Benefactors. It is absolutely unlawful and derogatory to God's Honour, to pray to them and to worship them, for they themselves are but Creatures, and worship the Creator; and concerning the Son of God 'tis said, *Let all the Angels of God worship him*, Psal. 97. 7. Heb. 1. 6. And Christ is *their* Head and Sovereign as well as *ours*, (as I have above proved) therefore to give divine Worship to them is absurd and irrational, as well as idolatrous and superstitious. But we may and ought to honour, esteem, and love these excellent Creatures, as for their own sakes (because they are noble Beings, of a Rank higher than our selves, and of great Worth and Dignity) so likewise for the Favours and Kindnesses we receive from them, for the good Offices they are constantly doing us, and the Care and Love they shew to us. It would have been accounted a wild and extravagant Notion, that those superiour Beings should be Waiters and Tenders on us the inferiour ones, unless the infallible Writings had assur'd us of it: but now being assured of this, we ought to reverence and respect these glorious Spirits, who vouchsafe to become the Servants of Men. We ought to admire, and value, and imitate the transcendent Humility and Condescen-

sion of those Cœlestial Inhabitants, in coming down to wait on us, and their great Willingness and Forwardness to assist and help us, and to be our Guiders and Conducters, to be an invisible Guard over us, and to be serviceable to us when we know it not.

And, lastly, Let us think our selves concern'd to live well, seeing not only God beholds us, but even the Angels are Witnesses and Observers of what we do. *Epictetus* in *Arianus* often inculcates this, and urges it as a Motive to a good Life. And a greater than he, even St. *Paul* (as hath been noted before) exhorts to good Behaviour *because of the Angels*. Let us then do nothing unworthy of these Spectators, and let us not discourage them by our Sins, from coming to us and assisting us. Let us not chase away these blessed Spirits, and fright them hence by our wicked and ungodly Carriage: and so hinder that Correspondence which uses to be betwixt Mankind and them, which is so illustrious an Instance and Proof of the *Divine Providence*.

Thus I have said what I thought was sufficient to be here deliver'd, concerning the Ministration of the heavenly and glorious Angels, so far as it is serviceable to shew how these blessed Creatures are made use of by God in the Government of the World, and his providential Dispensation of things.

I proceed in the next place, to speak of the *Evil Angels* or *Dæmons*: And indeed it will be necessary to say something of *them*; because this is made use of by some as an Argument *against Providence*; namely, that there are *Devils*, and those so mischievous to Mankind. Wherefore they are rather enclin'd to hold the Negative, that is, that there are *no Devils*. This was asserted by the *Epicureans* of old, and by the *Sadducees*, a noted Sect among the *Jews*, for *they said that there is neither Angel* (Good nor Bad) *nor Spirit*, i. e. any Substance distinct from Matter and Body, *Acts* 23. 8. *Sallustius* the Philosopher, in his Discourse *of the Gods and the World*, disputes against the Being of Evil Spirits. This wild Opinion hath been taken up more lately by *David George*, a modern Enthusiast. There is no Devil but what dwells within us, saith the *Muggletonian* Tribe, for 'tis no other, say they, but the corrupt Reason and Imagination of Man. *Hobbes* once exploded all Diabolic Substances, and there hath lately appear'd * another Writer, who fiercely denies the Power of evil Dæmons, and laughs at all Histories concerning their Operations and Exploits. He reckons the Notion of Devils among the Inventions of the *old Chaldeans*, who superstitiously fansied such Beings, he saith. And that the generality of *Atheists* and *Libertines* agree with these Writers, I suppose will not be denied. Those that own not a God, throw aside the Belief of all Diabolical Spirits. Indeed it is not their Interest to believe there are such Beings, and thence they look upon them as Fictions and Chimera's, and whatever is said of them is rejected as fabulous. We are the more concern'd then to assert and vindicate this Doctrine, because in our Days the number of Infidels as to this matter is so great. Therefore I hope the Reader will excuse me if I be very large and prolix in shewing how weak and groundless the contrary Doctrine is, and in directly proving, that there are such Beings in Nature as *Devils*. And then I will proceed to shew, that these Beings are serviceable to very important Ends and Purposes, and are Proofs and Arguments of a Divine *Providence*.

* Anton. *van Dale de orig. & Progr. Idololatriæ.*

We are to know then that there are not only Corporeal but Spiritual Beings, and these latter are of two Ranks; first, the Supreme Being, the Infinite, Uncreated, and Eternal Spirit, GOD blessed for ever. He is the Top and Head of all Immaterial Substances, and is justly styled *the Father of Spirits*, the Fountain, the Original, the Source, the Author of all Incorporeal Beings. Secondly, Finite and Created Spirits; and these are of four Orders, which gradually differ from one another. The lowest is the Spirit of the World, or seminal Forms, which organize prepared Matter, and give Life and Vegetation. The next Degree are the Souls of Brutes, whereby they are enabled to discharge all the Offices appertaining to the Animal Life: for mere Matter cannot perform those Operations we see done by this sort of Creatures. Therefore I conclude, that there is an Immaterial or Spiritual Nature in these Animals, tho' 'tis true they do not properly *Think*: there is only a Shadow or Semblance of this in them. Nor indeed is *Cogitation* an inseparable Property of all *Spirits*. The third sort are the Spirits of Men, for Man is an Incarnate

carnate Mind, and is compounded of Spirit as well as Flesh. These Humane Spirits may be considered either as they actuate the Body, and so they are properly called *Souls*, or as they exert the nobler powers of Understanding and Willing, and so they are known by the name of *Minds*, or as at Death they are separated from the Bodies, and so they are wont to be styled *Spirits* or *Spectres*. There is a fourth sort of Finite and Created Spirits which we call *Angels*, and these are of two kinds, *Good* and *Bad*, as the most intelligent Heathens acknowledged, for they tell us that * they are differenced according to their Vertue or their Wickedness. Of these latter who are called *Evil Angels* or *Devils*, I am now to speak. And I will demonstrate the Being of such Spirits from, 1. Their Possessing mens Bodies, 2. Their appearing and shewing themselves to Men, 3. The Magical practices caused by them, 4. The plain Testimony of Scripture concerning, 1. their Original, 2. their Names, 3. their Multitude, 4. their Government and Orders, 5. their Cursed designs, Works and Employment, 6. their State and Punishment. And from all these the Doctrine of *Providence* will be proved and illustrated. I own that I have treated of some of these Heads in a *Latin Discourse* which I published, but I will now considerably add to what I then offered in a more concise way, and I will obviate some *Objections*, and render the Discourse on this Theme of *Evil Spirits* compleat and perfect.

* Τίνονται ὡς ἐν ἀνθρώποις, καὶ ἐν δαίμοσιν ἀρετῆς διαφορᾷ καὶ κακίας. *Plut.*

I. I prove the being of *Devils* or *Evil Spirits* from the violence on Mens Bodies, by *Possessing* them. In our Saviour's time this was frequent: we need no other proof but that of the Evangelists, *Mat.* 8. 16. --- 9. 32. --- 12. 22. --- 28. 33. *Mark* 5. 15. --- 16. 18. *Luk.* 8. 2, 36. The δαιμονιζόμενοι, *the possess'd*, mentioned in these and other places, are no other than Persons really possess'd and vexed with Evil Spirits. And whereas some have asserted that these are only such as were *diseased*; this is plainly confuted from *Mat.* 4. 24.--10. 1. *Mark* 1. 34. where the *Demoniacs* are distinguished from *those that were taken with diverse Diseases*. And healing the Sick and Diseased and Casting out Devils were two *different* Gifts.

And though by comparing *Mat.* 17. 15. with *Luke* 9. 39. we find δαιμονιζόμενος, *the possess'd with a Devil*, to be the same with a *Lunatick*; yet there is reason to understand it thus, that the Party was really possess'd with an Evil Spirit, and the Fits returned according to the influence of the Moon. But that such a one was *Epileptick*, or otherwise diseased at certain Revolutions and Aspects of that Planet, is no argument that he was not *Possess'd*: but rather hence we may gather that the Troublesome Dæmon, took occasion at such a time especially to Torment the Person. He so disposed the Body that the Paroxysm returned according to the Periodical course of the Moon. *Grotius*'s words are very remarkable on the place, *the Devils* (saith he) *are wont, such is their Sagacity and Knowledge, to join natural Causes with their own Force and Power*: thus 'twas the practice of the Dæmon, here to make use of those certain Times when the Brain is most weak and disordered, which happens generally at the Lunar intervals. A famous instance of this Possession by Evil Spirits we have in *Acts* 19. 13, &c. and another before that of a *Damsel who had a Spirit of divination*, Acts 16. 16. that is, as often as she was actuated by this Spirit, she pretended to foretell Futurities. We read of *delivering Persons to Satan*, 1 Cor. 5. 5. 1 Tim. 1. 20. which was sometimes attended with extraordinary Bodily Pains and Diseases, inflicted by the Devil, which in the former of these places are called *the Destruction of the Flesh*. The *Jews* cast out Devils by the invocation of God's Name, as is evident from what our Saviour said, Mat. 12. 27. *By whom do your Children cast them out?* which is attested by the *Jewish* Historian *Josephus*, in the 8th Book of his *Antiquities*, chap. 2. Ecclesiastical Historians mention the frequent Possessions in the Primitive times, together with the Wonderful dispossessing of the infernal Fiends by the Christians. *Justin Martyr* tells the Emperour in his *Apology*, that at that very time the Christians exerted that Power by calling on the name of *Jesus*: the same he saith in his Dialogue with *Trypho*. *Origen* against *Celsus*, saith this was done frequently by the meanest Christians. *Cyprian*, *Tertullian*, *Minutius Felix*, and several other Ancient Writers of the Church, appeal to the *Pagans* concerning the Truth of their ejecting Devils out of the Possessed: yea, this was one Argument they made use of to them to prove the Truth of the Christian Religion. Lastly, the Relations of Physicians and such curious Persons, as have conversed with the Distempered of all kinds, bear witness to this as matter of Fact, and produce several Examples of it.

Now, these Obsessions of humane Bodies argue the Existence of *Devils*; for we can't with any pretence of Reason ascribe them to any other Causes or Agents. It is extreamly prophane and most unworthy of *God*, to Attribute any such thing to him. Besides that it is irrational and absurd to do so, for in the Name of *God*, and by the powerful invoking of the whole Sacred Trinity, those Tormented Creatures have been relieved, and finally rescued from the Hellish Guests within them. Nor can it be an Effect proceeding from *Man*, for none can possess himself. And if it were in the power of *other Men*, we should have had some one Instance at least of it, and some malicious Persons at one time or other would have boasted of this Ability, which could not but be infinitely pleasing to Men of Inhumanity and Cruelty. It remains therefore that either *Good* or *Evil Angels*, must be the Authors of these inexpressible Torments. The former have other Offices, and better Services assigned them, nor can we think that those Blessed Spirits delight in torturing Mankind. The latter therefore are the only Persons that are fit for this work, and their Malicious Nature makes them take pleasure in it. Besides, it hath been oftentimes the repeated confession of the Parties possessed, that this infernal Spirit is he that so excruciates and plagues them. And lastly, it hath sometimes been the Acknowledgment of the *Dæmons* themselves, when they have been upon the point of leaving the Distressed, that they are the only Actors in this Tragedy. It is true, the Popish Priests sometimes cheat the People by making them believe persons are possess'd, that they may bring them to extoll *them* and their *Exorcisms*. But it follows not hence that there are no true Dæmoniacks, and that there are no real Spirits, for it is possible that Exorcising or casting out of Devils may be counterfeited as well as other Real things, the Truth of which no Man doubts of. Wherefore this cannot Rationally be made use of against what I have said. But I may on good Grounds conclude, that if any Man of a sober and considerate Mind, will weigh all these things which I have suggested, he will not fail to conclude that the Possession of human Bodies is a plain eviction of *Devils*, for it is a thing of such a Nature that it can't be charged upon any but them.

II. Their Existence is proved from their frequent *Appearing* and shewing themselves. It is true, some of the Ancient * *Fathers* were of opinion that the Bad (as well as the Good) Angels were wholly Incorporeal. And † one of them reckons it among *Origen's* Errors, that he held the Devils had Aerial Bodies. But others of them, as *Justin Martyr*, *Tertullian*, *Cyprian*, &c. with many other Christians and Platonists thought that the Evil Dæmons, though they are in themselves Immaterial and Spiritual, are not wholly destitute of Bodies or Vehicles, which, though they be Thin and Airy, may be condensed by them, and so they are capable of appearing to Mankind. They can also act in the real Bodies of Living Creatures; or they can assume Bodies which they make to bear the Resemblance of such or such a thing or Person. At other times it is enough that they affect the Air, and dispose the Medium which operates on the Eye, or Ear, &c. and by this means they seem to appear in such or such a form, though really they have no such Body. And this is the reason generally why they appear to one, and not to another in the same place, and at the same time; the Senses of one being not wrought upon as the others are, there being not the same disposition either of the Medium or of the Organs. There are famous Instances of these things in the infallible Records of the Bible, which acquaint us that the Devil appeared and spoke to *Eve* in Paradise in the real Body of a Serpent; that he visibly shewed himself to King *Saul* in the shape of *Samuel*; that he appeared to and held discourse with our Saviour in the Wilderness, and when he Tempted him; that he not only makes use of and assumes a Body himself, but that he Transforms other Bodies, and changes them into several Shapes, as when he gave the *Egyptian* Sorcerers a power to turn Rods into Serpents, Water into Blood, and to produce Frogs, &c.

* *Cyril, Epiphanius, Chrysostom, Basil, Theodoret, Nazianzen, Nyssen, Damascen.*
† *Hieronym. Epist. ad Avit.*

That these mischievous Agents often appeared in Bodily shape, is attested not only by the Sacred Writings, but other particular Relations made mention of by the Ancient Fathers, and Ecclesiastical Writers, *Eusebius*, *Basil*, *Jerom*, *Chrysostom*, *Austin*, *Ambrose*, *Nicephorus*, *Socrates*, *Sozomen*, &c. and by *Luther* of late. Some have said they have attained to a way of *seeing* them, and they confirm it, for Truth, on their own Experience. Thus the *Platonists* generally averred: * *Alexander ab*

* *Genial. Dier.*

ab Alexandro and * *Suavius* say as much: And *Paracelsus* boasts that he had a sight of them frequently. Our *Dee* and *Kelly*, who conversed so much with this sort of Spirits (as well as the *Chymical* ones) would have been glad to have arrived to this, after their talking with them, and hearing them so often. That the Apparition of these Evil Angels was usual heretofore, cannot be denied by any but such as resolve to stifle the Faith of all History. There are both Foreign and Domestick Narratives, of unquestionable certainty, that may confirm and establish us in the Belief of the Reality of this thing, which is the proper Concern and Province of Historians: Many of whom are of singular Credit and Repute for their Faithfulness and Integrity, and consequently there is no ground to question the Truth of what they deliver. Particularly this is evident from the many credible Stories concerning *Witches*; wherein we are told that the Evil Spirits they held Correspondence with appear'd to them. See Dr. *Pordage's Posthumous Mystical Theology:* And Mr. *Baxter's Historical Discourse of Apparitions.* See *Lavater de Spectris, Boissardus de Spirit. Apparitionib. Loyerus de Spectris, Cardan. Subtil.* lib. 19. *Wierus*, lib. 1. who furnish us with particular Testimonies, Experiments, and Examples to prove that Evil (as well as good) Angels appear to Persons, and converse with them. There is undeniable proof from the Relations we have from very good Hands, of such as have been in the *Indies*, that *Devils* frequently appear to the Inhabitants of those Countries, and as often vex and plague them. Several Writers, not only *Papists* but *Protestants*, testifie that the Infidels of *America* are haunted and scared by those cursed Creatures, who meet them at all times in frightful Shapes. Particularly of the People of *Brasil* it is related by *Maffeus*, that they commonly carry Fire with them when they go abroad, for they think this is their Defence against the Devil. It seems they have learnt to encounter him with his own Element. These miserable *Brasilians* (above all others of that part of the World) are domineer'd and tyranniz'd over by these hellish Dæmons, who make them do open Homage to them, and nothing will serve them, but to be Worshipped with the greatest Humility.

* *Comentar. in* l. 1. *Paracelsi.*

As to the form and manner of the Apparitions of them, I need not say much. Sometimes they shew themselves in the shape of Men, and converse as such, and if we may believe some Authors, they sometimes proceed unto lewd and obscene Actions. This may be credited if St. * *Augustin* of old, and † *Bodinus*, and ‖ *Scribonius*, of late were not mistaken. And the former of these tells us that these Devils, who were by the *Latins* called *Incubi*, were called *Dusii* by the old *Gauls*: And *Isidore* agrees with him, and lets us know that *Dusius* is that sort of Dæmon. Whence by the way let me be permitted to conjecture that the * *Vulgar* Execration or Imprecation, which is in use among some may owe its rise to that Name, which it is likely was derived to us who are the Off-spring of the *Gauls*.

* *De Civ. D.* l. 15. c. 23.
† *Cont. Wier.*
‖ *Physiolog. Sagar.*

* *Dose take you.*

But whether these things be exactly adjusted to Truth, I will not now dispute. This is certain and unquestionable that the *Angels of Darkness* sometimes assume Humane Shapes, and are not discern'd from Real Men, as to their Behaviour, till something afterwards discovers it. That they sometimes resemble *Beasts* is well known, and at other times they appear in other likenesses. Nay, it is hard sometimes to distinguish between these and *Good Angels* as to their Appearance, for they can *transform themselves into Angels of Light*, 2 Cor. 11. 14. The Prince of Darkness can appear as one of the Glorious Cherubims, and not only in his Shape but in his Suggestions he may seem to be one of the heavenly Messengers, thereby to delude and deceive us. Which we find to be the Sense of the *Pagan* Philosophers, as † *Porphyrius* witnesses, *These Dæmons* (saith he) *put on as 'twere the Countenance of the other Gods* (so he calls Good Angels) *and thereby work upon our Ignorance and Imprudence.*

† *De Abstinent.* l. 2.

But most generally they appear in frightful Shapes, and bring Horrour and Astonishment along with them. Whence perhaps they have the name *Segnirim* Lev. 17. 7. 2 Chron. 11. 15. about which Criticks have made a great stir: For the word signifies, 1. *Hairy, Shaggy.* 2. *Goats*, because they are so. 3. Some particular sort of *Wild Beasts*, as in Isa. 31. 21 —— 34. 14. some *deformed Animals that inhabited in the Desarts*, and with their horrid noise and shrieks affrighted those that passed by that way. And from these three significations of the Word, it is made use

use of 4thly, to signifie *Devils:* Whence the *Satyrs* or *Devils* that haunt the Woods and Desarts are by the *Hebrews* called *Segnirim.* And they have that denomination also, because sometimes they have assumed the likeness of *Goats.* But chiefly, as I conceive, because they are Frightful and Astonishing, for what is *Rough* and *Hairy* is generally so: Thence the *Hebrew* Word for * *Horrid* is from another that signifies † *Hair.* This word *Segnirim* is of the like sort, being derived from *Sagnir, Hairy,* and that from the verb *Sagnar* which implies such a *Fear* and *Dread,* as when *the Hairs stand upright.* So that this Epithet, upon Examination, is found to be most fitly applied to the *Evil Dæmons,* and denotes how Terrible the shape of them usually is, and how horrible their appearance is wont to be.

* *Tsimmim*
† *Tsimmah*

But it is not upon the *Manner* of their appearing, that I ground my Argument at present. Their appearance itself shews their real Existence, and a Man would not desire a better proof. *Good Angels* have often blessed Mankind with their Presence, and thence it is rationally inferr'd that there are such Glorious Creatures. The same inference we may with as good reason use with respect to *Evil Ones:* We can't question their Being, since they have audibly and visibly manifested themselves to the World.

It is not to be denied that there were *Delusions* as to this: And I am not going about to perswade the Reader that all the Stories concerning these Apparitions are true. Who knows not that Popery was the Nurse of Ignorance and Superstition; and that these made way for Cheats and Impostures? The Prince of Darkness Reigned in those times of Blindness and Barbarism, and it was part of the Curse on Apostate *Rome to give heed to seducing Spirits, and Doctrines of Devils,* 1 Tim. 4. 1. But at length Truth confounded Error in many Countries, and the Gospel scattered that thick Darkness: And the former Lyes and Impostures have not prevailed after that rate that they did before: And the *Roman* Priests have not been so busie of late in imposing upon the World by Counterfeit Spectrums. But must we hence conclude that all the Relations concerning the visible appearance of Devils, in those times, and since, are false and fabulous? No surely. These Fiends could then come abroad, and shew themselves with Confidence, and they always more or less gain'd by it. And even since the abundant Light of the Gospel hath appear'd, that sort of Visions hath not wholly disappear'd, and that by the Wise Management of Divine Providence, it being useful to rouze Mankind sometimes, to fright and terrifie the stupid World, to punish and torment some great Criminals, and to bring all Men to a firm perswasion of the Being of this sort of Creatures.

Nor is it to be expected that they should very *often appear,* though 'tis certain they make frequent Excursions into these Regions we live in, because God is pleased generally to make use of other Methods for the affecting of Men's Minds, and animadverting on Sinners, and shewing his Displeasure against them. Besides, there may be good Reasons in Nature why this kind of Apparitions is but seldom: Namely, because it is probable the Government and Laws of these Spirits allow not of it. They are under a certain Discipline, and must submit to it, and therefore cannot shew themselves as they please. Further, it is likely that it is difficult for them to appear, to force their Aerial and Tenuious Vehicles into a visible Consistence. Again, it is to be remembred that this Region which we live in is unsuitable to the Frame and Temper of their Constitution, so that they can no more bear our Air than Owls and Batts the bright Rays of the Sun. And hence it is that they make such hast away, and are observ'd to be gone, and leave these Quarters all of a sudden. So that it is somewhat hard to reconcile this with that Notion of the *Pagans,* that the Evil Spirits that wander about High-noon, and are most mischievous at that time (to which one thinks there is an Allusion in *Psalm* 91. 6. where *the Destruction that wasteth at Noon-day* is rendered by the Septuagint *the Noon-day Devil*) unless we should salve it thus, that the Evil Dæmons are uneasie at such a time, and are forward to be gone, and therefore make hast to do more Mischief than ordinarily. This is certain, that whilst they are here, they are very busie and active generally, and follow their Work, and leave behind them for the most part too evident Testimonies of their having been here. Sacred and Prophane History attest this abundantly, and therefore hence we irrefragably conclude that there are Diabolick Spirits. If we will not grant this, we must renounce our

our Faith in the Bible, both Old and New Testament, and we must impeach all other History of Falshood; and that without any Ground at all, for why both these should not be credited in this matter of Fact, as well as in others, there can no reason be given.

III. These Dæmoniacal Spirits are proved from the *Practice of Magick.* But here we must distinguish between the *kinds of Magick*, lest we be misunderstood. *Magick* is Three-fold, Natural, Artificial, and Diabolical. The first is no other than Natural Philosophy, but highly improv'd and advanced, whereby they that are skillful in it are able to produce wonderful Effects. An instance we have of this in Scripture, *Gen.* 30. 37. &c. though this must be said that here was a particular and distinguishing Hand of Heaven in this Affair. *Jacob* having been defrauded by his Uncle *Laban* made use of his Wits to be even with him, laying *pilled Sticks* or *Rods* in the Gutters before the Flocks, to make the Ewes conceive and bring forth *spotted Lambs.* Thus *Jacob*, as * *plain* a Man as he was, made use of the Assistance of *natural Magick* to effect his innocent Purposes. *Baptista Porta*, a *Neapolitan*, is famous for his Books of this sort of Magick, and several † others have writ upon the same Subject. To this properly belongs that Skill and Insight into the Operations of natural Bodies, whereby a Man is able to tell before-hand what will be the Effects of them. So a Philosopher, from no other Principle than this, foresaw a scarce Year, and bought up all of one sort of Commodity. So by Astronomy, *i. e.* a long and diligent studying of the Stars, and all the Motions and Aspects of the heavenly Bodies some have foreseen some certain Events, or rather have guess'd at them. The Ignorant mistake this and the former Skill for *Diabolick Magick*, and pronounce them to be so: whereas they depend wholly on the Power of natural Agents, and exceed not the Operations which are within the verge of Nature.

* *Gen.* 25. 27.

† Roger Bacon, Albertus Magnus, Cardan, Corn. Agrippa, Bodinus, *Lord* Bacon.

2. There is an *artificial Magick*, which is either *Mathematical* or *Prestigious.* The former is called θαυματουργική, *Wonder-working*, because the Contrivances which are wrought by it are wont to create Wonder and Astonishment in the Spectators. Of this sort was *Archimedes*'s Glass Sphere, *Archytas*'s Wooden Dove, and several curious Machines and strange Engines, which are the ingenious Productions of Mathematicks and Mechanicks: and a thousand Rareties and Curiosities which depend upon Principles of Geometry, Arithmetick, Astronomy, *&c.* The Vulgar take this for *Art Magick*, in the worst Sense, and a *Mathematician* with them goes for a *Conjurer.* The latter sort of *artificial Magick* is that which is *Prestigious*, whereby strange things are done by *Legerdemain*, i. e. Slight of hand. The Effects of it are not such as they seem to be, but are mere Tricks, Deceptions and Impostures. In short, This Magick is no other than that of *Juglers*, (so call'd by a corruption of the Word *Joculatores*) which many times passes among the Illiterate for Diabolical, though it exceeds not the Performance of Art.

3. There is *Dæmoniacal Magick*, which is done by the help of the Devil. And this is that which is the proper Subject of this part of my Discourse. This *Magick* is working strange and wonderful things by a Power derived from some Evil Spirit. It hath other Names affix'd to it, as *Sorcery* and *Witchcraft.* These are generally where there is some Compact and League with the Devil. This *Diabolical Magick* is either *ludicrous* or in *good earnest.* The former of these is when the Devils are employ'd in * making Sport, and shewing Tricks. Some of the *Romish* Saints (as *Oswald*, *Dunstan*, *Xavier*, and others) were hugely familiar with this sort of Dæmons, and were frequently shewing some feats with them. Among the *playing Dæmons* I reckon *Fairies*, for it is not to be doubted that there have been such Spirits, that have assumed little diminutive Bodies, and have appear'd after that manner to several. The pious and learned † *Xancby* thought fit to write on this Subject, and hath asserted the Truth of it from the Experience of many Persons of untainted Repute. Histories are full of Passages concerning them, and though questionless many Stories about them are false and counterfeit, yet we have no reason to suspect the Truth of all upon that account. These puny Dæmons swarm'd in the times of Popery, (the Ignorance and Superstition of People at that time fitting them for such Play-fellows) but of late they have been seldom seen in these Countries.

* *Call'd* Magicæ fallaciæ *by* Tertullian, *Apologet.* cap. 23. Magicar. artium ludi, *by* Arnob. lib. 1. παίγνια, *by* Epiphan. 34. Ludicra *by* Cyprian *de Idolis.*

† *De Angelis & Dæmonib.*

Devils

Devils have acted the part of Buffoons sometimes; and we read that they have been dealt with accordingly. When *Martin Luther* was haunted and pester'd with one of these merry Devils, and could not be rid of him by quoting of Scripture, and by other serious Methods of dealing with him, he attempted to drive him away by being Ironical and Drolling upon him, as * *Sancte Satan; ora pro me*; and to all his Questions he return'd Answers of Derision, and sportive Repartees, and so at last made him fly by using ridiculous Words and Actions, tho' tis not safe for every one to do thus. The Devil of *Mascon* was a merry, joking, sporting Creature, as appears from the Relation writ by *Monsieur Perreaud*, and translated and publish'd by *Monsieur Du Moulin*, with a Preface to it written by the Honourable Mr. *Boyle*, who voucheth the Truth of it, as being acquainted with the reverend Author Mr. *Perreaud*, a Person of Credit and Integrity, a grave and pious Divine of the Reformed Religion, in whose own House the things were done. And among this *trifling* sort of Devils we may reckon those that deal in Needles and Pins, Tape and Inkle, and such Pedlars Ware, of which there are several Relations extant. Sometimes the Fiend is a * *Piper*, as in a known foreign Relation, and sometimes he is a † *Drummer*, as when he disturb'd the House at *Tedworth*.

* *Colloq. Mensal.*

* *See* Verstegan *Antiqu.* cap. 3. Wier. *de Præstig. dæm.* l. 1. c. 16.

† *See Mr.* Glanvil's *Dæmon of* Tedworth.

I can't see how this latter Relation, publish'd by Mr. *Glanvil*, can reasonably fail of being believ'd, for he was a Man of a Philosophic Genius, Inquisitive and Cautious: he was a great and profess'd Enemy to commonly receiv'd Reports and Rumours, and was distrustful even to a fault. Had he been one of another Temper, had he been a Credulous sort of Person, and enclin'd to take up Reports and Opinions upon common Fame, then we might have justly suspected the Truth of this Narrative which he gives us about the *Haunting of Mr.* Mompesson's *House*: but it is well known that he was not forward to go in the common Road; yea, he was observ'd to go out of it as much as any Man in his time. He exploded several receiv'd Notions and Doctrines, not only in Philosophy, but in Divinity, of which I could give some flagrant Instances. He was so far from being liable to be charg'd with Credulity, that his Error was on the other side. However, this makes him a fit Person to relate this Story, for we are sure he was thereby qualified to understand and publish the true matter of Fact in this Affair. And besides, he was one of great Diligence and Industry, and lov'd to take pains about new Discoveries; and particularly in his Enquiry into this strong *Phænomenon* at *Tedworth* he was indefatigable, and spent many Nights and Days in searching into it, and informing himself about all its Circumstances. Wherefore I can't see (as I said before) why this Relation should not be firmly credited; yea, I see there is abundant reason why it should. And from what I have briefly hinted it appears, that Mr. *Glanvil* was the best Witness and Judge in this Matter, that could have been, to testify and decide the Truth of it.

And many other Credible and Certain Stories there are of the Pranks that these Internal Creatures have played, and of the Comical part they have Acted. * *Melanchton* and some † other good Authors have testified, that they sometimes speak *Greek* and *Latin* to amuse the Auditors, and are pleased to shew themselves *Grammarians* and *Criticks* upon occasion. All which are Arguments of their Subsistence.

* *Epist. ad Hubert. Languet.*

† *Fernel. de Abdit. rer. caus.* lib. 2. *Ragusei de Divinationi*, lib. 2.

The latter sort of Diabolick Magick, that is, that which is *in good earnest*, is either *Divining* or *Operative*. The Divining Magick is that whereby, thro' the help of these subtile Agents, things to come are foretold. And this was affected several ways, namely,

1. By the aid of *Astrology*, as when the *Teraphim* were devoted to some Dæmon, and framed under a certain Position of the Stars, of which those Texts *Ezek.* 20. 21. and *Zech.* 10. 2. are thought to speak: and other Images and Statutes for Divination were used in an Astrological way (concerning which see Mr. *Selden, de Diis Syr. Syntag.* 1. *cap* 2.) and then they were esteemed to be * *full of the Divine Presence*, as one expresses it, pregnant with the Spirit or Dæmon, as *Trismegistus* (in *Asclepio*) and from him and others † St. *Augustine* tell us. They made use of the Moon (the Witches *Hecate*, as ‖ Mr. *Selden* calls it) in order to Divine about Love-matters, for she was thought * to preside over

* Ἀγάλματα θείας μεστὰ πνεύματος ἀνέπλασε. *Jamblich.*

† *De Civ. Dei, lib.* 8 *cap* 23.

‖ *De Dis Syr.*

* Βεβαιοῦν τὰ ἐρωτικά. *Plut. de Iside & Osiride.*

over these Affairs. And because they made use of the Heavenly Bodies and their Aspects in Divination and in Witchcraft, thence *Astrology* had a bad Name, and was said to be found out by the Devil, as † *Lactantius* tells us, and from him *Luther* seems to have borrowed that Notion in his *Colloquia Mensalia.* But tho' this be too severe a Censure, yet there is Truth in what hath been suggested, namely, that the skill in the Celestial Bodies and their Motions and Positions hath been made made use of, by the help of Dæmons to Magical designs and purposes. This we shall find to be the confession of *Porphyrius*, who is largely quoted by *Eusebius* in his 4th Book of the *Evangelical Preparation:* and *Plutarch* in his Treatise of the *Deficiency of the Oracles*, is cited by the * same Author to the same end. So that there is some ground to give credit to that of † *Tertullian*, that there is an Affinity between Magick and Astrology. If we may believe ‖ *Gregory Nazianzen*, *Julian* the Apostate joined both these together. And * *Nicetas Choniates*, furnishes us with some remarkable Examples of the like Nature in the Life of the Emperour *Manuel.* This using the Stars in the Magical way was bythe Greeks called Τέλεσμα and Στοιχεῖον, and thence στοιχεῖν, is to exercise Magical Practices, as is proved out of *Cedrenus* and *Codinus*, and other Authors by *DuFresne* in his *Glossary.*

† *Institut.* lib. 2. c. 17.

* *Præp. Evang.* lib. 5. cap. 11, 12, 13.

† *De Idolat.* cap. 9.

‖ *Orat.* 3.

* *Lib.* 4.

2. Divination was effected by *Augury* and consulting the bowels of Beasts: for though this sometimes was a mere humane Juggle and Pretence, yet it is Rational to believe that at other times the Spirits of Darkness, were concerned in this piece of Paganism.

3. By *Oracles*, for though these likewise were Cheats, and the Responses were sometimes given without asking the Devils opinion, yet it is not to be questioned that this Oracular Transaction was generally Diabolical. This is fully proved by *Eusebius* in his *Evangelical Preparation*, Book the 4th, ch. 7. and Book the 5th, ch. 1 and 4. And *Plutarch* himself, whom this Author alledges, acknowledges as much in his *Defect of Oracles.* The Devils were great Fortune-tellers, in *Greece* especially, were they where wont to deliver their Oracles in Verse. To the Priests therefore (their Ministers) there was great resort when Persons were desirous to know future Events. Then these Priests who were generally Magicians, really consulted the Dæmons, though 'tis not to be doubted that they sometimes were the Devils themselves, and gave Answers.

4. By *being possess'd with a Divining Spirit.* There were several of these among the Gentiles of old, especially the *Engastrimuthi* or *Ventriloqui*, whose voice came out of their Bellies, not their Mouths. It is probable the *Damsel* of *Philippi*, Acts 16. 16. was of that sort, for πνεῦμα Πύθωνος wherewith she is said to be possess'd, denotes that very sort of Divination, for such *Magical Foretellers* were called by the Greeks † Πύθωνες. And indeed this we find confirmed in the next words, for it is said *she brought her Masters much gain by Southsaying*, i. e. by predicting of things to come. For those Spirits out of a cursed Emulation undertook to vie with the Sacred Prophets, who were immediately inspired by God, and foretold Future Events.

† *Plutarch. de Orac. Defectu.*

5. By *Necromancy*, which is calling up the dead by the Devils power, and consulting them. This was frequently used of old as *Gentile* History informs us; and there have been some since that have been skilled in this Mystery. ‖ *Luther* tells us that the Abbot of *Spanheim* (who was reputed a Great Magician) brought up, at the request of *Maximilian* the Emperour, *Julius Cæsar* and most of the deceased Roman Emperours, and other Great Monarchs (as *Alexander* the Great, &c.) all walking before him one after another very orderly in his Bed chamber. And it was usual for Sorcerers and Magicians to hold Confederacy not only with the Apostate Dæmons, but also with wicked Spirits of their own kind, who perhaps had been Magicians and Witches in this Life, and were Malicious and Revengeful, and therefore fit instruments to make use of. These *departed Ghosts* of wicked Men were scarcely distinguished from *Devils*, by some of the Ancient Philosophers, for thus we find one of the chief of them speaking, * "These Spirits which we call "*Angels* and *Devils* are the Souls of Men deceased, which either out of a princi-"ple of Love and Friendship help and assist us, or from Hatred and Ill-will perse-"cute and torment us. Yea we are † told that *Tertullian*, one of the Christian *Fathers*, was of opinion that the Souls of the worst Men are presently after death turned into Devils. Which tho' it be an erroneous and groundless Notion, and confounds the Nature of Humane Souls and Diabolical Spirits, which latter are another Species of Beings; yet that which we observe here is that they had an

‖ *Colloqu. Mensal.*

* *Max. Tyr. Dissert.* 27.

† *S. Augustin. de Hæres.*

Art of calling up these Souls of deceased Men, and sometimes the *Devils* in the shapes of these dead Men. It is my apprehension that the reason why the Place where *Moses* was interr'd, was concealed, was that none of the *Magicians* of those times, or any afterwards should attempt (tho' in vain) to call him up from the dead. From the History of the Witch of *Endor*, 1 *Sam.* 28. 'tis plain that 'twas the practice of those days to consult the dead, and rouze their Ghosts, and enquire of them about Futurities. Whereupon the Learned *Jewish* Antiquary hath this Remark, * There is a sort of *Engastrimuthi* that have skill to call up the Souls of the deceased, and by them to foretell Futurities to those that consult them. We are told that *Julian* the Apostate, used in the remotest parts of his Palace, to betake himself to † *this sort of Divination*, which is a remarkable Instance and Proof of what I now offer.

* Τὸ γὰρ τῶν ἐγγαστριμύθων γένος ἀνάγον τῶν νεκρῶν ψυχὰς, διὰ αὐτῶν προλέγει τοῖς δεομένοις τὰ ἀποβησόμενα. *Antiqu. Jud. l.* 7. *c.* 15.

† Ψυχαγωγίαν καὶ μαντείαν. *Gr. Naz. cont. Julian. Orat.* 1.

The next sort of the *serious Diabolick Magick* is that which is called *Operative*, because it is accompanied with Great and Lasting Effects. For the Devils are not only Ludicrous, and also delight to befool the World with the prediction of some Futurities, but their business is to be more seriously Mischievous, by Actions of greater Consideration and Moment. The Exploits of *Pharaoh's Magicians* may be reckoned here, and the Feats of *Simon the Sorcerer*. And to this appertain all those strange things done by Enchanters, when by *strange Words*, *Characters*, and *Amulets*, &c. Persons are hurt, and sometimes healed; though this latter is a thing by the bye only, for Diabolick Art designs chiefly and principally the Hurt and Damage of Mankind. But sometimes, I say, this Art is Sanative, really Helpfull and Beneficial to Men: which was the Sense of the Ancients, according to whom some Dæmons were ἀποπομπαῖοι, and ἀποτρόπαιοι, also ἀλεξίκακοι, such as averted evil things from them. Particularly this Art was Medical, and those that were the Professors of it, undertook to administer Remedies against all sorts of Bodily distempers.

This was very anciently practised, and accordingly ‖ *Theodoret* enclines to think that the *Rophim*, those that are call'd *Physicians*, 2 Chron. 16. 12. whom King *Asa sought to* for the cure of the Malady in his Feet, perhaps the Gout, were those that used *Inchantments* in order to the curing of Diseases. From this medical Sorcery *Serenus Sammonicus*, an Ancient Roman Physician and Poet who writ concerning the cure of Diseases borrowed his *Abracadabra* against Agues: which the Learned * Mr. *Selden* thinks is from *Abraxas*, a certain Dæmon whom the Magicians of old often made use of, and is mentioned by *Irenæus adv. hæres. l.* 1. *c.* 23. and by *Epiphanius*, and other Christian Writers. And another Receipt for the foresaid distemper was,

‖ *Quæst.* 48. *in* 3 *Reg.*

* *De Dis Syr. Syntagm.* 1. cap. 1.

Mæoniæ Iliados quartum suppone Trementi, i. e.

Take the fourth Book of *Homers Iliads*, and lay it under the Patient's pillow, and it will cure him of his Ague. No meaner an Author than *Festus* mentions a Spell written on a House to keep it from Fire: the words were these in the *Tuscan* Language, *Arse verse*, which is as much in Latin as *ardorem avertito*. These superstitious Enchantments were retained even among the Christians in St. *Chrysostom's* time, they being derived to them from Paganism. The Good Father takes notice of their using of † *Amulets* in order to the curing of Agues and in * another place doth smartly reprove them for using other Charms to help and relieve the distressed. This sort of Prescriptions was usually in the Magick practices of old, when by the Devils direction they found a peculiar Vertue, Power and Efficacy in certain *Letters* and *Characters*, in certain *Words* and *Writings*.

† Περίαπτα καὶ ἐπῳδαί. *Hom.* 6. *contra Judæos.*

* *Hom.* 8. *in Colos.*

Let it not seem strange if I add that by Witchcraft they undertook the Ejection of Devils. Of this rank were those *Vagabond Jews*, *Exorcists* (*Acts* 19. 13.) that pretended to cast out Devils, and cure Diseases by Magical Art, which they brag'd they had from some Ancient Manuscripts of King *Solomon*. " Accordingly the † " *Jewish Antiquary* would perswade us that *Solomon* arrived to that Art which is " Efficacious against Devils, and is to be made use of for the healing and restor- " ing of those who receive any hurt from those Evil Spirits. He made several " Charms whereby Diseases are expelled, and he left in Writing certain ways of " Incantation and Conjuration by means of which the Devils are so effectually " put to flight, that they never dare return any more. And this kind of curing " of

† *Joseph Antiqu. Jud.* l. 8. c. 2.

" of Persons very much prevails among our Countrymen. And he proceeds to tell a story of a *Jew* who cast out a Dæmon by this Art in *Vespasian*'s Presence; by applying a certain Root to the Party's Nostrils to smell to, he in a short time fetched the Devil out through his Nostrils: And all the while he was at his Work, he made mention of *Solomon*, and recited the Charms and Spells which he had invented. It is not improbable that some by Magical Help might be able to do this.

But you'll say, *How can Satan cast out Satan?* Mark 3. 23. I answer, Christ, who spake these Words, did cast out Satan *in another way*, and *to another end* than these do. He by his own Power and Vertue did it so that he thereby destroyed the Works of the Devil, and weakned his Kingdom; but these by strength borrowed from *Satan* himself effect what they do, and when he suffers his Instruments to eject him, his Kingdom is not worsted, but thereby advanced, for he sets up Superstition and Idolatry oftentimes by this means. And so though there be in this work a pretence of doing Good, yet we see there is at the bottom of it a design of *Mischief*.

And *this* indeed is that which the wicked Spirits take delight in, and therefore the effecting of this is the main business they aim at. Witchcraft and Sorcery are chiefly employed in *hurting* of Persons, and bringing some actual Evil and Calamity upon them. Thence Satan's Allies are wont to raise dangerous Storms and Tempests, and to throw down whatever lies in their way, and are the Authors of destructive Fires and Conflagrations, as we see in the Example of *Job*'s Children, Chap. 1. v. 16. 19. The great Host of Evil Spirits is called *the Power of the Air*, Eph. 2. 2. for in the Regions of this Element they claim as 'twere a peculiar Jurisdiction and Dominion; and here the *Prince* of this Power hath been observed to be very busie. Here he finds himself to be nimble and active, and therefore bestirs himself to the worst Purposes. Of which that is one remarkable Instance, *Mat.* 4. 5, 8. his snatching up our Saviour into the Air, and carrying him up to the Pinacle of the Temple, and to the Top of an High Mountain, with a design to have done him the greatest harm he could.

Then, as to bodily Diseases and Maladies, he can inflict these upon Persons, as Melancholy and Madness on King *Saul*, 1 Sam. 16. 14. and as in the Case of *Job*, Job 2. 7. *Satan smote* Job, &c. So we read of *a Spirit of Infirmity* which a Woman labour'd under eighteen Year, such a bodily Pain and Torture by *Satan*'s procuring as *even bowed her together, so that she could in no wise lift up her self*, Luke 13. 11. and in ver. 16. 'tis added, that *Satan had bound her*: by all which Expressions *Luke* the Evangelist and Physitian, describes the particular kind of Disease which she labour'd under, that is, Her *Spina*, (as the Anatomists speak) which before was erect and streight, was now by the Evil Spirit so distorted from its right Position, that the poor Woman was not able to lift up her Body, but was forced to look on the Ground. Thence a very observing and judicious Writer acknowledges, that * *the Devil mixes himself with bodily Distempers, and perhaps this happens oftner than is usually believ'd.* Another of that Faculty owns, that † *there are certain Experiments of the Power of Dæmons on human Bodies.* * Other Physicians and learned Writers attest this Power of Evil Spirits in bodily Diseases. As for the *Epilepsy*, it is the Judgment of Dr. *Willis*, that † *we may fully suspect the Afflatus of an Evil Spirit here.* And 'tis no unreasonable Thought that some of the *Maniaci* are of this sort.

Bewitching and Poisoning went together heretofore, as we may gather from both the *Greek* and *Latin* * Names of a *Witch*. This is not denied by † one that hath of late indeavour'd to baffle the Doctrine of *Witches*. After all his Batteries against Witchcraft, he acknowledges once and again, that the *Devil* moves and instigates wicked Persons, to give and administer strange things to such as they would hurt and torment. This kind of Witching, saith he, is too common and frequent, and produces much Mischief. And though the Compositions and Receipts are of Ingredients that are Natural, (as he contends, and no body denies it) yet the Art and Contriving them are Diabolical, and are learned from Converse and League with the Evil Spirit. This is the *Magick* or *Sorcery* I am speaking of, *viz.* such as is transacted by the Mediation of infernal Ghosts: and therefore we have no reason to doubt whether there be such Creatures or not. *Magicians*, saith *Arnobius*, who had been a Pagan, and

* *Sennert. de Maniâ.* l. 1. c. 15.

† *Ader de morb. Evang.*

* *Anton. Benevent. de abditis morbor. causis*, cap. 26. *Andr. Laurent. de Strumis.* l. 1. c. 9. *Jan. Durnstat. Problem. Ragus. de Divinat.* l. 2. *Zacut. Prax. Med. Theodore Mayern's Observations.*

† *Patholog. Cerebri.* cap. 2. *de Epilepsiâ.*

* Φαρμακεύτρια, *Venefica.*

† J. Webster. chap. 12.

and was no Stranger to their impious Usages, * *Do not only know the Dæmons, but whatever wonderful thing they do, they do it by the help of those Dæmons.* And so all the Christian Writers of old, who have had occasion to speak of this matter, expressly affirm this: and I do not see any reason why we should think that all these Persons were in an Error. Therefore if there be *Magicians* and *Magick*, there are *Devils*.

* *Magi non tantùm sciunt Dæmonis, sed etiam quicquid miraculi edunt, per Dæmones faciunt: illis aspirantibus & infundentibus præstigias edunt*, &c. Adv. Gent.

But because I have said before, that this *Magick* is wrought by a *Compact* with those damn'd Fiends, it is requisite that I adjoyn this, that this *Compact* is either *express* or *tacit*. The former is when the Devil visibly appears, and there is a solemn Promise and Agreement made on both sides. To make such Persons his own, to bind them fast he makes a *League* with them. It is clear from what he did with our Saviour, that he is forward to enter into a *Stipulation* and *Agreement* with Men. He promised *to give* our Lord *all the Kingdoms of the World, and the Glory of them*, on Condition that he would worship him. Thus the *Compact* was made on his part; if he could have brought *Christ* to accept of the Condition, it had been a *Compleat League*. This shews, I say, that he is for *Contracts* and *Bargains*, and would thereby oblige Persons to him; and this he sometimes effects when he meets with fit Persons, such as seek his intimate Society, and think to gain by it, as Wizards and Sorcerers. These having made a formal Alliance and Confederacy with Hell, have constantly a certain Spirit who is their Familiar, with whom they hold continual Correspondence. There is a remarkable Epistle of *Porphyrius*, who was intimately acquainted with the Mysteries of this Art, which will establish our Belief of this thing; namely, the familiar converse of Magicians with Dæmons. We shall find it recited by *Eusebius* in his *Preparation Evangelick*, Book 5. Chap. 6. where *Porphyrius* propounds 9 Queries about this Commerce: Whence 'tis evident that there was such a thing, that there was a Correspondence and Association with Dæmons, and (as those Queries shew) that Magicians receiv'd Instructions from them about the Ceremonies and Usages they were to observe.

The latter sort of *Compact* is that which is *Tacit*, viz. when persons knowingly and willingly use those Superstitious Rites and Ceremonies which Magicians use. When they exercise themselves in things above the force of Nature, and the reach of Art, they in some manner converse with the Evil Spirit, and are assisted by him. This, though it be not a direct, is a vertual Agreement with him, for what they do is by Diabolick Art, though they are not apprehensive of it. All that can be said is that they are acted by the Fiend, but know it not. And here by the way, it is to be fear'd that this Dæmoniack Magick sometimes hides it self under those other two before mentioned; *viz. Natural* and *Artificial*. Some of the greatest Practisers in the former would perswade themselves and others that they deal in those only, and especially when they are not conscious of any Commerce between themselves and any wicked Spirits: But herein they may cheat and delude themselves, because there may be an unknown Converse with them, there may be an implicit Compact by reason of their addicting themselves to some unlawful and magical Mysteries. And it is likely after a continual using themselves to some Arts of the Devils Invention, they may proceed to a direct intercourse with the Apostate Spirits, and enter into Covenant with them.

Having sufficiently explained what I mean by *Diabolical Magick* or *Witchcraft*, and given several instances of the Devil's Power and Malice, I will in the next place confirm it by Sacred and Prophane History. In the former (besides some particular Examples which I had occasion to mention before) we have abundant Testimonies concerning *Wizards* and *Witches*, such as hold converse with the Spirits of Darkness. *Balaam* was such a one, *Numb.* 22. 6, 7.——24. 1. a *Diviner*, an *Enchanter*, one that could *curse* or *bless*, i. e. bring evil upon Men, or take it away by Magick Performances. Of this number were *the Wise Men, the Sorcerers, the Magicians of Egypt*, (the chief of whom in *Moses*'s time were *Jannes* and *Jambres*, who are mentioned in some of the *Jewish* * Writings, as also in some of the *Greeks*, from whence St. *Paul*, who was well versed in those Authors, borrow'd their Names, 2 *Tim.* 3. 8.) whose *Inchantments* we read of *Exod.* 7. 11, 22.——8. 7, 18. which in down-right terms are called *the illusions of Art Magick* Wisd. 17. 7. And to *Egypt* belong *the Charmers, and them that have familiar Spirits, and Wizards* mentioned in *Isa.* 19. 3. There was a breed of

* *Quoted by* Bochart, *in his Hierozoicon.* Part I. Book II.

of these even among the *Israelites*, for we read that about King Saul's time there were *those that had familiar Spirits, and were Wizards*, 1 Sam. 28. 3. of which we have a famous instance in the *Witch of Endor*, v. 7. 8. *&c.* and I have in another place prov'd that this whole Transaction was a Reality, and not a mere Shew, as some would have it to be. King *Manasseh* himself *used Inchantments and Witchcraft, and dealt with a familiar Spirit, and with Wizards*, 2 Chron. 23. 6. But his Pious Son and Successor rooted out this cursed Brood, *The workers with familiar Spirits, and the Wizards did* Josiah *put away*, (2 Kings 23. 24.) *that he might perform the words of the Law*, viz. *Thou shalt not suffer a Witch to live.* Exod. 22. 18. *A Man or Woman that hath a familiar Spirit, or is a Wizard, shall surely be put to Death*, Lev. 20. 27.

Among these must be reckoned *the Wise Men of* Babylon, Dan. 2. 12. who are styled *Magicians, Astrologers, Sorcerers, Chaldeans*, v. 2. And these were the Race of the old *Heathen Zabii, Assyrians* and *Chaldeans*, who were Neighbours of the *Israelites*, and therefore you may observe that these had an early Caution given them against such *Pagan* Practices, Deut. 18. 9, 10, 11. *When thou art come into the Land which the Lord thy God giveth thee, thou shalt not learn to do after the Abominations of those Nations. There shall not be found among you any one that useth Divination, &c.* And in the next Words are reckoned up the several *Species* of Diabolical Arts or Magick, whereby Men hold Commerce with the Evil Spirits. Of which I have particularly and distinctly treated in an *Exercitation* on that Text, and therefore I will not add any more here.

To pass from the Old Testament to the New, we read that the Devil from a high Mountain *shew'd* our Saviour *all the Kingdoms of the World, and the Glory of them in a Moment of Time*, Mat. 8. 4. Luke 4. 5. which he could as well have done if Christ had stood upon the lowest Ground, for all his Prospect was but a Delusion of the Sight. And if *Satan* was permitted by God to have such a Power over our Saviour's Body, as to carry it up aloft in the Air, and to place it on a Mountain, we may safely grant that he might permit him to have some power on our Saviour's Organs of seeing, and likewise upon the Medium, for this is no more derogatory to our Saviour than his being Tempted. Nor did *Satan* impose upon him by this, for he knew that they were Fictitious Representations in the Air, and he knew that the taking him up into so high a place, was but a Blind and a Cheat, and that no Mountain in the World could give a view of all the Kingdoms of it, because the Figure of this earthly Globe, and the Limits of the Horizon would hinder the Sight. Now, 'tis not to be doubted that the like to this which is here Recorded of *Satan* himself may be done, and is done by his Instruments, who act by his power, that is, by Magicians. Again, from what the Malicious *Jews* said concerning Christ, *He casteth out Devils by Beelzebub the Prince of Devils*, we may gather that it was usual with Sorcerers to be in *Confederacy* with the Devil. This is supposed in these Words, and Christ doth not confute their Supposal. There was one *Simon who used Sorcery, and bewitched the People of* Samaria, Acts 8. 9. And as for the particular Feats he was famous for, they are attested by a great number of * credible Writers, even of the Christian Church. There was *Barjesus or* Elymas, *which is by interpretation the Sorcerer*, (for *Elymas* is an *Arabick* Word, and signifies a *Knowing* or *Wise Man*, and so is as much as μάγος, which in its worst signification is the same with a *Sorcerer*) Acts 13. 6, 8. Here may be reckoned the *Witch* at *Philippi* (before named) who brought her Masters much gain by this means. *Acts* 16. 16. Some of the Ancients seem to understand *Gal.* 3. 1. of *Diabolical Fascination*, but there are few since that take the Words in that meaning. But it is not to be questioned that *Sorcerers* Rev. 21. 8.——22. 5. (who are there doom'd to the *Infernal Lake*, from whence they had their Art) are to be taken in the plain and obvious Sense of the Word.

* *Just. Mar. Apol.* 2. *Origen. con. Cels. Augustin. Serm. de Petro & Paulo. Epiphan. haref.* l. 1. *Euseb. Arnobius.*

There is proof of these not only in *Sacred* but *Prophane* Records. The common History of all Ages, as well as the Bible, testifies that there have been Diabolical Contracts, and unlawful Confederacy with Evil Spirits. We need not appeal to the Relations of the Poets, and hale in the Fabulous Stories concerning *Circe* and *Medea*, two famed Witches among that sort of Writers. There are other Authors, of known Credit and Authority, that Report the wonderful Effects wrought by the Professors of *Magick*, such as *Zoroastres, Pythagras, Apollonius Tyanæus, Nero,*

Nero, *Heliogabalus*, *Julian* the Apostate, *Ericus* one of the Kings of the *Gothes*, &c.

And several of the * *Christian Fathers* acquaint us, that some of the ancient *Hereticks* were vers'd in Magical Arts, and did strange and prodigious things by them. If we must not credit these Authors, then there is no Faith in History.

† Two eminent Men of *Hebrew* Learning, testify that the chief *Rabbins* among the *Jews*, and even the Heads of the *Sanhedrim* were given to Magick and Witchcraft.

In the *Imperial Code* are particular Laws against those that practis'd this Art, and they are express'd by several * Names.

In the † *Ecclesiastical Canons* of the ancient Christians they are condemn'd and anathematiz'd.

* Irenæus, Justin Martyr, Tertullian, Epiphanius, Theodoret.

† Dr. Lightfoot, *Hor. Hebr. in* Mat. 24. 24. Johan. Wagenseil, *Annot. in Sota.*

* *Malefici, Magi, Chaldæi, Divinatores, Magicis artib. accinsti, maleficiorum labe polluti.* Lib. 9. Tit. 18.

† *Decret. par.* 2. *Caus.* 26. *qu.* 5. c. 1, 2. &c.

We read that Witchcraft hath been a National thing, some whole Countries, as *Finland*, *Lapland*, and divers places in the *Indies*, have practised Sorcery. Witches have been busier in other parts of the World than here of late: witness the fresh * Account of the *New-England Witches*, which I take to be a very credible Relation, and attested by good Hands. But let the Reader consult what is related (and that generally with most evident Circumstances) by *Cardan*, *Olaus*, *Gilbert*, *Spranger*, *Bodinus*, *Del Rio*, *Casaubon*, *Glanvil*, *More*, and *Baxter*, and he will be abundantly satisfied about the Truth of the Transaction of *Witches* and *Magicians* with Devils, and of their magical Pranks. And he will see reason to disapprove of *Wierus*'s fierce Attempt against the Doctrine of Witches, and his denial of Dæmoniacal Contracts: Which is also the Opinion of *Episcopius*, who though he denies not a sort of *Witches*, yet allows of no *Confederacy*. And he will find reason to reject the Assertions of *Scot* and *Webster*, who laugh at Witchcraft as a vulgar Error.

* By Mr. Cotton Mather.

As for the *Meetings of Witches*, and their *Transformations*, and their being carried through the *Air*, and other such strange Phænomena about them, I see no good ground why we should disbelieve them, seeing they are attested by so *many credible Witnesses*, and seeing they are not impossible in themselves. There is no Contradiction in it, that the Confederate Spirit should transport the Witch through the Air to the place of general Rendevouz. He that took up *Christ* into the Air, and carried him up to a high Mountain, and set him on the Pinacle of the Temple, can effect this much more upon those Creatures that are his Vassals. He cannot only transport their own Bodies, but he can at other times leave these behind, and cloath the Witches with other Bodies fitter for their purpose, *viz.* such as are made of Air. This surpasses not Belief, for (as it is ingeniously and truly observ'd by Mr. *Glanvil*) there may be a real Separation of the Soul from the Body, without *Death*, properly so call'd, for this consists not wholly and absolutely in the actual Disunion of these two, but in the Indisposition and Unfitness of the Body for vital Action. And that Expression of St. *Paul* seems to patronize this Notion, *Whether in the Body, or out of the Body I cannot tell.*

In these airy Bodies the Witches appear at their Assemblies, and they are oftentimes chang'd into the Likeness of Cats, Dogs, Swine, Goats, &c. Which Metamorphosis into the Shapes of these and other Animals is very conceivable, for the Power of Imagination is able to form their pliable Vehicles of Air (which they had assumed) into these or any other Resemblances. But perhaps sometimes these are not Realities, but mere Appearances and Illusions, for the Confederate Spirits delight to deceive the Senses of the Spectators.

It is related also, That if they receive any Hurt in their Assum'd Bodies, it redounds to the Hurt of their Real ones: which is not uneasy to apprehend, if we consider that Diseases are sometimes inflicted by Imagination, or if we remember that the *Fœtus* is sometimes wounded by the fancy of the Mother. If we call to mind these things, we may conceive how the Hurts they receive in their Airy Bodies are translated and derived to their other Gross ones.

Authors of good Repute tell us, that these Meetings are commonly in the Night, and that Hundreds flock to them, and are met there by Devils. One of these, who is Chief and Master of the Conventicle, appears most commonly either like a big ill-favour'd black Man, or like a He-Goat. They worship this their great Master by kissing his Posteriors: then they all dance round back to back, then mix some Obscen-

ſcenities, and afterwards feaſt together, but ever without Salt. Then they receive Powders and Ointments, and ſuch like things to do miſchief with, and at laſt are carried home again. Theſe and ſome other Particulars are from the voluntary and repeated Confeſſion of the Witches themſelves, and therefore it is unreaſonable Niceneſs to diſbelieve them, or at leaſt every part of them. I muſt not omit, that every one of them hath a *Mark* about them; the Nature of which is ſuch, that if you thruſt a Pin, Awle or Bodkin into it, they are not ſenſible of it in the leaſt. I am not ſollicitous to give an Account of this; but yet it is congruous enough, that theſe Creatures who converſe with the Devil ſhould have his *Stamp* ſet upon them.

And when it is ſaid alſo that they are ſuck'd by the Familiar, Mr. * *Glanvil* and others have ſhew'd, that this is not ſo unaccountable a thing as ſome imagine: for, 1. It is likely that this Sucking is a Diabolical Ceremony to confirm the Helliſh Covenant. 2. It is probable that the Familiar doth not barely ſuck the Witch, but in doing ſo injects ſome venomous Quality into her, and thereby fits her for the Work of Bewitching. 3. Perhaps the Devil can't effectually act without this and other Rites, particularly drawing of *Blood*. How do we know but that they are neceſſary? Theſe may be (as one calls them) the *Devils Sacraments*, for he will have his *Federal Signs* as God hath. As he makes a Contract and League with Witches, ſo theſe are the Seals to it. And as Covenants were uſed to be made with Blood, ſo the Dæmons and Witches perhaps obſerve this. But if, after all, we ſuppoſe that ſome of theſe Particulars are feign'd, yet the main thing that we have aſſerted is not at all ſhaken, and that is this, That Evil Spirits and Witches have a Correſpondence, and work ſtrange and marvellous Effects, which I have before proved, and ſhall proceed yet further to convince the Reader of.

* *Conſiderations concerning Witchcraft.*

But here I will firſt anſwer an *Objection* or two which lie in the way. It is ſaid, That thoſe who are ſuppoſed to be Witches work commonly on *Children*, which ſome think is an Argument againſt the Being of Witches, for why ſhould they deal with theſe chiefly? If they had any real Power given them from *Satan* to do Miſchief, they might exert this Power upon ſuch as are of Years, and are of Underſtanding to to tell what they ail. I anſwer, 1. The curſed Confederates operate moſt frequently on *Children*, becauſe their tender Bodies are moſt liable to their Attacks: they ſooneſt receive the malign Influence and Impreſſion. And therefore it is no wonder, that the helliſh Aſſociates deal moſt with weak and tender Perſons, and thoſe that are young, for they can moſt ſucceſsfully work upon ſuch, they being generally more timorous than grown and ſtrong People, and their Imaginations being more liable to be wrought upon, on which accounts they are the fitteſt Subjects for Faſcination. This is given as a Reaſon by a late learned *Commentator* on *Exodus*, why the Law about *Witches* immediately follows that about *Virgins*, Exod. 22. 18. becauſe Witches by their evil Arts were wont more eſpecially to allure and entice ſilly young Maidens and tender Virgins. 2. As Childrens weak and paſſive Spirits are ſooneſt invaded and hurt, ſo the Impreſſion continues longeſt with them, and thereby the Malady becomes more fix'd, and conſequently is harder to be remov'd. This ſort of Perſons have not the Benefit of Reaſon and Experience to help them, and ſo the load lies heavier upon them, and proves the more dangerous. 3. In hurting Children, they at the ſame time hurt the Parents, who ſympathize with their Little ones, and in a manner feel the ſame Evils that they do. So that hereby the Confederates ſhew themſelves doubly miſchievous, and therein act like themſelves. 4. Though they are obſerv'd to deal moſt with thoſe who are not come to maturity of Years, yet it can't be denied, that they have frequently done harm to thoſe that are Adult, and are of Strength and Firmneſs of Body. This is evident from abundance of Inſtances, and therefore the foreſaid *Objection* is not of any force, but was ſtarted only to evade the Doctrine of Witches.

But it is ſaid again, Thoſe that are reputed to be Witches are of low Fortunes, and generally very poor; and beſides, they are a ſort of melancholick conceited People. As they are of the former Rank, they are deſpiſed, and thence become diſcontented: as they are of the latter, they preſent ſtrange things to their Minds, and take their Dreams to be Truth, or really believe themſelves guilty of what others lay to their Charge, though there is no ground for it. Thus *Conceit* and *Poverty* are the Sin of *Witchcraft*. I anſwer, 1. There have been ſeveral that have been found

found guilty of Witchcraft and magical Practices, that have been neither Poor nor Melancholick, as appears from the several Histories and Relations about these Matters. Their outward Condition in the World hath been prosperous, and by the briskness of their Behaviour it hath been seen, that they were not over-run with black Bile, yea, that their Temper was rather Sanguine. 2. Granting that the generality of Witches are of a mean Condition, and of a dark Complexion, (and I think verily this is to be granted) yet it is no ways prejudicial to the Truth which I am asserting, nay it rather strengthneth and confirmeth it: for though Melancholy and Penury are not (as is falsly suggested) the Crime of Witchcraft, yet they are for the most part the way to it, by means of the evil Suggestions of the infernal Spirit, who makes use of all Methods and Occurrences to seduce Mankind. Need and Extremity and want of Friends naturally beget Discontent and Melancholy, and both these meeting together, in some that are void of all Grace, and the Sense of what is Good and Vertuous, call as it were to them the damned Ghosts, and attract their Aid and Assistance, who are always near at hand, and ready to gratify (for their own ends) such complaining Souls. Thus sometimes, in the very nature of the thing it self, *Witchcraft* is caus'd and promoted by dismal *Pensiveness*, and *Poverty*: and therefore there is no reason to deny the former, when we can suppose these latter to be made use of by the forlorn Spirits, as an Introduction to the other. This, I think, is a satisfactory Reply to the Objection.

But it is further urged, that the Stories concerning Witches and their bewitching of People are Lyes and Impostures. Sorcery and Witchcraft are Crimes that are judged of in *Spiritual Courts* among the *Romanists*, and thence we have most of our Narratives of this kind. It is probable therefore that the Opinion of *Witches* comes from the *Popish Inquisitors*, and from their Revenge or Covetousness, whereby they were excited to doom many for magical Practices, that they might by that means wreak their Malice on them, or make some Advantage by their Deaths. Particularly it is said, that *Del Rio*, and *Bodinus*, and *Spranger*, were Persons that serv'd the *Inquisition*, and so advanced the Trade of those bloody Judges: besides that, they promoted the Cause of Popery and Superstition by such a Doctrine. This is another Argument which some use to prove the Imputation of Witchcraft to be a mere Cheat and Delusion. In answer to which, I grant what in Sobriety and Reason is to be granted: I deny not, but that *some* Stories concerning Witches (as well as some others concerning other Occurrences) may be mere Inventions and Falshood. I deny not, that some Persons perhaps have been condemn'd for Witchcraft by the *Roman Inquisitors* who were not guilty of that Crime; and that some have promoted the Accusation that they might be Gainers by it. Nay, moreover, I will not deny, that some Popish Priests and Friars have deluded the Ignorant and Superstitious People, with Semblances of Magick Feats and Witchcraft, to give occasion thereby of shewing some seeming Miracles, which hath been no uncommon Practice in the Church of *Rome*.

But notwithstanding this, no Man of Sobriety and Sense will believe that *all* the Relations concerning Sorcery and Witchcraft are false and counterfeit, and that *none* of all those that have been taken for Witches were really so. Say that some of the Narratives were mere Sham, yet it follows not thence that all were so. Because there are many legendary Tales concerning *Miracles*, shall we conclude thence there were no Miracles wrought by Christ, and the Apostles of old? Or (to come closer to the foremention'd Allegations) say that some who were condemn'd as Witches, were not guilty of that horrid Crime, yet it doth not thence follow that there are no such Wretches. If a Man should argue thus, then after this rate he may perswade himself, that there are no *Robbers*, nor *Murderers* in the World, that there are no real *Criminals* or *Malefactors*, because some innocent Persons are doom'd to be such by Publick Judicatures: or there is no such thing as Justice in any Courts because some are unjustly sentenced to Death.

Again, We are to consider, that Witchcraft hath been voted to be a Reality, not only by those of the *Roman* Communion, and particularly the Judges of the *Inquisition*, but by those of different Countries and Religions, by Men of all Perswasions and Ranks, (as I have shew'd already) and by such as were not biass'd by Gain, or any other such ill Principle, as far as we can discern. We are furnish'd with Narratives not only from *Roman Catholicks*, but from the Persons who are extremely

averse

averse to their way. Even from these we are plentifully inform'd concerning the things which we have been speaking of: so that we must necessarily give credit to them, unless we resolve to believe nothing.

Moreover, Mistaken Witcheries and imaginary Sorceries, must not hinder our Belief of those that are true and real: Some strange things are from a disturb'd and deprav'd Fancy. *Bartholine* and others tell us, that some melancholick Persons have believ'd themselves to be transform'd, and other strange and incredible things they have imagin'd concerning themselves. But we cannot rationally inferr thence that all is from Hypochondriack Steams, and that Witchcraft is but a fanciful Conceit. No Man of correct Thoughts can discourse after this manner, because there are hundreds of Instances wherein the matter of Fact will not admit of this Plea of Imagination: and there is a vast number of others which are so clear and evident that a Man can't possibly suspect them of fraud and imposture.

And though a *Compact* cannot be directly proved, (for what Witnesses are there present at that League?) yet there is no reason to deny such a thing, for the Proof of things may be had from the *Consequences* of them, from the *Confessions* of the Party, and from notorious *Circumstances*. It is not necessary to the convincing of a rational Man of this, that there were Eye-witnesses present at the making of the Covenant. It is sufficient that he sees what follows upon it, that he discerns the real Effects (both visible and audible) of that intimate Converse between Witches and Dæmons, whereby Families are disturb'd, Houses haunted, and Persons affrighted and tormented. Some are beaten and bruis'd by an invisible Hand, and otherwise hurt and mischiev'd: Drums and Trumpets and other strange Noises are heard, Stools, and Chairs, and all Utensils are visibly moved up and down the Rooms, when no one can be discover'd to be near, or in the place where this is done. These wonderful things have been effected without the Concurrence of any Man, or any other visible Creature, (and indeed most of them exceed their Strength and Power) and therefore we must conclude, that they proceed from some invisible Agents, *viz. Spirits*. Now, by this Name we mean either *God* or *Good Angels*, or *Devils*. God cannot be the Author of these wild Phænomena, because they are unworthy of him. *Good Angels* will not have a hand in them, because they are his *ministring Spirits*, and do nothing without his particular Allowance and Approbation. It remains therefore, that they are the Works of the *Evil Dæmons*. Consequently these are proved from *Witchcraft* and *Sorcery*, and all *Magical* Operations, which are by the help of these Spirits. And tho' of late these things are derided, and are call'd, * *The Legend of the Nursery, where Children with their Milk are fed with Tales of Witches*, (with which the Author ranks *Miracles*) yet all sober Persons have had other Thoughts and Apprehensions: and we may be confirm'd in such by a Cloud of Witnesses, *Jews*, *Pagans*, *Christians*; *Moses* and the Evangelists; Emperors and Fathers; the Civil and the Canon Law; Divines, Physicians, Philosophers, Lawyers, Historians, ancient and modern.

* *Miscell. Disc. Advice to a Daughter.*

IV. The Existence of Evil Dæmons is manifest from that Account which is given us in *Scripture* of the Nature of them. Though this hath been partly made good already, when I produced Examples of Sorcery and Witchcraft out of the Writings of the *Old* and *New Testament*, whereby I demonstrated the Reality of those Diabolical Practices, yet now I shall *particularly* and *fully* represent to you what these infallible Records deliver concerning this Rank of Beings; namely, Evil Angels or Devils.

First, Here we are acquainted what they were at first, *viz.* That they were created Good, but became Evil, and rebell'd against their Maker. It is probable, those Words, *Job* 4. 18. referr to this, *He chargeth his Angels with folly*, and chap. 15. ver. 15. *He putteth no trust in his Saints*, (or *Holy Ones*, i. e. Angels) *and the Heavens* (i. e. the Inhabitants of that place) *are not clean in his Sight*, Even some of them lost their Primitive Purity and Perfection. But the *New Testament* is more express and plain, *John* 8. 44. *He* (i. e. the Devil) *abode not in the Truth*, i. e. in that Integrity of his Nature which he had in the beginning, but became the Enemy of Truth and Goodness, and the promoter of all Falshood and Wickedness. And because of this wilful Apostacy of him and his Companions from their original Uprightness, they were by God thrust down from their glorious Habitation, as St. *Peter* informs us, *God spared not the Angels that sinn'd, but cast them down to Hell*, 2 Pet. 2. 4. And

another Apostle sets it forth thus, *The Angels kept not their first state*, (ἀρχὴν their *Beginning*, or their *principality*, for so the word also may be rendred; they voluntarily abandoned their primitive Dignity, Heighth and Superiority) *but left their own Habitation*, (i. e. Heaven) *Jude v.* 6. they were not suffered to stay any longer in that place of Happiness and Glory. This is the account which the Book of God gives of the Original and Apostacy of these once Glorious Spirits. And if any of the *Pagan* Writers knew this, they had it from the Scripture, or from the Ancient Traditions of the Patriarchs and of the *Jewish* people, with whom some of them conversed, and thence *Empedocles* speaks of such * *Dæmons as were thrown down from Heaven.* And *Phericides*, an Ancient Pagan Writer quoted by † *Origen* and ‖ *Eusebius*, makes mention of the Lapsed Angels and particularly of *Ophioneus* (he that appeared in the shape of a *Serpent*) the Ring-leader of them. It must be from the Sacred Records that we have a clear and distinct notice of this matter: here (and here only) we are certainly informed that those Celestial Inhabitants revolted from God, and quitted their Thrones of Glory.

* Δαίμονες ἐκπεσόντες. *Plut. de vitando ære alieno.*
† *Contr. Cels.* l. 6.
‖ *Præp. Evangl.* l. 2. cap. 10.

Here it may be expected I should assign what was the particular *Fault* and *Crime*, of these Delinquents; but here we may conjecture rather than determine, because the Scripture is not positive in this point. *Josephus* and *Philo* and some of the Christian Fathers, thought that the Sin of the Angels which threw them into the State of Devils was Carnality, founding this opinion on Gen. 6. 4. *The Sons of God went in unto the Daughters of Men. Origen* hence thought that the wanton Angels mix'd with mortal Beauties. Concupiscence and Lust made them leave Heaven, saith * *Tertullian*: and *Justin Martyr*, *Clement* of *Alexandria*, *Cyprian*, *Eusebius*, *Ambrose* and others seem to hold the same, *viz.* that the Angels were cast out of Heaven for Lusting to converse with Women on Earth. But this opinion was grounded on a misinterpreting of that place in *Genesis*, which speaks not of *Angels*, but of *the Religious Men* of that Age, who according to the Scripture style, in other places are called *the Sons* or *Children of God.*

* *Lib. de Cultu fœm. & lib. de Idololat.*

There is another odd Opinion lately vented by a † Learned Man, namely that the Sin of Angels for which they were deposed from Heaven, was their Tempting and Seducing of our first Parents. But he should first have proved that this Temptation and Seduction were before the Fall of Angels, which he hath not done. But it is most probable that *after* they were fallen, they betook themselves to this work out of mere Spight.

† *Bynæus de Natali Christi.*

The Angels first Sin by which they fell was *Envy*, say several of the ‖ Ancients, who are perswaded that they approved not of the Creation of *Man*, thinking that he being made after the Image of God, and taken into his special care, would Eclipse their Glory. *Zancby* and others say, they *Envied* Mans Nature, which was to be exalted by Christ. But the generality of the * Ancient Fathers held *Pride* was the leading Sin of Angels. The apprehension which they had of the Heighth and Dignity of their Place and Advancement puffed them up. They had an Arrogant opinion of their own Worth, and accordingly they threw off all Subjection, and were ambitious to have the full Dominion and Sway over all. Or perhaps their *Envy* and *Pride* had a more particular respect to the *Son of God*, who it is probable was solemnly declared by his *Father* to be such in the presence and assembly of the Angelick Spirits, to which it may be the *Psalmist* referrs *Psal.* 2. 7. He was propounded to be their Head and King, but they enviously resented that Honour which was done to him by his Father, and would not acknowledge him to be their Lord. Out of Pride and Scorn, they refused to own *Christ* to be their Chief. They were *the Sons of God*, and would not acknowledge *a Son of God* above them, who was also *God* himself. This we may conceive was thought by them to be a diminishing of their Power and Glory, and hereupon it is likely they combined together, and forcibly attempted to gain their ends, and fought with the other Angels that were Good, and presumptuously imagined that they could not only defeat them, but dethrone God the *Father*, and his *Son*, who was set over them as their Head. In brief, they would needs aspire to be as *God*, and for this they were justly cast down from the Heavenly Mansions; which seems to be related to in *Isai.* 14. 12. (speaking of Proud *Sennacherib's* Fall)

‖ *Irenæus*, *l.* 4. *c.* 78. *Cyprian de Zelo. Lactant*, *l.* 2. *c.* 8. *Greg. Nyss. Catech. c.* 6. *Hilar. Can.* 3 & 20 *in Matth. Basil. Hom. de Invidiâ. Theodoret. Hist. l.* 1. *c.* 2.

* *Chrysost. Hom.* 65 *in Matth. Hom.* 9. *in Johan. Theodoret. Epit. Div. Decret. cap.* 8. *Athanas. de Virgin. Augustin. in* 58 *Psalm. Hieronym. Ambros.*

Fall) *How art thou fallen from Heaven, O Lucifer! or, O Morning-Star!* for this is the Name given to *Angels*, Job 38. 7. *The Morning Stars sang together.* So that it is as much as if the Prophet had said, O how hath Pride destroyed this Babylonian Tyrant, as heretofore it did the Angelick Spirits? To this cause of the Angels Apostacy perhaps the Apostle referrs in 1 Tim. 3. 6. *Lest being lifted up with Pride, he fall into the Condemnation of the Devil:* where the Sin and the Punishment of those Evil Spirits are mentioned together. But, after all, I conceive it may be said that the cause of the Angels Fall was not *One* single Sin, and so all the forementioned Opinions may be reconciled. It is probable they fell by Infidelity, by Envy and Malice, by Pride and Self-conceit. Thus these Stars fell from Heaven, thus these Apostate Spirits *left their own Habitation*, and are irrecoverably lost.

But here it will be demanded why these fallen Angels were not Redeemed, but remain still *Devils* to this day, and so shall for ever; whereas lost Man and his Race found Mercy after their Apostacy. First, it may be said, it is enough that God would have it so. He was not bound to do otherwise, and therefore we ought to acquiesce in his Will and Pleasure. But to satisfie even the Curious and Scrupulous, these following Reasons may be offered.

1. The Sin of the Angels was *the first Sin* of all, and it is fitting that Rigour should begin there where the Offence begins, lest too early Mercy should encourage Sinners. All Governours and Lawgivers observe this, they punish the Ringleaders of Rebellion or any other Exorbitancy, to suppress the like for the future.

2. These Angelick Spirits voluntarily abandoned the *Greatest Happiness* that Creatures could enjoy; they fell from the *highest Top of* Honour and Excellency, and therefore their Fall was desperate, their case was irrecoverable.

3. The Malignity of their Sin was greater than that of Man's, because they had none to Tempt them, but they fell of themselves, and of their own accord, without any sollicitation. Whence their Sin seems to be from pure Malice, and therefore was not pardoned: but Man fell by their Temptations, they maliciously designing to draw him in to their Condemnation. This is another Reason why there was Mercy and Salvation for Men, and not for Apostate Angels.

4. Some of the Angels fell not at all, and thereby the whole Species was preserved, the Angelical Nature was kept up. But *Adam* falling, all Mankind fell in him, and would certainly have perished, the whole Race would have been destroyed, if infinite Mercy had not interposed; this perhaps might be one Reason why Men were redeemed and saved, and not the fallen Angels.

5. And lastly, we must resolve this into the distinguishing Favour and Grace of God. What hath been before alledged is Conjecture rather than any certain Solution, for God could have changed the nature of Devils, and made them as Glorious Creatures as they were before. He could have bestowed Redemption and Salvation on them, as well as on lost Man. But it was God's pleasure to shew the Riches of his Grace towards these, and not towards them. It is this that makes the difference between them, and therefore we who are of Humane race are invited on this occasion to admire and stand amazed at the singular Love of God to us. His discriminating Favour in Restoring of *our* Nature, whilst he neglected that of *Angels*, who are of an order Superiour to us, is never sufficiently to be prized and adored by us. The lapsed Angels had no Saviour provided for them, but we had. Here we may say with the Apostle, *God commendeth his Love towards us*, Rom. 5. 8. This peculiarly displays his abundant Grace and Condescention to us. This we are to reckon as the chief Reason why Christ *took not hold of Angels*, that is, to recover and save them, but *of the Seed of* Abraham *he took hold*, Heb. 2. 16. The Sovereign pleasure of God made the distinction.

This shall suffice to have been suggested concerning the Causes of the Angels Apostacy, and the difference between it, and that of Man. And though the Scripture is not express in these things, yet it plainly and distinctly assures us of the *Fallen State* of these once happy Creatures, which was the main thing we were concerned at present to enquire into. This true account of the *Original* of Devils we owe to the Scripture alone, and especially to the Writings of the New Testament. The true notion of *Evil Dæmons* was never well known till *Christ* came, whose design was to destroy the works of these Devilish Spirits. And indeed it was requisite that when our Saviour came, we should know better than ever the

Nature of these Cursed Beings, because by his Coming we are obliged more exactly than ever before to avoid their Wiles and Impostures.

Secondly, Further, the infallible Scripture acquaints us with the General and Particular *Names* of these infernal Spirits, which give us an account of their *Nature*. As the Good Angels, so these Bad ones are differently expressed in these Holy Writings. The first General Title is *Satan*, which is sometimes used in the * Old Testament, but oftner in the New. It hath a double Signification according to the double sense of the Verb *Satan*, which signifies more generally *to act the part of an Adversary or Enemy*, but particularly and specially *to Accuse, or lay to ones charge*. Accordingly *Satan* is an *Adversary, one that behaves himself as an Enemy*: And he is also an *Accuser*, one that after he hath tempted us to the Commission of Sin will charge us with it, and Aggravate our Guilt. Both these very manifestly express the Nature of the Diabolical Spirit: Whence this is a Catholick Term among most Nations of the World that are not Paganiz'd. *Satan* is a known word to signifie the Infernal Spirit in the Idiom of the *Jews* and *Christians*, and in the Language of the *Turks*, *Arabians* and *Saracens*.

* *Job* 1. 6. ----2. 1. 1 *Chron.* 21. 1. *Zech.* 3. 1, 2.

Διάβολος is another common Name given him in the * *New Testament*, and in the Version of the *Septuagint*, and it answers to the *Hebrew* Word *Satan*, which accordingly is rendred Διάβολος by those † *Seventy Interpreters*. And from them this *Greek* Word (whence the *English* word *Devil*) is used by *Ecclesiastical* Writers to denote this Hellish Ghost. We find not in any other *Greek* Authors that this word signifies a *Devil*. The *Septuagint* seem first to have fixed the sense of the *Greek* Word; and from them the Writers of the *New Testament* borrow'd it, and from thence the *Greek* Writers of the Church receiv'd it, and the *Latin* ones used the word *Diabolus*. And certainly it is a proper expressing of the forementioned *Hebrew* Word, and lets us know that this Malign Spirit shews himself our *Adversary*, by *Accusing* and *Calumniating* us.

* *Mat.* 4. 8. *Luke* 8. 2. *John* 4. 7.----8. 44. *Eph.* 4. 27. *Jam.* 4. 7. 1 *Pet.* 5. 8. *Jude* 9. *Rev.* 2. 20. *and several other times in this Book of the* Revelation.

† 1 *Chron.* 21. 1. *Job* 1. 6. ——2. 1. *Psalm* 109. 6. *Zech.* 3. 1, 2.

Whence (without doubt with Allusion to the Word) he is called ὁ Κατήγορος *the Impleader* or *Accuser of the Brethren*, Rev. 12. 10. which is a Name directly opposite to that of the Holy Spirit, *viz.* Παράκλητος *the Advocate*, who pleads for us, as the Devil doth against us.

He is accordingly styled by St. *Peter* ὁ Ἀντίδικος *the Adversary*, 1 Peter 5. 8. which is a very Emphatick Word, and (as may be gather'd from *Mat.* 5. 25. Luke 12. 58.) signifies such an *Adversary* as appears in the Publick Courts, he that manages the Suit or Action in Law against one, and so it denotes very appositely the restless Office and Employment of *Satan*, who is a professed Plaintiff and Pleader against us.

For this reason he hath by way of Eminency the Name of *Ojeb*, Psal. 7. 5. and ὁ ἐχθρὸς *the Enemy* Mat. 13. 39. Luke 10. 19. such an *Enemy*, such an *Antagonist* as is not only Potent but Subtile. He upholds and maintains the Cause against us with all Art and Skill.

On which very account this sort of invisible Spirits are call'd also * Δαίμονες (for though the Word Δαίμων be of an indifferent signification among the *Gentile* Writers, and signifies both good and bad Angels, yet in Scripture it is always taken in the worst part) and sometimes † Δαιμόνια, though this word is sometimes taken in a middle signification, as in *Acts* 17. 18.

* *Mat.* 8. 31. *Mark* 5. 12. *Luke* 8. 29. *Rev.* 16. 14.---- 18. 2.

† *Mat.* 7. 22. *Luke* 4. 41. ------9. 1.------10. 17. 1 *Cor.* 10. 20. 1 *Tim.* 4. 1. *Jam.* 2. 19. *Revi* 9. 20.

Lastly, These Evil Spirits are sometimes called *Gods*, Deut. 12. 31.——32. 16, 17. because they were reputed and worshipped as such by the Idolatrous Heathens. And conformably to this way of speaking it is not be doubted that *the God of this World*, 2 Cor. 4. 4. is the *Devil*; though there have been some great Men that have understood this Text of the *True God*, or God properly so called. The reason why they thus interpreted the Text appears to be this, because some *Hereticks*, as the *Marcionites* and *Manichees* understood this Text of the *Evil Principle* (as they called it) for they held two *Principles* or *Gods*, a good one, and an evil one; and therefore these Fathers, because they thought these *Hereticks* would be encouraged if they interpreted with them this place of *the latter*, understood it of the *True God*. But there is no real ground for this, for this Text doth not in the least favour that Doctrine of a double Deity, because we find that it is not repugnant to the Sacred Style to attribute the

the Name of *God* to *Satan*, as in those forecited places in *Deuteronomy*, he being esteemed as such by wicked Men, and likewise because he is of great Power and Sway upon Earth, and *effectually ruleth in the Children of Disobedience*, Eph. 2. 2. and therefore is called by our Saviour himself *the Prince of this World*, John 12. 31. and again Chap. 14. 30. v. nay a third time, Chap. 16. v. 11. which words are a plain decision of the meaning of this place now under our Consideration, for *the Prince of this World* is the very same with *the God of this World*, a *Ruler* or *Prince*, and a *God* being *Synonymous*, Exod. 22. 28. Psal. 82. 1, 6. John 10. 34. 1 Cor. 8. 5. And besides the word *this* puts it out of all controversie that the Text is meant of *Satan*: *this* is added to distinguish him from the true God, who was called by the *Jews*, *Melech Hagnolam*, *the King of the World*, and is styled by the Apostle himself *the King of Ages*, or *of Worlds*, 1 Tim. 1. 17. the Universal Lord and Sovereign *over all Things and Persons, both in this World and in the other*. But *Satan* is said only to be a God or Prince of *this World*, that is, as 'tis corrupted and depraved, and his Power extends only to this present degenerate World. We must then place the Emphasis of the Words in the Pronoun *this*, and then we can't but discern *that the God of this World* is no other than the Evil Spirit that Reigns in the Hearts and Lives of worldly and sensual Men, and is reckoned by them as their *God*, and accordingly is worshipped, serv'd and obey'd by them.

There are not only *General* but *Particular Names* of Evil Dæmons in the Sacred Writings, as *Segnirim* Lev. 17. 7. 2 Chron 11. 5. (of which I gave an Account before, *viz.* that they are the most *Frightful* sorts of Devils) and *Shedim*, Deut. 32. 17. Psalm 106. 37. which Name is derivd from *Shadad*, *Vastavit*, because of the signal Hurt which they (above the rest) do to Men and other Creatures. To these it is likely belongs *Abaddon* or *Apollyon*, i. e. a *Destroyer* Rev. 9. 11. *the Angel of the bottomless Pit*, and such of his Fellows who make it their sole business and work to procure the Harm of Persons and Nations, yea to effect their utter Ruin and Destruction. Of this sort perhaps was *Asmodæus* mentioned in the *Apocryphal* Writings, whose name signifies a *Destroyer*. Finally, as some of the *Good Angels* have particular Names (as *Michael*, *Raphael*, *Uriel*, *Gabriel*,) so some of the *Evil* ones have likewise: And perhaps those strange *Names* and *Titles* of Dæmons among *Magicians* were communicated to them by those Spirits themselves. Some of the *Rabbinical* Writers seem to have borrow'd from them, and mention several Names of Devils. They will tell you that *Samael* was the proper name of that Spirit who seduced our first Parents, and that he came riding on a great Land-snake that was in the shape of a *Camel*. But I'll not trouble the Reader with such Vanities and Whimsies.

Thirdly, The Scripture acquaints us that the *Numbers* of these Dæmons are great. It is a *weak* Apprehension of the *Vulgar*, that there is but one Devil, and that he acts in all Counties and Places at the same time, for ordinary People, and unthinking Heads, fancy an Ubiquity in him. But this is a gross mistake, and is grounded on the common mentioning of *the Devil* (not *Devils*) as if there were but one. But it must be remembred that the making mention of him in the singular Number excludes not a Plurality of Devils; but when one is named, all the rest or a great part of them are supposed and implied. Accordingly we may observe that *Satan* is put for the whole Multitude of Devils *Mark* 3. 23, 26. *Acts* 26. 18. *Rom.* 16. 20. 2 *Thess.* 2. 9. *Rev.* 2. 13. And so by *the Devil* is meant the whole Company and Association of those Infernal Spirits, *Hebr.* 2. 14. *Jam.* 4. 7. 1 *John* 3. 8. *Rev.* 2. 10. —— 12. 12. —— 20. 10. and other places. But oftentimes they are spoken of in the *Plural*, thus the *Evangelists* expressly mention *Devils*, *Mat.* 4. 24. *Mark* 5. 12. *Luke* 4. 41. —— 9. 1. —— 10. 17. So doth S. *Paul*, 1 *Cor.* 10. 20, 21. 1 *Tim.* 4. 1. and St. *John*, *Rev.* 9. 20. —— 16. 14. —— 18. 2. and St. *James*, Chap. 2. v. 19.

That their *Numbers* are vast we learn from the Confession of some of themselves, *Our name is* Legion, *for we are many*, Mark 5. 9. A full and perfect *Legion among* the *Romans* was six thousand and odd armed Men, but it varied as to the number oftentimes, for a *Legion* was more or less according to the needs of the Commonwealth, and the pleasure of the Senate. But the word is here used to signifie a *Great Number* (because a *Legion*, whether it was compleat or not, consisted of a great many Souldiers) and it expresses to us the vast Multitude of Devils that are up and down the World; for if there was a *Legion* in one Man, then we may infer

ferr how numerous these Spirits are, seeing a great many more were possessed; and we can't think that their number is decreased since. But this will appear further from what I shall say in the next place concerning the diverse Ranks and Degrees of Infernal Spirits. Only I will adjoyn this here at present, that this was the sense of the Wisest *Pagans*. * *All places are full of Spirits and Dæmons*, saith *Heraclitus*. And a Platonick Philosopher thus expresses himself, There are innumerable kinds of Devils, saith he, † in so much that the Air above and about us, the Earth, the Sea, and the most remote and dark places are full of them.

* Πάντα ψυχῶν καὶ δαιμόνων πλήρη. Diog. Laert. in Heraclito.

† Ὡς εἶναι πλήρη μὴν τὸν ἀέρα, τὸν τε ὑπερθεν, ἡμῶν καὶ τὸν περὶ ἡμᾶς· πλήρη δὲ γαῖαν καὶ θάλατταν, καὶ τοὺς μυχαιτάτους καὶ βυθίους τόπους. Psellus.

Fourthly, From the Scriptures we learn that there is a *Government* and *Polity* among the Devils, and that there are *several Ranks* and *Degrees* among them. This is clear from Christ's Words, *Mat.* 12. 26. *If Satan be divided against himself, how shall his Kingdom stand?* There is a *Kingdom* or Government established among them, they are united by certain Laws and Constitutions, which they by mutual consent keep up and Maintain, that they may not be *divided among themselves*, that they may not break into Disorders, and so destroy their Government. Again, if *Beelzebub* be *the Prince of Devils*, Mat. 12. 24. which our Saviour denies not, but rather grants, v. 27. then there is a Primacy, and there is a Subjection, there is Superiority, and there is a dependance among those lapsed Spirits: One is a Prince and Supreme, and the rest are under him. So we read of *the Prince of this World* (which I had occasion to mention before) and *the Prince of the Power of the Air*, Eph. 2. 2. *i. e.* that chief Dæmon who sways most in the World, and is the Head of the whole Body and Society of Evil Spirits, of the whole *Posse* and Force of the Diabolick Kingdom. There is a General or Captain of this great Host, there is one that commands this mighty Army, and he is called *the Prince* of it. As we read of *Michael and his Angels*, i. e. the chief of the Glorious Spirits above, and his subordinate Attendants, so in the same place are mentioned *the Dragon and his Angels*, Rev. 12. 7. *i. e.* the chief of the Devils, (called the *Great Dragon* and the *Old Serpent*, Rev. 20. 2.) and his inferior Crew. These latter may be called (as the Good Angels are, but in a far different Sense) *Ministring Spirits*, i. e. they wait on the Supreme and Principal Dæmon, and attend his Will, and do his Commands. Thus there is mention of the *Devil and his Angels*, Mat. 25. 41. that is, the Sovereign and Lord of the Apostate Spirits, and all those that are under him. These latter are called his *Angels*, and accordingly we may understand, 2 *Cor.* 12. 7. *a Messenger or Angel of Satan*, who was sent to *Buffet* St. *Paul*, which is the same, as I conceive, with *the Thorn in the Flesh*, for we may observe that here is no Disjunctive Particle to separate and distinguish *the Thorn in the Flesh* from *the Messenger of Satan*; but this latter by way of *Apposition* is made the same with the former. Wherefore the plain meaning of the Apostle seems to be this, there was given or sent unto me, by the order and permission of the Lord and Disposer of all Things, an Evil Angel, one of *Satan*'s Officers and Ministers, whom by experience I found to be *a Thorn in my Flesh*, that is, a very great trouble and torment to me (as that way of speaking denotes) which is expressed also by *buffeting*, as much as to say, he used me as a Slave and a Vile Person, for that was the common *Punishment* which was inflicted on Slaves by angry and enraged Masters. So then these words denote not two distinct things, but one and the same; namely, St. *Paul*'s being severely chastised by one of the inferior Spirits of Darkness belonging to *Satan*, the Prince and Supreme of them.

And these Diabolick *Angels* or *Messengers* are distinguished among themselves according to their *Diverse Orders* and *Classes*; which we learn from the Apostle's Words, *Eph.* 6. 12. for having in the former Verse instructed them how *to withstand the Wiles of the Devil*, he immediately sets down the several Ranks and Divisions of them, *viz. Principalities and Powers, the Rulers of the Darkness of this World, Spiritual Wickedness in high Places*. Where, as I apprehend, the Evil Spirits are distinguished, 1. According to their Eminency and Superiority above others of them, for though there be but one Supreme, yet he appoints several Over-seers and Superiours over the rest, and these are here styled *Principalities* and *Powers*. This is positively set down and affirm'd by the Apostle, as part of the Account which he gives of these Wicked Spirit, which I the rather mention because * a Person well vers'd in Critical Learning hath presum'd to publish it as his Opinion that

* De Gale. Not. in Jamblich. p. 208.

that St. *Paul* here doth only *obliquely* utter this Passage, and *brings it in as taken from the sayings of Hereticks.* This I cannot admit of, for 'tis evident from the Apostles words as joined with the preceeding ones, that he speaks directly and absolutely, and not according to the ungrounded Opinions of others, but according to the Sentiments of his own Mind: of which we have this certain proof, that in other places of his Writings he plainly asserts this Regimen and Dominion of the Evil Spirits. 2. They are distinguished in respect of their place: for they are either, 1. Earthly and Grosser Dæmons, *the Rulers of the Darkness of this World*, those who hover about this dark Atmosphere: or 2. Those that are more Exalted, who inhabit chiefly the Higher Regions of the Air, which are called *Heaven* in Scripture, and therefore (as I conceive) this is meant here by ἐπουρανία *Heavenly places.* Our Translators thought it harsh to render it so, because *Heavenly places* are not proper for *Devils*, and therefore they translated it *High places:* but if they had considered that the Regions of the Air are called *Heaven*, they would not have baulked the other rendring. These airy Regions are the Receptacle of the πνευματικὰ (for πνεύματα) τῆς πονηρίας, *the Spirits of wickedness* or *Malice*, in which they are exalted as well as in their Station.

Thus from what hath been produced out of the Sacred Writings, I think it is evident that there is a *Polity* among the Evil Angels, and that they are marshal'd into several *Squadrons* and *Ranks.* I forbear to mention what *Porphyrius* and *Jamblichus*, what *Proclus*, *Psellus* and *Plotinus* have suggested, concerning the different Orders and Classes of Dæmons, for I believe the Reader would look upon it as savouring too much of Platonick fancy. Some over curious Inquisitors and particularly *Cornelius Agrippa*, in his *Occult Philosophy*, tells us that every *Order* hath three subordinate or co-ordinate ones belonging to it, in which they answer to the Hierarchy of the *Blessed Angels*, but these things are beyond our notice, and therefore we can determine nothing concerning them. It is sufficient that we are informed in general that there is a certain *Order* and *Oeconomy*, among the Damned Spirits, and that there is a Head and Prince over them all.

Fifthly, The Scripture gives us an ample account of the *malicious Designs* and *cursed Employment* of these Forlorn Spirits. Their *Names* (of which I spake before) set forth their wicked Nature, and sufficiently assure us that they are implacable Adversaries and Enemies to the Souls of Men, and that they study the Ruine of Mankind: but their Actual Endeavours are yet a more convincing proof of it.

For tho' sometimes we falsly attribute those Evils to them which they have no hand in, we unjustly accuse the *Accuser*, yet 'tis certain that they are interested in most of our vices. Thence Satan is styled the *Tempter*, *Mat.* 4. 3. 1 *Thess.* 3. 5. because he makes it his business to Tempt and call men off from their Duty, and to stir them up to the commission of Sin, and thereby to procure their Ruin and Misery, for this is his grand aim and design. Which is thus admirably expressed by St *Peter*, *Your Adversary the Devil, as a roaring Lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour*, 1 Pet. 5. 8. The Devil is a *Lion* in respect of his Dominion and Sway, as the Lion is the Chief of all wild Beasts. He is called so likewise because of his Fierceness and Terribleness: he is wont to create Horrour and Amazement where he visibly shews himself, and this is denoted here by his *Roaring.* He is also a *Lion* as to his Power and Strength: for which Reason (as well as some others) * *Luther* thinks he is shadowed forth by † *Behemoth*, another Beast of great Might. And indeed there are abundant Testimonies of his Strength and Force; whence he is called by our Saviour *the strong Man Armed*, Luke 11. 21. But chiefly he is styled a *Lion* because of his Voracity and Cruelty. He is Rapacious and Greedy of his Prey, and Tears, Rends, and Devours it. Therefore it is said *he seeks whom he may Devour.* The ruining, destroying, devouring of the Sons of Men, is the main design and business of the Spirits of Darkness. And to this purpose they *walk about*, they Range up and down every where, and ransack all parts of the Earth.

* *Colloqu. Mensal.*

† *Job* 32.

Some, it is likely, are more especially and peculiarly set over some Places and Countries, and others over others. And some perhaps (as those of the First Rank) have an universal Jurisdiction, and visit all quarters, and are acquainted with the state of all Persons. It may be some are chiefly employed to tempt Men, to such and such particular Sins and Vices, as others to those of another kind; thus it may be *Mammon* is a Name of that Evil Spirit, who presides over Riches, and is

to

to entice and corrupt Men by these: and some again are Catholick Tempters, and pervert all that they can. When the Elect Holy Angels, called *the Sons of God* (as some interpret it) met together, we read that *Satan* came to the same Meeting, *Job* 1. 6. If he thus thrusts himself in among the Good Angels, will he not intrude into the Company of Good and Holy Men, and mix himself with them, to inform himself of their Condition? yes certainly. There is not a Good and Righteous Man upon the Earth, but he is known by one Devil or other, especially those that have an universal Range granted them. I gather this from *Job* 1. 8, 9. when God spake to Satan concerning that Holy Man *Job*, we find by Satan's answer, that he was no Stranger to him, he perfectly knew his Condition and Circumstances. This must needs be, because (as he confesses himself, *v.* 7.) *He goes to and fro in the Earth, and walks up and down in it.* Which is the very same that the Apostle asserts, that he *walketh about seeking*, and what doth he seek for but *to devour?* This is the end and design of all his Inquisitions and Travels.

*Heb. 1. 1. And he hath acted in different ways to compass this End. As God hath **at Sundry times and in Diverse manners*, dispensed his Word for the Good and Welfare of Mankind, so the Evil Spirits (who in this and other things seem to emulate the Divine Example) have made choice of different Seasons and Methods to effect their Ruin and Destruction. Heretofore they were active in possessing Mens Bodies, and in teaching Men and Women to use Magical Operations, Witchcrafts and Inchantments, of which I have treated before. They caused Men to be bred up in gross Ignorance and Barbarism, and by that means to be fitted for any Delusions whatsoever. They took care to nurse Men up in Idolatry, and even exacted Bodily worship of them, and inveigled the Worshippers to offer their very Children to them in Sacrifice: and other acts of Inhumanity and Cruelty they inured them to. They set up Oracles among some of them, and thereby brought people to pay a mighty Respect and Reverence to them, as often as they had occasion to consult them. Neither did *Gentilism* wholly engross their Care: they were sollicitous to pervert the *Christian Church*, and accordingly they raised up Heresies and Schisms among them, and corrupted their Lives and Manners and thereby made way in the Eastern parts of Christendom for the impostures of *Mahomet*, and the vile Opinions and Practices which attended that way of Religion. And in all past Ages of the World it might be shewed how the busy Dæmons have employed themselves, and have *Diversly* dealt with Mankind, to procure their Mischief.

Nor are they idle at this day: nay they are as Active, not to say more now than heretofore, but partly in *another* way. Though they act not so visibly and above board as they did in some of the preceeding Ages, the wonderful and successful spreading of the Gospel having hindred their more open Progress, yet they carry on their designs still with great Vigour and Application, and impose upon Mankind by new Arts and Methods. Where there was of old Pagan Idolatry, and downright Polytheism, they have introduced the worshipping of Saints and Angels. Heretofore they blinded Mens Eyes with ignorance, and now they labour to do as much hurt by making them abuse their Light and Knowledge. Whereas of old they possessed Mens Bodies, now they chiefly work upon their Souls. Instead of that Magick and Witchcraft which were gross and corporeal, now there most prevails that kind of Fascination whereby the † *Galatians* were *bewitched.* Before the Devil cheated the World with *Oracles*, and since he hath deluded Men by False Teachers, and Pretenders to Revelations and Visions, and diverse sorts of Enthusiastick Impostors. And to conclude, in some places where Superstition took place, now Irreligion is Rampant: heretofore Men were perswaded that there were many Gods, but it is now too frequently believed that there is none: Idolatry is turned into Atheism.

† Gal. 3. 1.

It may be observed further that the Apostate Spirits suffer Men to change some Sins for others, those that are Gross and Scandalous for such as are Refined. Instead of hurrying some Men on to Cruelty and Bloodshed, to Rapine and Oppression, to Adultery and open acts of Lasciviousness, to Riot and Luxury, and the visible Exercise of Debaucery and Prophaneness, they stir them upto Pride and Haughtiness, they possess their Hearts with Envy and Malice, they inspire 'em with Hatred, they fill their Minds with Revenge, they push them on to breed Quarrels and Dissentions, especially to raise unnecessary Disputes and Divisions about Religion, and to sow the Tares of Error and False Doctrine in the Church which is therefore called *the Doctrine of Devils*,

Devils, 1 Tim. 4. 1. and hence in the same place those Devils are styled *seducing Spirits*, i. e. Spirits of Error and Delusion. They perswade Men to indulge and favour themselves in some close and secret Sins, though of a very high Nature: they prevail with them to be Hypocrites, and to dissemble with God and Man: and by several other ways, of the like Nature, they have Dominion over Men, and as effectually make them theirs as if their Bodies were possess'd by them, as if they were bound to them by a League and Compact as *Witches* are, or as if they bodily worshipp'd them, as the *Indians* do. Thus the Black Dæmons have different Arts of destroying Mankind, and they use them as they see occasion. For they are so discerning as to know, how they are to make their respective Applications to Persons. By all this diversity and variety of Devices *they seek to devour*. For these damned Spirits are not content to be Miserable alone, but would involve us all in the same Ruin. This is that which they pursue with so much eagerness; which cannot possibly be express'd more fully than by the Apostle's Similitude, *As a roaring Lion*, &c. Which in the most sensible and lively manner imaginable, describes the Nature of the infernal Fiends, and is an undeniable Proof and Demonstration of their acting in the World.

Sixthly, and lastly, The Scripture gives us an account of their *State* and *Punishment*. It lets us know how miserable and wretched their Condition is at present, and hath been ever since their revolting from God, and how much more Miserable it shall be afterwards. As their Nature is chang'd, so is their Place. Like fallen Favourites they are banish'd the Court, they are thrust down from Heaven into the Regions of Darkness, even into Hell it self. This we are ascertain'd of from two Apostles; the first tells us, that *God cast them down to Hell*, (ταρταρώσας, he detruded them into *Tartarus*, the Apostle referring to the Name whereby the Heathens expressed *Hell*) *and deliver'd them into Chains of Darkness*, 2 Pet. 2. 4. The second speaks after the same manner, *He hath reserved them in everlasting Chains under Darkness*, Jude v. 6. And that *Hell* is the Place of the Devils is undeniably clear from *Mat.* 25. 41. where our Saviour informs us, that *Everlasting Fire* (which is the same with *Hell Fire*, Mat. 5. 22.) *was prepared for the Devil and his Angels*. Here is the proper Place of their Abode, here they are tormented. And this is implied in what the Devils themselves said to our Lord, *Luke* 8. 31. *Command us not to go out* (*viz.* out of the Possessed) *into the Deep*, ἄβυσσον, * *the Pit of Hell*, rendred *the bottomless Pit*, Rev. 9. 11—11. 7. They were loth to be remanded to *Hell* again, which shews that that is their special Place of Torment. But then it is plain, that they are sometimes out of this Place, as is evident from what was said before, *they walk about, seeking*.

* Ἄβυσσον πολλαχῶς τῆς γεέννης, τὸ τῶν δαιμόνων ἐνδιαίτημα μεμαθήκαμεν. Greg. Nyss. *Tract.* 1. *in Psal.* c. 1.

But how shall we reconcile this? Can the Devils walk about, and yet be tied up? Have they liberty to go abroad, and yet are said to be *cast down to Hell*, and to be *in Chains*? I answer, They are not so tied and confined to Hell, that they cannot go out thence sometimes. They are not so chain'd but that they can *go up and down on the Earth*, Job 1. 7. and often in the *Air*, whence they partly have their denomination of *the Power of the Air*, and they are said to be *in heavenly Places*. Nay, I will add further, that some of these Evil Spirits are admitted up to the Heaven of Heavens, the Place of the Blessed, the Seat of God himself, which I prove from 1 *Kings* 22. 19. *There came forth a Spirit* (call'd in the next Verse a *Lying Spirit*, and therefore must be an *Evil* one) *and stood before the Lord sitting on his Throne, and all the Host of Heaven standing by him on his Right-Hand and on his Left*, which is a Description of *Heaven*. Whence it appears, that sometimes the damned Ghosts are suffered to ascend Heaven it self, and to come into the Divine Presence, and there receive their Commission or Permission to act upon Earth. But it may truly be said, that even there they are in Hell, for they carry their Torments about them. Wheresoever they go, they are *in Chains of Darkness*, they are in dismal Confinement, and are *reserved* for a greater. Though they have liberty to gad abroad in the World, yet they can't throw off their Chains and Fetters. There shall be a time when *Satan* shall be *bound and shut up in the bottomless Pit*, Rev. 20. 2, 3. so as he shall not go forth, and ramble abroad to deceive the Nations: he shall be shut up as in a *Prison*, as we may collect from what is said of him afterwards, ver. 7. *he was loosed out of his Prison*. But generally at other times he is not *confin'd* to the Lo-

cal Hell, he is permitted to sally forth; and yet then not without his *Chains*, for he cannot act as he lists, and he is not free from his Torments.

And, lastly, After he hath walk'd about, and taken his Circuit, he is dispatch'd to *Hell* again, for that is his proper Place, and therefore he may be said to be there always. As Good Angels are said to belong to *Heaven*, and to be in *Heaven*, and to dwell there, (and therefore are styled the *Angels of Heaven*, Mat. 24. 36.) though they are often absent from that Place, being sent and employ'd on Messages here on Earth: so the Devils and Apostate Spirits may truly be said to be in *Hell*, (the Place to which they were first cast down) and to be tormented there, though they are suffered sometimes to shew themselves, and act on this earthly Stage. And though it be pleasureable and delightful to them to come abroad and to tempt Men, and to do all the Mischief they can, yet still they are never free from their Misery within their own Thoughts; and their Misery is afterwards increas'd by their returning to the infernal Regions, which are their fix'd Habitation, because they are never any long time absent from it. And at the final Consummation of all things they shall so be shut up in this infernal Prison, that they shall no more for ever have liberty to change it for another place. This is it which will make it *Hell* in the most aggravated Sense. At the last Close of the World this shall be their horrible Doom, for we are told by St. *Peter*, that * *they are reserved unto Judgment*, and by St. *Jude*, that † *they are reserved unto the Judgment of the Great Day*, i. e. the full Execution of Judgment, which shall commence at that time, and never have a Period. The Devils are not so exquisitely and compleatly tormented as they shall be hereafter: nay, their Torments are but light now in comparison of what they shall be then: as we may gather from those Words of the forlorn Spirits to our Saviour, *Mat.* 8. 29. *Art thou come to torment us before the time?* i. e. before the last Day, the general Judgment, when they shall suffer their greatest and chiefest Torments: which, like those of damned Man, shall be Perpetual and without End.

* 2 Pet. 2. 4.
† Judev. 6.

It is true, the contrary was the Sentiment of some of the *Pagan* Philosophers, as of the *Platonists* generally, and particularly of *Porphyrius* and *Plutarch*, the * latter of whom tells a Story of the *Death of Pan*, to confirm the Notion of the Dæmons (whether Good or Bad) being subject to Death. And this was the Opinion of some of the *Jewish Rabbins*, and more lately of some that profess'd Christianity, as *Cardan* and *Paracelsus*, who would perswade us, that the Spirits and Dæmons die after a long time. This Notion is embrac'd by one of the *Racovian* Party, † *When we read*, saith he, *of the Judgment and Destruction of the Devils, may it not thence be justly gather'd, that they are to be Annihilated?* Which it is likely is the Opinion of the whole Party, for they that hold the Annihilation of wicked Men, may be thought to assert that of wicked Dæmons. There are others, who tho' they do not assert the Mortality of the evil Angels, yet are of Opinion, that they shall be set free at last from their Torments, yea, and shall be saved upon their Repentance. * *Origen* was the Ringleader of this Conceit, and there have been others of the Christian Perswasion, that have approv'd of it. I think I shall not injure a late Writer, of the Sect of the *Remonstrants*, by reciting his Words, that the Reprobate Spirits in Hell † *are not wholly deprived of all Power of doing Good*, as if they retain'd still some vertuous Inclinations, and might *at length* bring them into Act and Execution. But these are mere Dreams and Fables, and idle Amusements, for we have a *more sure Word* that contradicts all this, and assures us, that *everlasting Fire* is prepared for them, (where they must be tormented to eternal Ages) and that they are reserv'd in *everlasting Chains* under Darkness. This is the Account which we find given in Scripture of *Evil Angels* or *Devils*. And from the whole I think there is sufficient Reason to conclude, that there are such Beings, and consequently we can't but think our selves oblig'd, to believe and own a Truth which is so amply attested by God himself in the Sacred Writings, as well as by abundance of other Proofs. It can be reckon'd no other than wilful Blindness and Obstinacy to resist a Doctrine that is authoriz'd by so many authentick Testimonials.

*De Defe- Eu Oracul.
† Smalc. Disput. de Baptismo.
* Περὶ ἀρχῶν. lib. 1. c. 6. & lib. 3. c. 6.
† Theologia Christiana. lib. 2. cap. 20.

This being so great a Truth and Reality, our Words and Speeches should discover it to the World. It may be observ'd, that many frequently use the Word *Devil* to fill up their talk, but this is very irreligiously done. As we should not customarily and vainly use *God's* Name, so neither must we the *Devil's*, for it is a Word of great and vast moment. Those who use it not in a serious, but light and sportive

ſportive manner (as is too frequent) let us underſtand by this vain Language, that they have no ſolid Apprehenſion of the real Exiſtence or Nature of thoſe fallen Fiends, that they think *Damnation* is a ſoft Word, and that *Hell* it ſelf is very tolerable, if there be any ſuch thing. And as this Word ſhould not be an idle Expletive, ſo certainly it ought not to be uſed in Curſings and Execrations, which is the common Practice of prophane Men. For theſe never let the World know that they have any Notion of a *God* but from their *Swearing* by him, nor of the *Diabolical Spirit*, but from their uſing his Name in their horrid *Maledictions*, and that oftentimes upon the ſlighteſt Occaſions. This indeed is a kind of an Acknowledgment that there are *Devils*, but it is the worſt that can be, for it argues the Perſons to be much devoted to them, and that they have learn'd the Language of Hell, in order to their keeping Company with thoſe curſed Spirits.

And here I might add farther, That we cannot but think it our Duty and Concern to abhor and abandon all thoſe evil Practices, (which I diſcours'd of before) that are the Effects of *Deviliſh* Art. They are unlawful and impious in their own Nature, as proceeding from thoſe Infernal and Helliſh Agents, and we find them condemn'd by the Divine Law of old. But now more eſpecially under the Goſpel we are obliged to ſhun all thoſe Works and Devices of the helliſh Dæmons, and to have no Correſpondence with the Practices of them, for *Chriſtianity* was deſignedly introduced by the bleſſed Author of it to defeat thoſe curſed Arts, and to baffle thoſe apoſtate Spirits, which it hath in great meaſure done already, and will fully accompliſh before the final Period of the World.

But I muſt no longer inſiſt on this *Digreſſion*, (for ſo I fear it will be accounted, tho' it is a very *uſeful* one, and could not well be omitted in this place) I now paſs to my main Buſineſs, (according to what I propounded and undertook) which is to ſhew, that theſe Evil Spirits are *Miniſters of the Divine Providence*. Which will undeniably appear from theſe following Conſiderations.

Firſt, It is evident that the Devils themſelves and the Work they do are by the particular Permiſſion and Diſpoſal of Heaven, and that they are ſo manag'd and over-ruled that they conduce to the Welfare of Mankind, as well as to the Glory of the Divine Majeſty. We read, that Satan *ſtood up againſt Iſrael, and provoked* David *to number* Iſrael, 1 *Chron.* 21. 1. and yet it had been ſaid before, that *the Anger of the Lord was kindled againſt* Iſrael, *and he moved* David *to number* Iſrael. So then it was *Satan* that did it out of Malice, but it was God that permitted it out of Wiſdom, and to ſuch ends as he thought fit. Again, We read in *Mat.* 4. 1. that *Jeſus was led up of the Spirit into the Wilderneſs, to be tempted of the Devil:* where by *the Spirit* is meant *the Holy Spirit*, as appears from that parallel Text, *Mark* 1. 12. were immediately after thoſe Words, *The Spirit deſcended upon him*, it is added, *The Spirit drove him into the Wilderneſs*, namely, to be tempted by the Devil, as we read in the following Verſe. Whence we gather, that the Aſſaults and Temptations, and ſo all the other Enterprizes of the Spirits of Darkneſs, are under the Divine Diſpoſal and Government.

There is * one lately, that will not allow this *Hiſtory* of our Saviour's Temptation to be a Real thing, but only a Fancy and Imagination of his when he was Aſleep, or when he had a Viſion. But after this rate we may as well ſay, that the reſt of the Hiſtorical Paſſages in this and the following Chapters are Dreams, for there is as much Ground for one as the other; eſpecially if we conſider this, that every thing here is ſet down in the way of a Narrative or Hiſtory, and the very preciſe time of our Saviour's Faſting, when this Temptation happen'd is mention'd, to let us ſee, that what is here deliver'd is a Reality. And this further is obſervable, that St. *Luke* relates the very ſame thing that St. *Matthew* doth, and ſpeaks of it as real Matter of Fact. And that it is ſuch, is confirm'd by what the Author of the Epiſtle to the *Hebrews* ſaith, chap. 2. ver. 18. *He himſelf hath ſuffered, being tempted*; and again, chap. 4. ver. 15. *He was in all Points tempted, like as we are.* Which without queſtion hath relation to this ſignal *Temptation* of our Saviour, which the Evangeliſts record. So that there is not the leaſt reaſon imaginable to think that it was only a Dream or Viſion. If then our Saviour himſelf was tempted by *Satan*, this is good ground of Comfort to us, when the like happens to us, becauſe the Apoſtle hath aſſured us, that *in that he himſelf hath ſuffered, being tempted, he is able to ſuccour them that are tempted*, Heb. 2. 18. He experimentally knows how to pity and relieve the Tempted, he makes their Caſe his own, and he prays that their Faith may not fail,

* J. Cleric. *in Annotat. in Mat.* 1. 1.

fail, but that they may obtain an entire conquest over the implacable Enemy of their Souls. We read that Christ was assaulted by the Spirit of Darkness more than once, and in the highest manner that can be conceived, for the bold Fiend ventur'd to offer to Christ's holy Imagination the Thoughts of Murdering himself, by throwing himself down from the Pinacle of the Temple, and he also sollicited him to fall down and worship him. So that 'tis impossible a more horrid Temptation can be suggested to us than what our Saviour was tryed with. Yet we are told that *he was led up of the Spirit*, the Holy Spirit, *into the Wilderness, to be tempted of the Devil*, the Evil Spirit.

From this instance and others we may observe that even the *Best Persons* are incident to the Temptations and Assaults of this Evil Spirit, which cannot be but by the Wise Conduct and Providence of God, for it can't be doubted but that he will take especial Care of his chiefest Servants. Yet we see that *Satan* is permitted to set upon them: Yea, after their most intimate Acquaintance and Communion with Heaven, the sharpest and severest Temptations are generally felt by them. No sooner was our Lord Baptized, and the Holy Ghost descended upon him, and publick Testimony was given from Heaven, that he was the Son of God, but *Satan* began to Practise upon him. *Peter*, the most Zealous Apostle, was *sifted*. *Paul*, after his extraordinary Revelations, was *buffetted*: and generally, this is the lot of the most beloved Friends of God. For as a Pious Father hath illustrated this Matter, Thieves (saith he) break not into poor Cottages where there is no Booty, but they seize on those places where they may load themselves with Wealth: So *Satan*, the great Invader and Robber of Mankind, is most busie where he hopes to find the richest Prey. Which consideration should be so manag'd as to administer Solace to us when we are insulted by the Evil Spirit. This rudeness of his toward us should not disanimate us; for the goodness of our Condition, rather than the contrary, may be argued hence. Those that are most in the Favour of God, have experience of the greatest Temptations, and therefore we ought not to condemn ourselves for being Tempted. If we take care to shun this danger, as much as we can, it shall never be laid to our Charge, that the Tempter assaulted us. The chastest Matron, the purest Virgin may be sollicited to lewdness, yet her Chastity not impair'd. The Devil's Assaults do us no hurt without our own Consent: Yea, I'm going to shew that they do us much good. And consequently the *Providential Care* of Heaven is concern'd in over-ruling all Diabolical Temptations; otherwise the issue of them would not prove Advantageous.

Secondly, Then I will shew that the wise Governour of the World permits the Apostate Spirits to act in that manner as they do, in order to most necessary Ends and Purposes, and such as are justifiable by the strictest Reason. For these Evil Spirits are the Instruments of God's Providence as they are made use of by him to *keep us upon our Guard*, to make us *Watchful*. They being cast down from the heavenly Battlements, and for ever depriv'd of their primitive Happiness for their revolting against their Maker, they are bent upon Mischief, and by all Arts and Contrivances attempt the ruin of Mankind, to make them as miserable as themselves if possible. Now, though the wise Disposer of all things is able to deprive these cursed Creatures of their very Being, and thereby take away the possibility of their doing any hurt to Mankind, yet he chuses rather to keep them in their Being, as the standing Monuments of his Displeasure against that Apostate Race, *to reserve them in everlasting Chains under Darkness, unto the Judgment of the great Day*, and in the mean-time to make them serviceable here upon Earth to us, for the rendring of us continually Attentive and Diligent, and that we may not indulge our selves in a Supine and careless Security. *Be sober, be vigilant* (saith the Apostle St. *Peter*) *because your Adversary the Devil, as a roaring Lion, walks about, seeking whom he may Devour*, 1 Peter 5. 8. As much as to say, this roaring Lion will rouze you, and keep you awake, if you be not fallen into a dead Sleep. Now, you will be Sober and Vigilant, if ever: And it seems good to the Divine Wisdom to suffer this roaring Lion to walk about for this very Purpose; namely, to make us heedful and vigilant, and to be always in a posture of Defence. This in general, but more particularly these Infernal Spirits are useful, with relation to *Good* and *Righteous Men*, and likewise to those that are *Wicked* and *Profligate*. First, To the *Righteous*, and that upon a three-fold Account.

1. To

1. To *chastise them*, as we have seen in the Example of Holy *Job*, who was severely humbled by *Satan*, and that not without the particular appointment of God himself, *Job* 1. 12. And St. *Paul* was another illustrious Example of this, 1 *Cor.* 12. 7. *the Messenger of Satan* was sent *to buffet him*, (which prov'd a great *Thorn in the Flesh* to him, *i. e.* was as grievous and painful to him as a poinant Thorn sticking in any sensible part of the Body) and we read in the next words what was the design of this Diabolical Buffeting, *lest he should be exalted above Measure.* Whence we gather that *Providence* is seen in the Ministry of *Evil Angels*; God makes use of them to humble and keep under his Servants. And here by the way let it not seem strange that there are so many Devils in the World, and that they are so troublesome and mischievous to good Men, that they vex their Bodies, and trouble their Minds, and scare and terrifie them; for if it be God's Will (as we see it is) to suffer Oppressors, Persecutors, Tyrants, and Men of Blood and Cruelty upon the Earth, and to let them domineer over the Weak and Innocent, and act the part of Devils, it is not to be wonder'd at that he permits the Devils themselves to oppress and molest good Men: For here, as in the other case, the ends of *Providence* are serv'd, which design'd these Hellish Creatures to be a Scourge to his People, which is sometimes absolutely necessary for them. That Power and Dominion, which they Exercise, is not inconsistent with God's Care of his Children; yea, it is an argument of it, for it appears that it conduces to their Good, that is, the correcting and chastising of them.

2. It is for the *exercising their Graces*, which is a thing of very great Moment and Importance. This *Adversary* is necessary to keep them in continual Action, and to call forth their utmost Vigour and Strength. The Endowments and Vertues of Holy Men would lie Dormant, were it not that the roaring of the Infernal Lion did sometimes awaken and enliven them, as was said before. Hereby they are effectually invited to shake off their Sloth and Drowsiness, to shew themselves, and to exert their Abilities to the utmost. So that upon this account it is not inconsistent with the Divine Justice and Goodness, that these wicked Spirits should be in the World; nay, that they should have leave to tempt and assault the most Righteous Souls.

3. They are useful to *try* and *prove the Graces* of such Persons, and to evidence to the World the Sincerity and Uprightness of their Souls. Thus when *Satan* had Power given him to deprive *Job* of his Children, to ruin his Estate, and to smite his Body with Boils and Sores, and to strip him of all the Comforts of this Life, yet he could make no breach into the Fortress of his Soul. So that he was not able to effect that which he chiefly design'd, and promised himself he should bring to pass, that is, make *Job Curse and Blaspheme God to his Face.* For though this great Man lost all he had, yet he possessed his Soul in Patience, and held fast his integrity to the end, and was so far from *cursing*, that *he blessed the Name of the Lord*; which was a greater Torment to the Devil than all his Assaults and mischievous Acts were to *Job*. This subtle and potent Adversary could bring *Joseph* into Disgrace, and cause him to be reputed an Adulterer, and an invader of his Master's chiefest Right, he could procure the putting his Feet into the Stocks, but he could not fetter his Mind, and shake his Confidence which he had in the Great God. This professed Enemy of all goodness could move the *Jews* and others to persecute the Apostles, to scourge and imprison them, but their Power reached not so far as to confine their Tongues and their Hearts, for with the former they still proclaimed the Gospel, and with the latter they rejoyced that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for Christ's Name. This mercilesS Fiend could compass the Martyrdom of St. *Stephen*, but he could not hinder him from seeing Heaven open'd, and the Lord Jesus at the Right-hand of God, ready to receive his Spirit. He could invent a thousand kinds of Torments for the Primitive Christians, but could not disturb their Comfort, nor stop their Mouths from confessing the Lord Jesus. Thus the integrity of the Saints hath been tryed by the Attempts of *Satan*. And there is the same occasion for it at this day, for always in the Church there are too many Counterfeits and Impostors; there is a shew of Religion, and a semblance of Piety where there is not the reality of it. Wherefore the Temptations and Assaults of these Evil Spirits, are made use of by God for the detecting of Hypocrites, and such as have only a form of Godliness. Now the Vertues of Good Men will stand the Shock, and bear the Test, and it will be seen that their

Graces

Graces were Solid and Substantial; and they shall be approv'd of, and applauded by God and Men: Or (as the Apostle speaks) *they being tryed with Fire shall be found unto praise, and honour, and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ*, 1 Pet. 1. 7. Thus it is God's Will and Appointment that the Fallen Spirits should be permitted to sollicit Men to Sin, and to cause some of them to fall, that the Integrity and Uprightness of the rest may be discover'd: And on this Consideration the Devils are useful in this State of Probation.

Again, They are serviceable as they are *Executioners of Gods Vengeance and Justice on the Wicked*, as they are styled by * *Origen*. These must be punish'd; and who are fitter for this Work than Devils? These tempt them first to all Sin and Wickedness, and then delight in inflicting Plagues upon them, and that not only in this World, but in that to come. They hurry them into Vice, and overwhelm them with Guilt, and then take care to torment them both in Soul and Body. Here is nothing, you see, that in the least prejudices or diminishes, and impairs the Divine Providence: But on the other hand, here is that which attests, and confirms it. For the Office of these execrable Spirits is that of *Lictors* and *Executioners*, and they are the necessary Instruments and Ministers of the Divine Wrath. Therefore an excellent Bishop among the Ancients assigns this as one signal Proof and Evidence of that † consummate Wisdom which attends *Divine Providence*, that it fitly makes use of the Service of these Evil Spirits.

* Τῶν πονηρῶν κολασταί. Cont. Cels. l. 8.

* Σοφίας ἐστὶν ἐυμηχάνου καὶ τοῖς κακοῖς ἐν δόνῃ χρήσασθαι. Synes. Epist. 57.

I will add this also as a farther Consideration, that the *Infinite Power* and *Sovereignty* of God are seen in his checking and curbing these Infernal Spirits when he pleases. We must know then, that, notwithstanding the foresaid Permission of God with respect to Bad Angels, he all this while gives not the Reins out of his own Hand; he lets not Devils or the worst of Men act as they please, he restrains and curbs them as he thinks fit. All they do is by Leave, as we see in the case of *Job*: Satan could not touch him or his Relatives till he had a direct Licence to do it. Nay, we read that the Devils were not able to enter into the *Gadarene's* Swine, till it was granted them by our Saviour. Let us not then vainly and unreasonably think (with some of late) that the power which by *Divines* is attributed to Evil Spirits is such as they are not capable of, whence they question whether there be any Creatures that have such a kind of Power: For we assert according to the Holy Scriptures, that their force is Limited, that their Jurisdiction and Dominion are within certain bounds set them by the great Ruler of the World, which they are not able to exceed and go beyond. In that Punishment or Curse, *Gen.* 3. 14. *Upon thy Belly shalt thou go, and Dust shalt thou eat*, the *Devil* as well as the *Serpent* (in whose shape he appear'd) is concern'd, *i. e.* he shall be kept under, he shall not be able to raise up himself against the Servants of the most high, so as to do what he pleases with them, and at what time he thinks fit. *Satan hath desired to have you* (all of you my Apostles) *that he may sift you as Wheat*, Luke 22. 31. He hath desired Leave of God to assault you, and to do with you as he pleases, but we do not read that this was granted him. It is not in his power to act according to his Pleasure. This is the meaning of what *Balaam* said (and he knew the Truth of it as well as any Man) *surely there is no Inchantment against* Jacob, *neither is there any Divination against* Israel, Numb. 23. 23. This famed Sorcerer, who dealt with Evil Dæmons was hired with inestimable Summs to give a cast of his bewitching Faculty, and thereby to hurt and plague the *Israelites*: But he was not able to do it after all his *Magical* Attempts. The Evil Spirits had no power upon the People of God at that time. Not that these are not capable of being hurt by them, when it shall seem good to the Divine Wisdom.

It was the Judgment of the great * *Athanasius* that though a godly Man is not capable of being kill'd by Inchantments and Witchcraft, yet he may be vexed and tormented by them. † *Luther* saith the same concerning the power of this Diabolick Magick. Much more then are holy Men liable to the lesser insults of this daring Adversary. It is God's Will and Pleasure that this wicked Spirit shall sometimes exercise his Power and Malice upon good and holy Men, that even these should not be exempted from his direful Influence. *Job* himself, *the most perfect and upright of all the Men of the East*, was put into the Hands of *Satan*. It was a *Daughter of Abraham*, some holy and religious Woman, that *Satan had bound, and bow'd together*, Luke 13. 11, 16. But when the most High is pleased to exert his *Sovereign Power*,

* *Quæst. ad Antioch.*

† *Coll. Mensal.*

Power, no Evil Spirits are able to accomplish the mischief they designed, nor can their most skilful Operators effect any thing by those wicked Arts before mentioned. Ecclesiastical History acquaints us that the Sorcerers of *Alexandria* were not able to act their Magick Pranks in the abovesaid *Athanasius*'s Presence: Yea, they cried out that they could do little or nothing in their Art till that good Father was removed out of that City. So a *Sooth-sayer* professed that he could not act to any purpose whilst that Good Man Mr. *Tindel* was in the Room. His Presence and Piety had greater Charms in it than his Art. And from other Relations we are informed that the Attempts of Magicians have proved Ineffectual and Frivolous when they were confronted with holy Addresses to Heaven, and solemn Acts of Religion and Piety. So that we have no Ground to think that the Devils have an Unlimited sway, and that they can do what they please. No they are in *Chains*, they are under Confinement, they are at the Divine Beck and Command, and act nothing without Permission.

And I might add in the last place, that it is ordered by God's *Providence*: that these *Evil Angels* shall be kept under and controuled by the *Good ones*. Thus tho' we read in one Evangelist of *a Legion of Devils*, Mark 5. 9. yet another mentions *twelve Legions of Good Angels*, Mat. 26. 53. We read of a *Michael* (the chief of the Good Angels) *and his Angels*, as well as of *the Dragon* (the Head of the revolted ones) *and his Angels*, Rev. 12. 7. in which place we are informed that the former Encountered the latter, and overcame them in Battle. Wherefore there is no reason to impeach the Divine Providence, seeing the Power of the Holy Angels (to whom the Custody of the Saints is committed) surpasses that of the Wicked ones, and seeing the Heavenly Host is continually employed in defeating the Enterprises of the Powers of Darkness. And at last that Promise and Prediction shall be fully accomplished, *The Seed of the Woman shall break the Serpent's Head*, which final subduing of Satan is frequently mentioned (and therefore shall be amply fulfilled) in the Writings of the New Testament, *Job.* 12. 31.—14. 30. *Luk.* 10. 18. *Col.* 2. 15. *Heb.* 2. 14. *Rom.* 16. 20. 1 *Joh.* 3. 8. *Rev.* 12. 8, 9.

But in the mean time the All-wise Being, who best knows how to govern the World, is pleased to make use of these damned Spirits for Ends and Purposes very considerable and necessary. On several accounts (as we have heard) they are to be looked upon as the Instruments of the Divine Conduct and Management in the World, as well as the Angelical Host of Heaven: yea, let me say it, they are *in their way* as useful as the *Good Angels*. It is true, they design nothing but Ill, and their doing of it is Evil, but (which is *the thing* that commends the Divine Wisdom) whatever Evil they do is turned into Good in the close, and redounds to the Glory of God, and the Welfare of his chosen Servants. In a word, the Wisdom, Justice, Goodness and Truth of the most High, are rendred more conspicuous and illustrious in the World (and shall be much more hereafter) by the malicious Attempts of these damned Spirits. It is true, some * ill-minded Men even of late would suggest that the Diabolick Spirits are inconsistent with the Supreme Divine Being and Lord of all things, that the great and strange things which are generally attributed to them, eclipse the Omnipotency and Sovereignty, and the Goodness and Justice of God. Here by the way it might be observed, that this is the very thing that was objected to the Christians by *Celsus* the Epicurean, that † God willing to do good to Men is not able to perform it by reason of the Opposition which is made by the Evil Spirits: and thence that implacable Enemy of Christianity cries out that ‖ those are deceived who hold that there is such an Adversary of God as the Devil. But such apprehensions and assertions as these are the Effects of great Prejudice, and proceed from want of consideration. For those that consider matters aright will see reason to conclude that the Heavenly Empire and Command, the Divine Regency and Providence, are plainly discernible in this Administration.

* Webster's *display of supposed Witchcraft.* Decker's *Inchanted World.*

† Ὁ μὲν θεὸς βουλόμενος τοῖς ἀνθρώποις ὠφελῆσαι, τὸν ἀντιστήσεσθαι ἔχει, καὶ ἀδυνατεῖ. *Orig. cont. Cels. lib.* 6.

‖ Σφάλλονται δὲ ποιοῦντες τῷ θεῷ ἐναντίον τινα. *&c. Ibid.*

Having thus finished that part of my discourse which relates to *Angels* (whether *Good* or *Bad*) I will proceed to the other rank of Rational Creatures, viz. *Men*, who are the great Darlings of Heaven, though (as the Royal Psalmist speaks) they *were made a little lower than Angels*. Indeed the Reader cannot but observe that all the time I have been speaking of the *Angelick* Beings, I have evinced the Providence

dence of God over *Mankind:* but now my design, in this part of my Undertaking, is more *directly*, more *peculiarly*, and *designedly*, to assert and maintain this Divine Care over the latter, that is, *Humane Creatures.* This was seen very early, for, Provision was making for the *First Man before he was*, and when he knew not of it, and could take no care about it. *He* was not made till all things *else* were created and provided for him: and so he was brought into the World as into some great Store-house, furnished with all things needful and convenient for him. And ever since, Mankind hath been been the peculiar charge of Providence. All the ways and methods imaginable have been pursued by the Divine Wisdom, for the accumulating of Favours and Blessings upon them; and that is none of the least, which I have insisted upon, that *Angels* are their Ministers and Servants. And herein they are honour'd and valued *above Angels*, that Christ Jesus took not on him their Nature, but that of Man; yea, and that he died not for lost Angels, but for lost Man.

And here first, I will speak of *Providence* towards Mankind in *General*, and then as it is *Special* and more confined. First, I will consider it more Generally, as it takes in all Persons whomsoever. And here we cannot turn our selves *any ways*, but we forthwith have a view of God's careful Administration with respect to Man. There is nothing we can think of relating to him that carries not with it some marks and tokens of Divine Providence. The plain Footsteps of this are discernible in every thing wherein Mankind is interested.

Let it not surprize the Reader that I begin first with the consideration of the *Nature* and *Effects* of *Dreams:* which I do the rather because it hath some affinity with what I was last discoursing of, namely, the Administration of *Angels*, both Good and Bad; for I shall shew that *both these* are concerned in our *Dreams*, and that the Supreme Lord of all things directs and disposes this matter with that *Wisdom*, which is peculiar to him alone. But I must acquaint the Reader that I took the hint first of all from *Grotius*, in his Discourse of the * *Truth of the Christian Religion*, where among other Arguments, he reckons *Dreams* as an Evidence of *Divine Providence.* He barely mentions it, but from his doing so I will take occasion to Improve the suggestion, and to shew that in the Doctrine of *Dreams* there are contained many things that prove the *Divine Conduct* and *Management.* And besides, this is an uncommon Topick and no where insisted upon by those that have written of *Providence*, and therefore I shall here enlarge upon it. The *Pagans* had many fantastick Apprehensions concerning *Dreams*, and these were reckon'd as one kind of their *Divinations:* but tho' they were full of their Fictions and Dotages about this matter, yet we may with Benefit and Advantage discourse of it. And therefore for the sake of the Inquisitive and Curious, I will briefly undertake this Argument, and search into the Nature and *several Kinds* of Dreams and the *Signification* of them, which will be of good use and Service to us, as to the Matter now in Hand. The General distribution of Dreams is into *Natural* and *Supernatural:* of which I will distinctly speak, and of the Subordinate Divisions of each: *Natural Dreams* are those that proceed from Natural Causes, and they are of four Sorts.

* *Lib.* 1. *Paragr.* 17.

First, such as arise from the *Peculiar Temperament* and *Constitution* of the Body. These have their denomination from the different Humours (as they are vulgarly called) predominant there. Thus *Cholerick* Persons usually dream of Fires, of Battles, and Wars, and fierce Encounters: the *Phlegmatick* of Waters, and standing Pools, of Bogs, and Fens, and fansie themselves sunk and drown'd, at least Plunged and stuck fast. The Dreams of those that are of a *Sanguine* Temper are Airy, they fansie they flie or hover in that Element, and generally they are Amorous and Sportful. But the *Melancholick* are pressed down to the Earth, and their Nocturnal Imaginations are either Dull and Heavy, or Black and Frightfull. I know those of late, who pretend to a more Generous manner of *Philosophizing*, are not forward to admit of this way of speaking, but have discarded the Notion of *Humours*, and express the difference of Temper and Constitution by the difference of the Blood and Animal Spirits, that is the different Disposition, Agitation, Vigour and Force of these. But when we consider that these are the Cause of more or less Heat, Coldness, Dryness, Moisture, and of the increase of the Lympha's and other Juices in the several parts of the Body, this amounts to the same thing with the other, and so the difference of Natural Tempers is to be solv'd by these, and consequently this is one way of accounting for the *Dreams* I'm speaking of.

Second-

Secondly, there are others that proceed from some acute *Distemper* or *Disease*. Experience hath informed several Persons what strange Scenes a *Fever* will present a Man's thoughts with. The Dreams which accompany this Malady are Vain, Idle and Fantastick, or Wild and Distracted. And under this we may reckon *Delirancy*, which, when it will permit Men to Sleep, fills the Brain with yet greater Disorder, Confusion and Disturbance, as well as when they are awake. The Steams of the inflamed Blood, and the over-heated Animal Spirits, create most extravagant Representations and Ideas of things. And those Indispositions of Body which have their rise from the *Spleen* and *Hypochondriack Vapours*, which ascend to the Head, produce dreams of a particular kind, most commonly such as are Black and Dismal.

Thirdly, there are such as arise not only from the indisposition of the Blood and Spirits, but from the present Heat and Vapours which ascend from the Stomach into the Brains, as in *Drunken* and *Surfeited* Persons. This sort of Dreamers have very irregular and disordered Images of things in their Sleep, and can scarcely recount them because they are so confused. To this Head may be reduced Smoaking to excess, especially at Night and thereby heating the Throat, the neighbouring Glandules and the Lungs, which I have known hath caused the like Representations in Dreams, together with some other disorder in those parts. This was proved to be the real effect of the foresaid Cause, because when this was left off, there was no such Effect.

Fourthly, Other Dreams are according to the *Nature* of the *Meat* Men eat, or the *Drink* they drink, tho' they exceed in neither. Certain sorts of Food there are that according to Men's Constitutions and Tempers cause more or fewer Dreams, of which * *Plutarch* speaks. And therefore according to the mystical Wisdom of the Ancients, Dreams were said to be begot out of the Earth. † *O Earth, the Mother of Dreams.* The *Scholiast* gives this Reason, because Food is from the Earth, Sleep is from Food, and Dreams from Sleep. This is but a poor Reason: however, this merits our Assent, that the difference of some Dreams is to be attributed to the quality of that *Nourishment* which we take into our Bodies. And if the difference of Food be serviceable towards the difference of Dreams, we may rationally inferr, that this partly depends upon the Stomach, which receives and digests the Food according to the Nature and Quality of it; so that what was suggested before is now confirm'd, that as the *Blood* and *Animal Spirits*, so the *Stomach* exceedingly contributes to the Production of Dreams.

* *Symp.* l. 8. *quæst.* 10.

† Χθὼν μῆτερ ὀνείρων. Eurip.

Fifthly, Others have their rise from a contrary Cause, as *want of Drink* or *Food*: which create the like Images in the Mind. Of which the sacred Volume takes notice, *Isai.* 29. 8. *A hungry Man dreameth, and behold he eateth; a thirsty Man dreameth, and behold he drinketh.* There is a seeming Refreshing and Satisfaction which proceeds from that earnest Desire and Appetite which either of the Parties lies down with, or which they have the Shadow and Resemblance of in their Imaginations. For as in the general we can rationally satisfy our selves how the Idea of Want and Deficiency may influence on the Brain, as well as a Supply and Plenty, so in the present Case 'tis not difficult to understand not only how the Juice of the Meat and Drink, being mingled with the Blood, affects that Part, but also how a great Desire and Longing after Meat and Drink operates upon the same.

Sixthly, Sundry other things might be mention'd together which are accessary to Dreams, as the detention of the Fæces, and want of due Egestion, the Hardness or Softness of the Bed, the Change of Lodging, the laying of the Pillow either too high or too low, *&c.* all which, according to the different Disposition of Persons, have been observed to work upon the Fancy in the Night.

Seventhly, and lastly, Other Dreams (and those the most common and usual) are the Product of certain *Occurrences* or *Accidents in the Day time*, and of the immediate Consequences of them. These may be reduced to four Heads: First, Such as are caused by *strange* and *unusual Spectacles*, which were presented to the View in the Day time. The Rarity of which makes a great Impression on the Mind, and thence is fresh represented to the Fancy in the Night. Secondly, Such as proceed from some *extraordinary Passion*, which Men were affected with a short time before; as suppose it was Love, or Fear, or Joy, or Grief, or Anger, or the like. *Mourners* repeat in their Dreams their Lamentations, and the *Joyful* their Exultations

ons and Triumphs. *Lovers* rehearse their amorous Passions, the *Angry* and *Cholerick* reiterate their Contests, the *Timorous* dream over again the great Dangers they have escaped the Day before, and all the passionate Desires and Wishes which were the Entertainment of the Day are renewed again in the Night. Thirdly, Such as are the Results of the *Thoughts* and *Contemplations* of Men in the Day time. Thus *Theseus* dreamt of *Hercules*'s Atcheivements, saith * *Plutarch*. And (as the same † Author relates) *Themistocles* used continually in his Dreams, to have *Miltiades*'s Exploits and Trophies before his Eyes. Fourthly, Such as arise from the *Business* and *Employment* of the Day. So Misers dream of Money, Students of Books, Tradesmen of their Trafick, Soldiers of fighting, Mariners of their Sea-Affairs; Lawyers and Physicians have without doubt their peculiar Nocturnal Images. *Pharaoh*'s chief *Butler* dreamt of a *Vine*, and his *pouring out Wine* in a Cup to *Pharaoh*, and the chief *Baker* dreamt of *Baskets* and *Bread*, Gen. 40.

* *In Theseo.*
† *In Themistocle.*

Especially if Persons be over pressed with Business, and their Thoughts and Cares about their Employment, and the Work be very great and instant, these are wont to visit them again in the Night. This was observed by *Solomon*, Eccl. 5. 3. A *Dream cometh through the multitude of Business*. It arises from the Variety of those Concerns, and Actions, which Men were busied about in the Day time. Therefore Dreams are deservedly called by a great Man, * the *Echo*'s or last Sounds of the Cares of the Day. In imitation of whom † another of the Ancients styles them, the *last Resoundings* of the Occurrences and Discourses which happened in the Day. And this was the Sense of the learned Philosophers,

* Ἀπηχήματα τῶν μεθημερινῶν φροντίδων. Basil. Mag.
† Τῶν μεθημερινῶν ἐστι συντυχιῶν καὶ ὁμιλιῶν ἀπηχήματα. Isidor. Pelus. Lib. 1. Epist. 9.

* *In somnis eadem plerumq; videmus obire,*
Causidici Causas agere, & componere Leges,
Enduperatores pugnare, & prælia obire.

* Lucret. l. 4.

And so he goes on. *Tully* expresses it briefly † thus, It usually happens that our Thoughts and Discourses beget something of the like kind in our Sleep and Dreams. And that known Distick of * *Claudian* expresses it fully,

† *Fit fere ut cogitationes sermonesq; nostri pariant aliquid in somno tale.* De Repub. l. 6.
* *Præfat.* Lib. 6. *de Consul. Honorii.*

Omnia quæ sensu volvuntur vota diurno
Tempore Nocturno reddit amica quies.

And this cannot seem strange to him that considers what a multitude of Ideas and Images are convey'd to the Imagination of those Persons who are employed and busied in the World, some of which at least cannot but make a great Figure, and occupy a considerable Place in the Cells of the Brain, so that it is no wonder that even Sleeping they have a Perception, and as it were a renewed Representation of those things. All Men generally have some Employment or Diversion of one sort or other which may yield Matter for these Night-fancies: and therefore on this Consideration, it is somewhat strange and incredible, which * *Herodotus* and * other Historians relate of the *Atlantes*, a People in *Africa*, that they never have any Dreams. What we daily think of, and what we do, and what from time to time happens to us, is a sufficient, yea, an ample Stock and Fund for this purpose. And therefore a very judicious Writer gives it as his Judgment, that † any Man almost, if he be observant of his former Actions, Cogitations, and Occurrents, may find out the Occasion how Dreams (tho' in themselves oftentimes prodigious, absurd and foolish) come into his Brain or Fancy.

* Lib. 4. Solin. cap. 44. Plin. l. 5. c. 8.
† Dr. Jackson, vol. 1. book 1. chap. 10.

Having thus briefly spoken of the several *Kinds* of *Natural Dreams*, let us next (as our present Design requires) observe of what *use* they are to us in our Lives, and what Advantage we may gain by them, and consequently, how the *Providence* of God is serv'd by them, which is the thing I aim at. It seems the *Truth* of some Dreams, as well as the *Falshood* of others, was acknowledged by the Ancients, and they expressed it in an odd manner. † *Homer* talks of *two Gates* of *Sleep*, the one of *Ivory* and the other of *Horn*, and some Dreams come in at one Gate and some at the other: the first is the Entrance of false and idle Dreams, the latter for true ones. *Virgil* borrows from *Homer* this Notion of the two Gates of Sleep, * *Sunt geminæ somni portæ*, &c. and tells us, that the true Dreams enter by the Gate of *Horn*, and false ones by that of *Ivory*; of which fancy † *Macrobius* gives this

† *Odyss.* lib. 10.
* *Æn.* 6.
† *Somn. Scip.* l. 1. c. 3.

this account out of *Porphyrius*, the Gate of *Horn* expresses the true Images of things, for *Horn* is transparent, and we may see things thro' it: but *Ivory* is solid, and not pervious, and therefore the Species of things that enter by it are false. Other Conceits there are about this in the Writings of the Learned, but they seem to be strain'd and forc'd. What if I should offer this Conjecture, that by the *Horn Gate* perhaps we are to understand the *Eyes*, of which the *Tunica Cornea* is a considerable part, and by the *Ivory Gate* the *Teeth*? So that here is meant what is *seen* and what is *heard*, what enters by the *Eyes*, and what comes from the *Mouth*; for what is *seen* is known to be true, but what is only *told* of is generally false. It appears from this Poetick and Fanciful way of expressing themselves that they were perswaded of the *Truth* and *Reality* of some *Dreams*, and of the *Use* which may be made of them. What this is I will now enquire, and shew that God intended to discover something of moment to us by them.

And first, as to those Dreams which arise from the Temper of the Body, their Observation is profitable, because they signify and acquaint us with the present Disposition of the Body. Some of these Dreams let us know, that the Bodily Crasis is Good and Hale: whence perhaps the * *Hebrew* Word which signifies *to be in Health*, signifies also *to Dream*, and accordingly those Words in the 126*th Psalm*, which we translate thus, *We were like them that dream*, are rendred by some, *We were like them that were restored to Health*: Which is answer'd by the *Septuagint* and *vulgar Translation*, *We were like them that were comforted*. When our Dreams are not too numerous, and when they are placid and regular, we may inferr that our Temper is sound and good, that our Blood and Spirits are in good Case, and that we need not look out for any Medical Assistance.

* Chalam. *sanus fuit, convaluit,* and *somniavit.*

Again, Some of these Dreams are Signs of an ill plight of Body, and are an Indication that this or that Humour aboundeth too much. And from this exuberancy of Humours in the Body we are admonished to take care about the lessening of them, and bringing Nature to a poize. † *Galen* gives several Instances of this nature and amongst the rest this, That one dreamt that he stood up to the Neck in a Vessel of Blood; whereupon he was advised to Evacuation by bleeding, for that Dream signified a Plethory of Blood. And so proportionably other Dreams may signify the abounding of other particular Humours in the Body. I doubt not but that of * *Avicenna* is true, that to dream often that we are loaded and oppressed with some Burden, that we cannot move and stir, or that we can't speak, is an Indication of a Plethorick Body, of the excess and redundancy of some Humours. On the contrary, to dream often that we are running or flying, or swiftly mov'd from place to place, is a sign that the Body is not overpressed with Humours, but rather that the Blood is moderate, and the rest of the *Humours* (for I don't know a better Word, tho' it be not fashionable, to express the thing) are light, and not redundant. And from other Considerations it might be made evident, that Dreams have a natural Significancy in them: whence it was a Maxime amongst the Physicians of old, as *Aristotle* tells us, that * *we ought to be very attentive to our Dreams.* And if we would be curious and exact in the Care of our Health, we ought to acquaint our Physician with our Dreams, for the Care about them may be said to be a part of the *Materia Medica*: And therefore some of the most famous Writers of that Faculty, as *Hippocrates*, and *Galen* of old, and *Cardan*, and *Peucer*, &c. more lately, have treated on this Subject.

† Lib. *de somno.*

* *Canon.* 1.

* Δεῖ σφόδρα προσέχειν τοῖς ἐνυπνίοις. *De divinat. per somnium.* cap. 1.

As to the Dreams which are caused by *Fevers*, *Calentures*, or *extraordinary Disturbance* of the Brain, and likewise as to those Dreams which are produc'd by the *Steams* of *Meat* and *Drink* in surfeited and debauch'd Persons, they are generally so disordered and inconsistent that you can make nothing of them, they are discomposed and wild, senseless and insignificant; but yet we may truly say that they signifie this, (which is of great importance) that the Brain is very much out of order, and that there should be all care taken to reduce it. But this is to be added, That the Dreams of the *Debauched* are not so useless as of those that are enclin'd to be *Frantick*, for the Dreams of the former, when the intemperate Fumes are going off and vanishing, *i. e.* in the latter part of the Night, begin to be consistent and somewhat regular. And indeed all Dreams of such as have any Measure of Sobriety and Soundness of Mind, have been of old thought to have most of

Truth and Consistency, if they were dreamt after Midnight, and towards the approach of the Morning; according to that of *Horace*.

* *Sat.* 10. *Lib.* 1.

* *Post mediam noctem visus, cùm somnia vera.*

† *Certiora & solatiora somniari affirmant sub extimis noctibus.*

† *Lib.* 1. *cap.* 8.

Aristotle, *Pliny*, *Philostratus* speak to the same purpose; so doth * *Tertullian*. And from * *Artemidorus* we learn as much. The reason of which general suffrage I take to be this, it was thought that at that time, and not before, the drowsie Vapours are refined, and the Fibres of the Brain are not so relaxed, and the Spirits in it are more capable of acting, and consequently the Mind more able to form due and orderly representations of things.

And again, as to those Dreams that depend on *Food*, we may make them serviceable to good Ends, for we may thence be cautioned to regulate our selves as to Meats or Drinks, and not to accustom our selves to such sort of Food, as we find begets a great Alteration in our Bodies, and infests us with gross Vapours, and corrupts the Blood, and disturbs the Animal Spirits, and renders our dreams Extravagant and Disordered. For this we must always build upon, as a sure Maxim, That the more regular and orderly our Dreams are, the more healthful is our Constitution. The famous *Hippocrates* long since told us that confused Dreams, wherein all is Chimerical, and none of the things hang together, are an indication of a Perturbation of the Body; with whom agrees the great * *Arabian* Physician, who makes pleasant and delightful Dreams, and such as are Regular and Composed, to be a sign of an even and healthful Constitution. And this is a general and received Rule among the Masters of Medicks, that if we dream of things in order, and in a moderate and placid way, it argues a good Temper, a good State of Body; but if there be a representation of things that is Troublesome, Frightful, Monstrous, Violent, Rough, Disordered, it is a contrary sign; but this I have observed before.

* *Avicen. Canon.* 2. *lib.*

So as to those *other* things I *next* mentioned, when we find that they in any manner occasion a disorder in us as to our Dreams, we are thence informed what we are to do to prevent it: And the smaller and the more inconsiderable the things are, the more easily may we reform them. Thus *Dreams* are providentially given us to direct us in the knowledge of our bodily State, that thereby we may consult our Health.

Moreover as to those Dreams which arise from the *Business of the foregoing day*, they have some significancy in them according to *Hippocrates*, for he gives it for a sign of a good Temper of Body, that what we do in the Day is dreamt of in the Night, for it argues that the Mind is not overcome, and suffocated with too Gross Humours. But if we find that our over-busie Thoughts create a Disturbance in our Sleep, then we are admonished to remove the Cause, *i. e.* not to perplex our Minds in the day-time with excessive Care and Business, not to Embarass our Thoughts with a Multitude of unnecessary Affairs. This by the Providence of God instructs us in that which may be of great use in our Lives; namely, to be moderate in our worldly Enterprizes, and not to embroil our selves in too much secular Employment.

But there is yet a greater and nobler *Use* of these Dreams which are occasioned by the Thoughts and Contrivances, Business and Employment which took up the Day-time, and especially of those which are the Result of our strong Inclinations, Desires and Passions which were felt in the Day. They may be of great and excellent Advantage to us, because we may partly learn from thence the Frame and Disposition of our *Minds*, which is more considerable than that of our *Bodies*. From this sort of Dreams we may inform our selves what our Thoughts are *most* set upon, and what Objects they are *most* delighted in; Dreams are certain Comments upon our Inclinations and Wishes, they discover (if they be Frequent and Periodical) the inward Propension of our Souls. † A foolish Man hath foolish Dreams, saith the *French* Proverb, and that rightly. So it is true that a wise Man hath wise and sober Representations of things in his Sleep. The Dreams of a vitious Person are Vitiated: and on the contrary those of a good Man usually favour of Vertue and Goodness. Therefore one of the Pious Fathers of the Church requires of a Perfect Christian that there should be † *no Sin committed by him in his Dreams*. And the *Gentiles* had a Sense of this; whence it was *Zeno*'s Opinion (as ‖ *Plutarch* tells us) that from our Dreams we may know what unlawful and vitious things

† *De sot homme, sot songe.*

† Ἡ κατὰ τὴν ἐνύπνιον ἀναμαγνησία. Clem. Alex. Strom. *lib.* 4.

‖ *Lib. de Profectu in virtut.*

things we are delighted in, and by our Dreams we may perceive our Proficiency in Vertue. This is certain, if a Man would be careful and observant, he may *know himself* by his Dreams as much as by any thing, he may tell what particular Passions, Lusts and Appetites infect his Mind, and bear sway over him, or on the contrary, what good and Vertuous Principles and Designs are predominant in him. *Plutarch* uses this Similitude, As a Horse, saith he, that is Gentle, and accustomed to riding keeps on in his right Road, though his Rider be asleep, so the sensitive Faculty in which Dreams are formed, even when the Mind is at Rest, goes on in a composed manner, and declines not from the way of Honesty. And thence this moralist assigns it as one Mark and Evidence of our advance in Vertue that our Dreams are good and honest.

There is here then the remarkable hand of *Providence* in acquainting us with our selves by our Dreams, and shewing us how to make use of our Dreams, even natural ones, to Religious Purposes: For thence we may inferr the vertuous or vitious Propensions we lie under, and we are warn'd thence to correct them. If a Man finds himself often in his Dreams possessed with lustful Imaginations, this is a caution to avoid that Conversation where there are Enticements to libidinous Thoughts or Actions. If a Man finds himself haunted with revengeful Ideas, this is a warning to him to suppress the Fuel of that Passion. If his Mind be disturb'd with irreligious and prophane Suggestions, this calls upon him to be upon his Guard, and to shun all Occasions of such pernicious Conceptions. Thus *Religion* is concern'd in our *Dreams*. They are to be taken notice of in *Divinity* as well as in *Medicks:* They are to be considered, not only by Philosophers and Physicians, but by Divines and Moralists. These Physical Dreams discover to us (and that by the natural Course of God's appointing) several things concerning our Souls as well as our Bodies. We may judge not only of the Temper and Constitution of the latter, but of the Inclinations and Tendencies of the former by these Dreams: And we may guess from them, if they continue, what are like to be our Propensions of Body and Mind for the Future. We may foresee what *Distempers* and *Diseases* will happen to us, and what *Passions* of Mind, and consequently what *Vices* we shall be most liable to. But as to any *other Presaging* of *Natural Dreams*, (*as Natural*) it is not be expected; or if any other be pretended, it is not to be credited.

But it will be objected that there is another kind of *Presaging* in Dreams, for what is dreamt of is often verified and confirm'd by the Event, as * *Valerius Maximus* and † *Tertullian* have collected several Instances, of Dreams which were followed with Events exactly agreeable to them. Examples of these are in several other Authors, as ‖ *Cicero*, * *Pliny*, † *Alexander ab Alexandro*, ‖ *Francastorius*, * *Aldrovandus*, † *Eusebius Nierembergensis*, ‖ *Del Rio*, *Quercetanus*, who reckon up a great many of these *Presaging Dreams*, i. e. which gave notice of things that were to come, and did really come to pass: Therefore the Knowledge of future Occurrences is revealed by Dreams, and they are *Predictions* and *Presages* of what is to come. To this I Answer, most of those Dreams mentioned in the foresaid Writers were not of this *Classis* that I am speaking of, they are to be numbered amongst those which I shall afterwards discourse of, *viz. Supernatural Dreams.* But it is not to be questioned that some of those Dreams recounted by those Authors were *Natural* Dreams, and then the Answer is this, That it happens on this threefold Account, that Events, even in contingent matters are sometimes agreeable to Natural Dreams.

* *Lib.* 1. *cap.* 7.
† *De Animâ, cap.* 46.
‖ *De divinatione, lib.* 2.
* *Nat. Hist. lib.*
† *Genial. dierum, lib.* 1. *c.* 11.
‖ *De Intellectu.*
* *De Animalibus.*
† *Hist. Nat.*
‖ *Diætet.*

First, Because the Body is sometimes really altered or begins to be altered, and indisposed in the Night-time, and the Sense of this is communicated to the Party in his Sleep, which affecteth his Imagination, and causeth him to Dream of it. Afterwards when he awakens, or not long after, he actually finds this Alteration which he dreamt of. Thus *Galen* saith that one dreamt that one of his Thighs was grown as hard as a Stone, and presently after a Dead Palsey seized on that Part. *Pliny* tells of one that dreamt he was Blind, and in the Morning he was so. And *Montaign*, who relates the story of a King of *Italy*, that being in the Day-time at a Bull-baiting, dreamt of it in the Night, and dreamt that he had Horns growing on his Head, adds this, that this King found himself with a sort of Horns on his Forehead. By which it appears that the Imagination of Men asleep as well as those

those awake produceth real Effects, and that Dreams are follow'd sometimes with certain Events answerable to them. But we cannot gather hence that Dreams are naturally Boading and Prophetick, but only first that the imagination hath sensible Effects and Operations on the Body (of which there are abundant Instances in *Lemnius de Occultis naturæ Miraculis*, and *Del Rio Disquisit. Mag.* lib. 1. cap. 3. and several other Writers who may be credited) and secondly, that such and such Operations and Effects are Wrought, or are begun to be Wrought in us, of which we have some Perception in our Sleep.

Secondly, Those who passionately desire the things which they Dream of (and these Dreams, as I have said, proceed from those Desires) *endeavour* by all means to bring them to pass, as *Julius Cæsar*, and *Septimius Verus*'s Dreams concerning the publick Fortunes, testifie. * *Theodosius* dreamt that the Imperial Crown was set upon his Head by *Meletius* the Bishop of *Antioch*, and it proved true. Especially this proves effectual and successful when the Persons are very Ambitious and Greedy of Honour. Then it is their constant Aim and Business to *Accomplish* what their Desires push them on to, and what they have represented to them in their Dreams: Hence it is no wonder that those Dreams prove true. Thus we must conceive that *Oliver Cromwel*, who dreamt when he was a young Man, that he should afterwards be King or Supreme, thought of this Dream frequently, and especially when he was put upon publick Action, it came fresh into his Thoughts, and it ran often in his Head, and he was pleased with it, and his Ambitious Desires, and Victorious Exploits at last made good his Dream. But we cannot gather hence that this Dream was Presaging in it self, only this we may say, that that notable Person made good his Dream because it was his Desire: And we may add withall that his Dream helped forward his Enterprizes. We might mention *Astyages*, the last King of the *Medes*, † who dreamt himself out of his Empire, as the forenamed Person dreamt himself into one. Other Instances daily occurr to this purpose, though not of so High a Nature. It is here as it is with some that consult Fortune-tellers: They are told that such things shall befall them: They are pleased with it, and pursue it with great Earnestness: And because they are perswaded it shall be their Lot, they make it so, and thus the Event happens both according to their Wishes, and according to the Sayings of the Prognosticator, who pretended to have it from the Stars. But the cause of the Event is within themselves, *viz.* from their own Impetuous Inclinations.

* Theodoret *Hist. Eccl.* l. 5. c. 6.

† Justin. *Hist.*

Thirdly, That Events oftentimes answer to the Imaginations which Persons have in the Night, cometh hence, that among so *Many* and *Frequent* Representations, something will happen that we dreamt of. Which is thus expressed by the Famous *Roman* Orator and Philosopher, * who is there, saith he, that is all the day shooting, and does not sometimes hit the Mark? We dream whole Nights, and do we wonder that what we Dream of doth sometimes come to pass? In such a Multiplicity and Variety of Dreams some of them must needs prove True, and to some Persons more than others. Hence he that writes the Life of *Isidorus* the Philosopher of *Alexandria*, saith, he was † naturally very lucky in his Dreams: And he adds, that almost all the *Alexandrians* were fortunate in their Dreams, and therefore called them Oracles. And thence it is concluded by fond People that Dreams are Prophetical. Nay this hath been the Opinion of some Pretenders to great Knowledge and Skill, as the Stoicks, who thought all Dreams were Presaging. So the Philosopher *Artemidorus* vainly undertook to interpret all sorts of Dreams. And long before him some of the *Persian Magi* and *Ægyptian* Wise Men pretended to give an Account of all Representations in Dreams. *Prometheus* is made by an Ancient * Poet, the first inventor of *Oneirocriticks*, i. e. the way of Divination by Dreams. Several others have writ of this vain Art, as *Apollodorus*, *Pangasis*, *Hermippus*, *Dionysius*, *Rhodius*, *Philochoras*, *Epicharmus*, *Strato*, who pretended to give us certain Maxims and Rules that they proceed by in their interpreting of Dreams. They tell us they are founded upon Observations in Nature, and the Events which they had seen of former Dreams, and the Experience of Mankind.

* *Quis est qui totum diem jaculans non aliquando collimet? Totas noctes somniamus, & miramur aliquando id quod somniamus evadere?* Cic. de Divinat. lib. 2.

† Εὐήκων φύσεώς τε καὶ τύχης ὀνειραπόλος. Phot. Bibliothec. num. 242.

* Æschylus *in Pro.*

But behold the Vanity of these Men! It is a Maxim in *Oneirocriticks*, that Dreams have *contrary Events* oftentimes, and therefore in expounding you must take

take the Reverse of them, and expect the quite contrary to what is dreamt. Thus they are miserably put to their Shifts, which shews that their *Oneirocriticks* are idle and vain, groundless and unreasonable. Therefore the more impartial and unbiassed sort of Philosophers, allowed not of the Significancy of natural Dreams any further than I have offer'd before; namely, That by them we may discover the Temper of our Bodies, (which *Galen* approves of in many places of his Writings, and shews from several Instances how they presage in this kind, particularly in his Book of *Presages* that are to be made from Dreams) and accordingly, that we may sometimes guess at the approach of certain Distempers of the Body. Thus this sort of natural Dreams may be said to be boading, but not in the Sense which some fansie they are, The wisest Heads amongst the *Gentile* Philosophers, could not believe that future Occurrences and Affairs were foretold by this way. Not only * *Diogenes* derided the Dreamers in his time, but grave † *Tully* produceth several Arguments to invalidate the Significancy of Dreams.

* *Laert. In Diogen.*
† *De Divinat.* Lib. 1.

The wise *Hebrews* are of the same Judgment, witness the Son of *Syrach*, Eccles. 24. 1, 2. *Dreams lift up fools* (ἀναπτερῶν, add wings to them (as sometimes Men Dream they fly) elevate them, make them vainly expect great things) *Whoso regardeth them is like him that catcheth at a Shadow, and followeth after the Wind.* And again, v. 5. *Dreams are vain*, and in v. 7. *Dreams have deceived many, and they have failed them that put their trust in them.* The Jewish Doctors to this purpose say, after the Dream is over, be not troubled about any Evil thing you saw in it, neither rejoyce because of the Good you saw: for the Sorrow or the Pleasure you had *then in* it is sufficient. They have another saying which is this, The things which are seen in our Dreams should neither lift us up nor cast us down. As much as to say, they neither portend Good nor Bad to the Dreamers, and therefore we ought not to be concerned for their Events. They say likewise in a Proverbial way, All Dreams follow the Mouth, *i. e.* of the Expositor; they depend wholly on the Interpreter; he makes their Signification as he pleaseth, which shews the vanity of them. After this Impartial manner do the *Jews* speak, tho' at other Times they are too Superstitious as to Dreams.

Lastly, let us attend to the Law, and to the Testimony, which forbid the vain observation of Dreams. A *Dreamer of Dreams* is cautioned against, Deut. 13. 1, 3. *A Dream of the night Vision*, Isai. 7. 7. is put to express a Vain thing. And the words of the inspired Preacher are remarkable, Eccl. 5. 7. *In the multitude of Dreams there are diverse Vanities!* And he adds, *but fear God*, as if he had said, Natural Dreams are Uncertain and Fallible, therefore let them not disturb you; tho' some of them be Frightful and Dismal, yet be not dejected by them, but stand in Awe of God, I say unto you, fear him. But this excludes not that Lawful and Innocent use of Natural Dreams which I have spoken of before, they being serviceable to the benefit both of our Bodies and our Minds, and thereby are subservient to Divine *Providence*, and are a Proof of it.

Supernatural Dreams are to be considered in the next place, and these are of two sorts, either *Diabolical* or *Divine*.

First, *Diabolical Dreams* are such as proceed from Evil Angels, and the design of these is always Wickedness and Mischief; but even here the Over-ruling *Providence* and Hand of God are seen to discover themselves; and some Wise and Good design is intended and accomplished by the Almighty Ruler of the World. These Dreams were frequent amongst the Pagans of old, who lay in the Idols Temples all Night, on purpose to receive these Dreams. When they were concerned in Important Business, and would know what they should do in such Circumstances, they used to wrap up themselves in the Skins of the Beasts that were Sacrificed, and lay themselves down to Sleep on or near the Altars of the Gods, on purpose to dream, and by that means to inform themselves of what they desired to know. It appears from several Authors that this was a common Custom. *Pausanias* mentions this Usage, telling us that * after the Greeks had offered a Ram, they spread the Skin of it under them, and so composed themselves to Sleep, expecting some manifestation or discovery by Dreaming. and that of *Virgil* is thought by *Servius* to referr to this——

* Κριὸν θύσαντες καὶ τὸ δέρμα ὑποστρωσάμενοι, καθεύδουσιν ἀναμένοντες δήλωσιν ὀνείρατος. *In Atticis.*

† *Et*

† *Æn.* 7.
‖ *Lib.* 6.
* *De Divinat. lib.* 2. *Tusc. Qu. l.* 1.
† *In Plutone.*
‖ *Plaut. In Curcul.*
* *In vit. Apollon.*

† *Et Cæsarum ovium sub Nocte silenti*
Pellibus incubuit stratis, Somnosque petivit.

So ‖ *Strabo*, * *Cicero*, † *Aristophanes* acquaint us that the Pagans after they had offered their Sacrifices, laid themselves down upon the Skins of the Sacrificed Beasts, and betook themselves to Sleep that they might Dream, and thence know in difficult cases what to do. This is called ‖ *Incubare Jovi*, i. e. to sleep in the Capitol, to receive some answer from *Jupiter*. So * *Philostratus* reports that they lay all Night in the Temple of their Gods, and fell into Dreams, that thereby they might have Happy answers from the Gods. Especially when they were sollicitous about their Health and Recovery, they Slept in *Æsculapius*'s Temple, that they might have in their Dreams notice concerning some Remedy that was proper for their present Disease. *Antonius Caracalla* repaired to this Temple and slept there, as *Herodian* reports, *Lib.* 4. Many Examples there are of this in Greek and Latin Authors. *Apollo*'s Temple was also frequented for the like purpose, but especially for receiving Answers about Emergent Business and difficulties. And it is no Improbable thought that the *Tripodes* in this Temple were used not only as Tables on which the Priests prophesied, that is, received and pronounced the Oracles, but were made use of as Beds or Couches where they lay and dreamt, and in that manner consulted the Gods. These Beds (which were commonly used in all the Temples of the Gods) are called *Pulvinaria* by the most approved * Roman Writers. When the Persons that consulted the Oracles had taken a Nap there, their Brains conceived such Fancies as the Evil Dæmon infused into them, and then the Oracle delivered them to them in an Audible way, but so Ambiguously and Abstrusely for the most part that they were never the Wiser for their Dreams or the Oracles.

* *Cicer. Orat. pro domo suâ, & In Catalin. Liv. lib.* 1. *Ovid Metamorp. Li.* 14.
† Μαντῶα ὀνειρομαντεῖα. *Strabo. Lib.* 11.

And not only in this solemn manner in the Temples of the Gods, and in the way of Oracles, (some of which upon this account were called the † *Oracles of the Sleepers*) but at home and in any place whatsoever Dreams where in a Diabolical way: but so as the *Divine Superintendency* was plainly discernible. For God *in his* Sovereign Wisdom thought fit to *punish* the Heathen World by giving them up to these Gross delusions; and besides, this gave him occasion afterwards to shew his Power and Goodness in preserving those deluded Souls from their Errors and vile practices, when Christianity began to take place in the World. It is no wonder then that the *Dreaming Oracles* were permitted for a time, and that Satan was suffered to deceive Men by them.

I could observe here that it is acknowledged even by *Porphyrius* and *Jamblicus* that these Dreams were caused by Evil Dæmons. And to this purpose there were Evil Spirits or Dæmons that were called of old Ὀνειροπομποί, *Dream-senders*, whom they were wont to invoke, and make use of in their Magick practices. These or some other Infernal Spirits taught the interpretation of Dreams. And there were a sort of Men amongst the Pagans who took up this Diabolical Art, and made a Livelyhood of it. Such were the *Egyptian* Wise Men, who used to interpret Dreams, else *Pharaoh* would not have called for them, and demanded a cast of their Office, *Gen.* 41. 8. The Wise-men also among the *Chaldeans* pretended skill in interpreting of Dreams: *tell thy Servants this Dream, and we will shew the Interpretation*, said the bold Magicians to King *Nebuchadnezzar*, Dan. 2. 4. which shews that it was part of their Profession, and that they were skilled in it. Several took up this Employment afterwards, and pretended to understand the Nature of all Dreams, and though they were able by Natural Skill and Philosophy to expound *some* of them, yet it is not to be doubted that they repaired to Dæmons, and held correspondence with them, that they might be helped to interpret *others*, and especially to foretel some things to come.

And not only among *Pagans* were these Diabolical Dreams in use, but they were found even among some that made profession of *Christianity*. Satan the great Impostor deluded many by dreams: to which perhaps St. *Jude* referrs in his Epistle, where speaking of false Teachers and Seducers he styles them *Filthy Dreamers*, v. 8. For he may mean by that not only that they were led by their own *Imaginations*, but

but that they were misled by attending to *Satanical Dreams*. The Devil wrought upon them not only waking but sleeping: he suggested to them by Dreams that they must forsake the Doctrine of the Apostle's, and separate from the Communion of the faithful, and persuade others to do so, and disturb and distract the Church of Christ. *Arius* (that noted Heretick) pretended to a Revelation that Christ was not *from Eternity*, as we are told by *Athanasius* in his disputation against *Arius*. So the *Anabaptists* in *Germany* were instigated by their Dreams to take up Arms, to rebel against their Governours, to Rob and Murder, and to commit all sorts of Out-rages. The Revelations which they had in the Night made them so Furious and Bloody in the Day. And since that time Quakers and other Enthusiastick Sectaries have pretended to Dreams, and by that means without doubt have been excited to disown the sober Principles of Christianity and to embrace Error and Falsehood, and to act contrary to the Rules and Laws of the Gospel. For hereby we may know Dreams to be Diabolical, when in them Men are directed to undertake or do any thing contrary to the Word of God, and in it self Vitious, and against the substantial Doctrines or set Rules of Religion. Hence we may gather that the Dreams of those Anabaptists and these Quakers were not Divine (as they pretended) but Satanical, because by them they were hurried on to such things as contradicted the revealed Will and Word of God, and opposed the immutable Precepts of his Law. This was the Rule given of old by God himself to discern of Dreams, *If there arise amongst you a Dreamer of Dreams, and giveth thee a Sign or a Wonder, and the Sign or the Wonder come to pass, whereof he spake unto thee, saying, Let us go after other Gods, and let us serve them: thou shalt not hearken unto that Dreamer of Dreams*, Deut. 13. 1, 2, 3. and verse the 5th. *That Dreamer shall be put to Death, he hath spoken to turn you away from the Lord your God.* Whence it appears, First, That in those early Times of the World there were those that deluded others by Dreams: Secondly, These made use of their Dreams to invite them from their Duty, to allure them to what is Vitious and Unlawful: Thirdly, That such Dreams are from a wicked and diabolical Spirit: All this was permitted by the supreme Governour of the World for those wise Ends and Purposes which I have before mention'd, and that it might be demonstrated to all Men, that the Kingdom of the Almighty is above that of *Satan*.

Secondly, I come to treat of *Divine Dreams*: and these were either from *God* by the *Ministry of Angels*, (who are his Ministers for the Good of his Servants on Earth) or from *God himself immediately*. It is hard for us to distinguish between these, *viz.* to tell which were from God immediately, and which from those Heavenly Messengers: therefore I will propound them promiscuously. These were the celebrated Means of Revelation among the *Patriarchs* of old, and the *Jewish* People afterwards. Thus when a *deep Sleep fell upon* Abraham, *Gen.* 15. 12. God communicated unto him his Design of giving him a Son, and of multiplying his Seed, and of bestowing the Land of *Canaan* on his Posterity for an Inheritance. So *Jacob*, Gen. 28. 11, 12. *lay down to sleep, and he dream'd*, and in the prophetick way of Revelation had an assurance given him of the same Blessing which was promis'd to *Abraham*. Again, We read when *Jacob* was going into *Egypt* an Angel spake to him in a *Dream*, Gen. 31. 11. *Joseph*'s two *Dreams* which were Prophetick and Divine, are related in *Gen.* 37. 5, 9, 10. *Gideon* was stirred up to great and noble Undertakings by a *Dream*, Judg. 7. 9. It is not improbable that God reveal'd his Will to *Samuel*, concerning *Eli* and his Family, in a *Dream*, though it is called a *Vision* in 1 *Sam.* 3. 15. for *Visions* and *Dreams* often went together, (as I have suggested before) and it is said expressly in the 3d ver. that *Samuel was laid down to sleep*, which fairly intimates what manner of Revelation this was which *Samuel* had. And generally this went along with Prophesying under the *Jewish* Dispensation, according to that in *Numb.* 12. 6. *If there be a Prophet among you, I the Lord will speak unto him in a Dream.* We read, that the Lord appeared unto *Solomon* in a Dream, 1 *Kings* 3. 5. *Daniel* had great and wondrous Events communicated to him by this way of Revelation, *Dan.* 7. 1. And the Apocryphal Writings speak of *Esdras*'s Dreams, 2 *Esd.* chap. 11, *&c.* And * *Josephus* relates, that *Jaddus* the Jewish High-Priest was warn'd in a Dream to go and meet *Alexander* the Great, when he was marching with his Army to *Judæa*. From which Instances it is clear, that though God more especially and signally made himself known to the *Prophets* by this way, yet this was not peculiar to them. Upon great and important Occasions all Ranks of Persons had God's Will

* Lib. 1. cap. 8.

imparted to them by this manner of Conveyance. *In a Dream, in a Vision of the Night, when deep Sleep falleth upon Men, in slumbring upon the Bed, then he openeth the Ears of Men, and sealeth their Instruction*, Job 33. 15. then God is pleased to reveal himself to his Servants in an extraordinary manner, to enlighten their Minds, and to guide and direct them into the ways which are most pleasing to him.

And Admonitions by Dreams were usual of old among the *Pagans*, as well as the *Jews*. *Empedocles*, *Pythagoras* and *Plato* were of Opinion, that Dreams were sometimes sent by good Dæmons: they talk much of θεῖοι ὄνειροι, and sometimes θεόπεμπτοι sent by God, *prædivina somnia*, as *Pliny* calleth them. They were thought to be sent by some Deity, whom therefore they styled ὀνειροπομπός. They are *Achilles's* Words, advising *Agamemnon* to consult the Priests and Interpreters of Dreams,

* Homer. *Il. a.*

* Καὶ γὰρ τ' ὄνειρ ἐκ Διός ἐστι.
Dreams are sent down from Jove *to us below.*

The Sacred History makes mention of the Divine Dreams which were vouchsafed to Idolaters and *Pagans*; thus it is said, God came to *Abimelech* (the King of *Palestine*) in a Dream by Night, *Gen.* 31. 24. *Pharaoh* had such a Manifestation, and that twice, *Gen.* 41. 1, 5. for it is certain that his Dreams were from God, because it is said expressly, *God hath shew'd* Pharaoh *what he is about to do*, Gen. 41. 25. In the like way he revealed his Will to *Nebuchadnezzar*, Dan. 2. 1. *The great God hath made known to the King what shall come to pass hereafter*, as *Daniel* speaketh, chap. 2. ver. 25.

And here by the way observe, that the *Interpretations* of Dreams went along with these *Divine Dreams*, whensoever they were Mystical and Enigmatical. The same divine Spirit which was the Author of these Dreams, was the Expounder of them. *Joseph* was endued with this Spirit, and unfolded those cloudy and mystical Representations which *Pharaoh* had in his Sleeps. To this famous Patriarch this Faculty or Gift is attributed even by *Justin* the Historian, who tells, that * he was the first that found out the Meaning and Interpretation of Dreams. And all the Conjectures and Judgments of *Oneirocriticks* among the *Pagans*, are founded on and derived from this great and ancient Example. They, in a fond imitation of this great and inspired Man, pretended to the Skill of interpreting Dreams, and foretelling Events by them. It became an Art among the *Pagans*: and several of them were noted for it, and consulted. They had certain Rules to unlock the mysterious Passages in Dreams: and sometimes indeed they casually lighted upon the Meaning of them, and sometimes they had recourse to Evil Spirits, who saw further into things than they did. The inspired History also mentions *Daniel*, as another *Interpreter* of Dreams. *Daniel had understanding in all Dreams*, Dan. 1. 17. that is, he had Skill to unriddle them though they were never so dark and intricate. But this *mystical* kind of Dreams was rare.

* *Somniorum primus intelligentiam condidit.* Lib. 36. c. 2.

Those which were plain and easily intelligible, are the Dreams most frequently spoken of in Scripture, and were the usual ways of conveying God's Will to his Servants of old, yea sometimes to very bad Men; for these were not wholly debarr'd (as you have heard) from divine Dreams. So some of those Dreams recorded be *Cicero*, *Valer. Maximus*, and the other ancient Authors before mentioned, and by * *Cardan* and † *Zuinger* since, were of this sort, *i. e.* they were from God or good Spirits. *Alexander* the Great had reveal'd to him in a Dream what certain * Plant or Herb was effectual against the poison'd Arrows that were used at that time. *Galen* † in several places of his Writings acknowledges these sort of divine Dreams, and gives sundry Instances of them, and particularly in himself, that he was instructed by these Dreams, about several Medical Remedies and Cures of Distempers, not only in himself but others.

* *Somn. Syn.* lib. 4.
† Vol. 5. lib. 4. *de Insomniis.*
* *Trog Pomp.*
† Lib. *de Sang. Miss.* Cap. *ult.* Lib. *de Anatom. viv. Comment.* 2. *de Humoribus.* Lib. *de Ord. Libr. suorum.*

In the next place, I will add some Instances of divine Dreams recorded in the Scriptures of the *New Testament*, though but sparingly. Thus the Angel of the Lord appeared unto *Joseph* in a Dream, *Mat.* 1. 20. and enjoyn'd him to take unto him the Virgin *Mary* his Wife. And again, chap. 2. ver. 13. he had the same Apparition in a Dream, whereby he was bid to take the young Child and his Mother, and

and fly into *Egypt*: and ver. 19. he was enjoyn'd after the same manner to return into *Judæa*. The *Magi* that came from the *East* to visit our Saviour, were warn'd of God in a Dream, that they should not return to *Herod*, Mat. 2. 12. St. *Peter* declareth in *Acts* 2. 17. that the Prophecy of * *Joel* concerning the last Days, (*i. e.* the times of the Gospel) namely, That they should then not only *see Visions*, but *dream Dreams*, was actually come to pass and accomplish'd at that time. * *Joel* 2. 28.

If I should reckon *Pilate's* Wife's Dream among those that are *Divine*, none can reasonably blame me for it: for though † *Luther* positively saith, that that Dream was from the Devil, who would hereby have hindered the Crucifying of Christ, and consequently the Redemption of Men, yet I see no ground for this peremptory Assertion, but rather think that this was design'd to be a Testimony of Christ's Innocency. Whilst the *Jews* were falsely accusing our Saviour, and seeking his Blood, whilst *Pilate* himself was the Judge before whom he was arraign'd, his Wife sent to tell him, that * *she had suffered many things in a Dream because of that just Person*, and that therefore he ought to have nothing to do with him, but that he should presently dismiss him, and set him at liberty. Though neither this nor *Pilate's* own Sense of our Saviour's Innocency could prevail any thing, yet hereby Christ was clear'd, for tho' the Judge condemned him, yet his Wife by an extraordinary Dream acquitted him. I question not therefore but that it was either from God immediately, or from some good Angel: and here the wise *Providence* of God was remarkably seen. † *Colloqu. Mensal.* * *Mat.* 27. 19.

Thus both in the *Old Testament*, and at the beginning of the new Evangelical Dispensation God imparted his Will by Dreams. He was pleased to slide unto the Imagination by this means, to warn Persons of Dangers, to excite them to their Duty, and oftentimes to foretell future Events. I had almost forgot *Justin*, (afterwards styled the *Martyr*) who had a Dream or Vision that brought him off from his *Pagan* Principles and Practices, and made him a Christian: Of which he gives an account in his *Dialogue with* Trypho. So we read that *Arnobius*, a profess'd Enemy of Christianity, was converted by a Dream, and left Gentilism. And Ecclesiastical History will furnish us with other Examples of the like Nature.

It might be added, that *Divine* Dreams were distinguish'd, and could be known from *others*, because first they were so Distinct, Clear, Orderly, and Regular, and likewise because they made a greater and livelier Impression on the Mind: the Delineations and Images were strong and vigorous, and vehemently fix'd on the Soul: and besides they were void of those idle Phantasms which other Dreams have: and they had some particular Instinct which always accompanied them. See * *Jamblichus*, who treats of these things particularly, and assigns them to be Distinctions between *Divine* and *Natural* Dreams. * *De Myster.* cap. 1.

But this manner of Revelation was most proper to the former Dispensations; therefore now, since God has spoken to us by his Son, those Dreams are generally and for the most part not made use of. And besides, the great Degeneracy of the World of late may be thought to be one reason why these Communications are superseded. † The increase of Wickedness in the World, Multiplicity of Business, Sollicitude of Mind about worldly Affairs, and Men's too much depending on politick Devices to accomplish their Ends, are reckon'd by Dr. *Jackson* as the Causes of the Cessation of the Admonitions by true Dreams. But they are not quite ceased, for even under this last Oeconomy God hath been pleased sometimes to convey the Knowledge of things by Dreams, of which Ecclesiastical and Civil History gives diverse Instances, to which I remit the Reader; only taking notice of St. *Cyprian*, who in his *Epistles* more than once tells us, that he was inform'd in his Dreams by God what he was to do, and what others were to do: he mentions the Particulars. In latter times we are told by * *Zuinglius* himself, that he received the Interpretation of *Hoc est Corpus meum* from the Revelation of an Angel in his Dream, who acquainted him that *Est* was as much as *Significat*, and is parallel with *Ex.* 12. 11. So Mr. *John Fox* had an account of the 42 Months mention'd in *Rev.* 11. 2. in the same way. Several have been directed to Medicines and Remedies for their Distempers, in Dreams. It is certain, (if there be any Faith to be given to History) that *Murders* have been discover'd by *Dreams*; and you will find in Sir *Henry Wotton's Remains*, in Mr. *Walton's* Life of that worthy Knight, a remarkable Instance of *Theft* and *Robbery* found out by that Means. Thus, though very † *On the Creed.* Book I. * *Oper.* Tom. 2.

rarely, some good Angels are permitted by God to reveal things to Persons in their Dreams, even under this Dispensation.

But there is oftentimes a Mistake as to these Dreams, and therefore here we must act with Caution. As the false Prophets among the *Jews* pretended to *divine Dreams*, (*they prophesy Lyes in my Name, saying, I have dreamed, I have dreamed*, Jer. 23. 25.) so some in the Ages since have deceiv'd themselves and others by these Night-works of the Imagination. Even some *diabolical Dreams* have passed for divine ones, as among those enthusiastick Heads before-named: but it is most usual for Men to mistake *natural* Dreams for *divine* ones. *Constantia*, *Constantine* the Great's Sister, was troubled in her Dreams, and had it reveal'd (she said) in a Vision to her that *Arius* was unjustly banish'd, and that his Doctrine was true: and soon after this she died. Her Brother was affected with it, sent for *Arius*, receiv'd him kindly, and restored him to *Alexandria*. This was the Consequence of his Sister's Dream, and that was the Effect of her Kindness to *Arius* and his Party: for she had a good Opinion of him, she lamented his Exile, and wish'd for his Return: hereupon it operated on her Imagination in the dark, and this she thought was something *Divine*, though it was merely *Natural*. Unless you will say, it was partly Natural and partly Demoniacal: for it is probable, that there are Dreams compounded of both these, as also of Natural and Divine. Such it is likely were those affrighting Dreams which *Brutus* and *Cassius* had before the Battle at *Philippi*; and those of *Nero* (mention'd by *Suetonius*) after he had put his Mother to death, for here were *natural Impressions*, as the Consequence of inward Guilt and Fear, and here were the Strokes of a *Divine Nemesis*, and at the same time of those *hellish Furies* that attended and molested the Criminal. However, they were all of them Proofs of a *divine Providence*, which is pleas'd to make use of all Methods and Ways for the discouraging of Vice, and promoting the great Ends of Religion in the World.

This I further adjoyn, That some *natural Dreams* may be said to be *divine* on this account, that they are conversant about divine and sacred Matters. For those Persons whose Thoughts in the day time are vehemently set on Vertue and Goodness, are not without them in their Dreams: when they are awake they think of God and the things of Religion, and so when they are asleep, their Minds are employ'd about the same Objects. That these *religious Dreams* are of great advantage is plain, because they not only keep out bad ones, but because they are a great Sign and Evidence to us of a pious and religious Disposition, as vain and wicked Dreams are an Argument of the contrary; and likewise because they furnish us with repeated Impressions of Vertue and Goodness.

Again, Dreams may be said to be *Divine* so far as they are made use of by God for our signal Good. I know one that hath receiv'd as great Impressions concerning Religion, and the regulating of his Life from the things he hath dreamt of, as from any Occurrence whatsoever in his whole Life. He hath had most lively Representations sometimes of the near approach of Death, and of the Terrours of it, and other times of the Certainty of a Future State, and all the important Concerns of it. And I doubt not but others have had Experience of the like. God often influenceth on Men in their Sleep, he *scareth them with Dreams*, as he did *Job*. Job 7. 14. He acts upon them by the Operations of Fancy in the Night.

To conclude then, Dreams are of singular use to us in our Lives, and though it is Superstition and Folly to regard every Dream we have, yet it is equal Folly to take notice of none at all. For I have shew'd, that there is some kind of Significancy in most Dreams, even those that are merely *Natural*: much more in those which I call *Angelick* and *Divine*, viz. Such as proceed from none of the Causes which I mention'd when I spoke of natural Dreams, nor can be referr'd to them. I hope I have in some measure made good what I undertook to prove; namely, That the Doctrine of *Providence* receives great Confirmation from that of *Dreams*, and that these are Arguments of the Divine *Care* and *Concern* for Mankind. And this being (as I premised at first) an unusual Theme, and I being directed to the handling of it by that excellent Person above-mentioned, I hope it will be the more acceptable.

But I must now enlarge the Horizon, and take a View of *Humane Race* in their *whole Life* and *Commerce* in the World, whereby we shall easily discern how the Divine Providence interests it self every where. I shall at present consider only these

these two Heads. 1. The Diversity and Variety of Men's *Conditions* in the World. 2. More generally, all the *Events and Occurrences* of any other sort, which happen to them.

The first of these requires us to consider Men, 1. As to *Riches* and *Poverty* 2. As to their *particular and sundry ways of Subsisting* in the World, that is, their *Callings* and *Employments*.

As to the former of these, we find it thus represented in the Sacred Writings, *The Lord maketh poor and maketh rich; he bringeth low, and lifteth up*, 1 Sam. 2. 7. The reason of which is assign'd in the next Verse, *For the Pillars of the Earth are the Lord's, and he hath set the World upon them.* i. e. It is he that by his Providence hath fix'd all things upon a sure Basis, and by his sole Command and sovereign Power disposes of them at his pleasure; and consequently these different States of Persons are from him. Which is farther asserted in *Prov.* 2. 22. *The Rich and Poor meet together*, (i. e. have converse with one another in the World) *the Lord is the Maker of them all*, i. e. of all of both sorts, the Poor and Rich. And the same is express'd, with some difference in the wording of it, by the same wise Man, *Prov.* 29. 13. *The poor and the deceitful Man* (for the rich Man is call'd *deceitful*, because so many of that Rank are *so*) *meet together: and the Lord enlightens both their Eyes.* He gives Life and Being to both, and he upholds them both for necessary ends and purposes in the World. For Humane Society requires these two sorts of Conditions in the World, one Mean and Poor, and the other Rich. As in Nature there can be no Hill without a Valley, no Ascent without a Descent, so in Politicks where there is a height of Condition there must needs be a low and mean State also, and sometimes a *Middle* between them. It is by the wise Order of Heaven that there is this Subordination of Persons. * One of the Ancient Writers of the Christian Church hath excellently shew'd how this disparity of Degrees among Men is necessary for Man's Life, and that it could not be otherwise. If all People were equal, the World could not subsist; there would be none to discharge servile and mean Offices, and to undertake the most necessary things in Humane Life. There would be no peace and concord in the World, but perpetual ravaging and making Havock. But now, as God hath excellently temper'd the World, both States of Men are serviceable to one another: The Rich relieve the Poor, the Poor work for the Rich, and so are both useful, and mutually help each other. If there were not Poverty and Wants, two Vertues had been lost, the Poor Man's *Patience*, and the Rich Man's *Charity*. Where would there be *Beneficence*, which makes us resemble God so much, if some were not reduced to Streights and Necessity? How could we shew our selves *Grateful* to God (who so liberally gives us all) if some did not stand in need of our Bounty? For God himself is uncapable of receiving any thing from us but by what we give to the Poor, whom he hath appointed to receive our Alms here upon Earth. The Rich then have no cause to complain tho' they part with some Portion of their Wealth; and the Poor have no reason to complain of that inequality that is between them and others, because this very thing makes them capable of being serviceable in the World, and accomplishing the wise ends of Providence.

* Theodoret. Orat. 6. & 7. de Providentia.

Nay, Though there is such a vast *Difference* between these two Conditions of Persons, yet if we rightly and duly weigh things and their circumstances, we shall find that on some accounts they are not at all *Unequal*. Yea, the Rich and Poor, the High and Low are alike as to most things. It is not to be denied that they are so as to their *Birth*, they come into the World alike, one as naked and shiftless as the other. And if there be any advantage, it is on the Poor's Side, for the Mothers of this sort are commonly deliver'd of their Burden with less Pain and Difficulty, because they are not so Tender and Effeminate as the other, but are used to Hardship. Likewise, their issue is generally more Healthy and Strong, and comes not into the Light with Hereditary Diseases entail'd upon them. Besides that, this sort of People have Bodies that are more Robust and Healthful than those of the other Rank, because they are used to Labour and Exercise, which hardens and confirms the State of their Body. But who sees not that both sorts of Persons are alike as to the common and most useful Privileges of Mankind? They have the same Earth, Sun, Moon, and Stars; they enjoy the same Air, Fountains, and Rivers. They have all those Benefits in Common. As to other enjoymentss, they either have such a Portion of them as is necessary, or they can be contented to be without

without them. *The poor heareth not rebuke*, Prov. 13. 8. Those in that low Condition are not envied and spoken against, as the Rich are. They are not liable to the Dangers, to the Disgrace, to the Disappointments, that great Men suffer; they have none of their Cares and Perplexities. They have less to lose, and they can sooner repair their Losses. The Condition of the Poor is by this means either made equal to that of the Rich, or else is far better. Lastly, as their Lives are equal, so are their Deaths; as they came into the World alike, they go out. Diseases equally attack them, and Death is no more affraid of the great ones, than those of a lesser Figure. Yea rather, so much the worse is the Condition of the former, that they are taken away from their great Honours, and snatch'd away from their greater Hopes, yea and oftentimes without appointing their Heirs, and disposing of their mighty Fortunes. And, after death, they both return to their Dust, and rot alike in the Grave. But at the last day the Rich have more Talents to Account for at that Audit than the Poor and Needy, which makes their case the less desirable. Thus the Poor and Rich are in some respects the same as to their Birth, Life, and End: And both as to these, and as to that *Inequality* of their Conditions which is observ'd to be with regard to other things, the *Providence* of God is very Remarkable, and can't but be admir'd by all those that give themselves time to take notice of it. But I shall afterwards have occasion to speak of *Poverty* by itself, and therefore now I omit some things which will most properly be discoursed of then.

And further, God's Providence may be discover'd in the *sundry ways of Living and Subsisting* in the World; in the different *Occupations*, *Callings*, *Professions*, and *Employments* of Men. All of them, whether greater or lesser, whether mean or honourable, are under the influence and direction of Providence. The *Plowman's* inventions that belong to his Employment are reckon'd up, particularly in *Isa.* 28. 24. *&c.* to the end of the Chapter. After the Prophet had recounted some parts of his Skill in Husbandry, he adjoins this as the reason of it, *for his God doth instruct him to Discretion, and doth teach him*, v. 26. And afterwards, when *the threshing* and other ways of managing of the Corn are mentioned, the conclusion is, *This also cometh from the Lord of Hosts, who is wonderful in Counsel, and excellent in working*, v. 20. So the *Smith* is instructed by God for his Work, *Isa.* 54. 16 *Behold! I have created the Smith that bloweth the Coals in the Fire, and that bringeth forth an Instrument for his work*; And 'tis added, *I have created the waster to destroy*, i. e. I have taught the Soldier to fight. The *Smith* and the Warriour are both from me, and I have instructed the one to make Instruments and Weapons for the other. This is a full proof of what I am now treating of, that God superintends in all Occupations and Employments of Men: And they have their Skill and Art from him. The Talmudists rightly say, * *He that is set over the Cisterns or Wells is appointed to that Office by God.* That is, there is not the meanest or least Office or Employment that is not by God's Providence and Guidance.

* Buxtorf. Chald. Lexic. p. 470.

It is from him that every one generally is pleased with his own Calling, be it of what kind soever: Which is particularly taken notice of by the wise † *Jewish* Masters. Would a Scholar, a Gentleman, a Nice and Curious Man visit sick Persons at what time soever they call him, and leave his own Bed to visit them in theirs, and enter into Rooms and Chambers hung with Ill Steams and Stench; yea, and all his days converse with Excrements, and get his Living out of them, and like the sordid Emperor raise an Impost upon Urine? And whereas all Men before they came into the would had their Lodging *inter stercus & urinam*, he all his Life-time chuses to keep that Situation. One would think that this is a degrading of the Velvet Cap and Scarlet Robe. To go in Silk, and Strut in Velvet or Plush (as hath been the Mode) to the Chambers of the Squalid and Nasty, looks very Strange and Ridiculous: To suck in the Air of the Room which the Breath of the Diseased hath infected, and which sometimes seems to be more corrupted than the Patient who lies there: This and many other things of the like Nature, which the *Man of Medicks*, must undergo and are essential to his Profession, I will maintain are more Servile and Base than any of the most Vulgar Callings and meanest Trades that Men live by. A Man's Mind and Thoughts would for ever recoil at it, were it not that the Name and Credit of the Faculty, and the large Fees antidoted against all. Yea, the Funerals themselves carry Temptation with them; and the very Trophies of Death, the Gloves and Scarf, the Hatband and Ring are of some comfortable

† *Deus facit ut unicuique suum officium placeat.* Beracoth.

fortable Importance. It is hope of Gain that reconciles this and some other Callings to Men's Minds; but much more it is the *Providence* of God that both enclines and fits them for this Work, which is of so great use to Mankind, and therefore renders the Employment Honourable.

So for a *School-master*; that a Man of Parts and Ingenuity, and who hath a very good sense of things, should submit to spend most of his time in a dusty and noisie School, and to converse with a Company of Sweaty Boys, and to make himself too like them; that he should submit to the Humours of the Giddy Youth, or else to reak his Displeasure against them by Chastisements that may seem to be Indecent, and that he should *voluntarily* make choice of this way of Living rather than of any other, all this must be accounted for on the Grounds before-mentioned. All that can be said, is, a Divine Instinct pushes them on to undertake and go through this Work. It is *Providence* that directs Men to different Professions and Employments, and makes them contented with them, whether they be the most Contemptible or the most creditable Callings; whether they be the most vile, or the most fashionable Employments. It is God, that guides Men in all Conditions. They can't act in the lowest or the highest Station without the Divine Administration. By vertue of this their Abilities are proportion'd to their Callings, and by vertue of this alone the Callings themselves are made successful, or prove otherwise to some Persons. Whence that of the *Hebrew* Masters is true, * *There is no Profession, but hath some Rich and some Poor of it.* Some of the meanest Trades produce Wealthy Men; and some can't Thrive on the most Gainful Callings.

* *Nulla est ars, quæ non habet pauperes & divites.* Mishnah. Tractat. Kidushin. c. 4.

And to the Callings of Men and their Functions, are nearly allied their *Inclinations*, *Parts*, and *Genius's*, which are of very great diversity, and these also are from Providence. *Bavius* and *Mævius* were of use as well as *Virgil*, if for no other purpose, yet for this, to commend the Excellency of the latter. It was not thought fit that the faculties of all Men should be of the same size, but that there should be a considerable Difference among them. Which the *Hebrews* proverbially express thus, *All the Fingers are not of the same length.* Which may be answered by that of the Poet, *Non omnia possumus omnes.* The several degrees of Endowments and Tempers are of continual use in the World, and unless they were Unlike they would not be so serviceable to Mankind. Some mens Brains are light and flashy, and thereby comport best with that Mercurial Province, which is allotted them. Some are dull and heavy, but serve the purposes of those Occupations or Employments they are concerned in, and much better than if they were quick and sharp. Some are slow in Conception and Expression, but penetrate deeper into things than those that are more Apprehensive. Those that are able to transact Affairs with dexterity are seldom any great Clerks: and on the other side, Men of meanest parts (as to discerning,) are generally best for Business. Some are strangely Retentive, but are a long time taking in: others presently conceive, but can't hold any thing long. Some are very ready at sudden Repartees, which are of good use upon some occasions; but what is premeditated by them is flat and dull. Others have no Talent at all at Extemporary Conceits, and they are run down by every bold Aggressor; but they shew themselves Profound and Solid if they have time given them to think and ripen. So as to *Tempers*; some are of cool and moderate Spirits, others are warm and zealous, but both are very useful in the World: for the Moderate would suffer all things to run into Confusion, were it not for the more Zealous; and these would disturb all things, were they not restrained by the Moderate: so that both Parties are equally necessary in the Church, and in the Common-wealth. So as to Studies, some are for one *Particular Study* and no other, and there they rest, and are Asses at all things else. Others, tho' they seem to adopt one sort of Study, yet, fly out to others, rather than that, which a Man would take to be their proper Employ. So a Soldier found out Printing, and a Friar Gunpowder and Guns.

And to see how *different Genius's* may meet in the same person, I might here take notice that *Good Letters* and the *Military Art* sometimes go together. The *Greeks* were most famed for their Purity of Speech and Flourishing of Arts, even when they were busie in Arms. *Athens* the nursery of Learning, was as much celebrated for its Commanders and Captains as its Philosophers, and in the very *same* persons, as *Aristides*, *Themistocles*, *Miltiades*, *Pericles*, *Phocion*, *Alcibiades*, and several others, who were Great Wits, and as renowned for their Valour and Prowess. So Martial

tial Feats and Philosophy were thought to take their turns in *Pythagoras*, whose Soul was said to be in *Euphorbus* in the time of the *Trojan* War. Of the *Romans* it may be observed that they were never more Famous for their Eloquence and Learning than when they followed the Wars, and won Glory by their Martial Enterprizes. Particularly of *Cæsar* it was most signally true, that the Arts of War and Well speaking were his Glory. And in successive Ages we want not instances of some that were the best Soldiers and the best Scholars. And this apprehension was conveyed to us long since in the Mythology of the Ancients who made *Pallas* to be the Goddess both of Arms and Arts.

Again, some according to the guidance of Providence, seem to be calculated for all things, and are capable of employing themselves, in every matter; but they stay not long in this universal prosecution. Others are of so comprehensive a Genius, that they grasp all, and no study comes amiss to them, and they spend their whole lives in this Catholick pursuit. But these are very rare, and must be reckon'd among Prodigies; for we can't expect that humane Nature should Fathom all things, no more than the Sun can illuminate both sides of the Earth at once. And here too the Divine Administration is observable, that where Parts and Indowments of Mind are defective, there is a supply made. That Proverbial saying is not at random, that *Fools* sometimes have the best Success. And when it is said, *Fortune*, it should be said, *Providence favours them:* for seeing *Nature* hath not befriended them, 'tis fit that *This* should. As, in another case, we see, that God supplies the defect of persons strangely, *i. e.* the defects and infirmities of *Body* are recompensed by wonderful Abilities of *Mind* oftentimes.

And the *weaker Sex* are not seldom compensated by Providence, and upon Emergency are observed to outdo Man. *Deborah* was made a Judge in *Israel*, and was Victorious and Successful. Feeble *Jael* had the courage to strike a Nail, and that a fatal one, into the Head of *Sisera* a Great Captain and Warriour. *Abigail*, *Esther*, *Ruth*, were Eminent for their extraordinary Prudence and Wise Management. We read in the Evangelical History, that when Christ's Disciples fled and disappeared, the Women followed him, and particularly *Mary* kept her Ground, and stood near to the Cross, and endured the sight of the Horrid Tragedy. Which shews that sometimes the Spirit and Courage of Women excels that of the other Sex. Hear the Testimony of one of the Primitive Christians concerning the Christian Sufferers of his time, *Those of our persuasion (not to speak of Men* saith he) *even the Boys and tender Women do with Silence conquer their Tormentors and Executioners: they are so resolute and hardy that the Fire it self can't extort from them so much as a Groan.*

Nostri autem (ut de Viris taceam) pueri & mulierculæ tortores suos taciti vincunt, & expromere illis gemitum nec ignis potest. Lactant. lib. 15. cap. 13.

Then, as to other Excellencies and Endowments, from St. *Jerom's* Writings we learn that in the Primitive Age of Christianity there were many Noble Matrons, Widows and Virgins, that were Famous for their great Knowledge, and their greater Piety, as *Euphrasia* of *Alexandria*, and *Eustochium*, *Marcella*, *Paula*, *Principia*, and several other *Roman Ladies*, who were the Wonders of their Sex. *Plutarch* hath left us a † choice piece, wherein he gives us an account of sundry Brave Women in diverse Countries. And one hath lately presented us with ‖ *the History of Women Philosophers.* I might mention here what * Mr. *Selden* saith he found in an Ancient Author, that most, if not all the Arts and Sciences were found out by *Women.* This may seem to be too high a strain, but we are certain that the Female Wit is very conspicuous, and we have reason to give our Suffrage to what one hath observed of them, that † they are of a very quick Invention, and are excellent at diverting a sudden and present Evil. Tho' the *Salick* Law locks up the Crown and Scepter from them, as things too good or too great for them, yet we may be convinced by numerous Examples, and some very Eminent ones at home, that they are fit to ascend the Throne, and that their Sway is as Auspicious as any that is Masculine. This together with what I alledged before, I look upon as a great Instance of the Divine Providence: it is a singular proof of it, that that Sex which is so Weak and Infirm, and on diverse accounts unable to make any considerable Figure in the World, is frequently blessed with such remarkable Endowments, as make them equal with Men, and sometimes raise them above them.

† Γυναικῶν ἀρεταί.

‖ Ægid. Menagius.

* De Dis Syr.

† Καὶ γὰρ εἰσι γένει εὑρετικὸν, καὶ πρὸς τὸ συμπίπτον ἀνυποπτωτατον. Psellus.

To

To this adjoin what the Sacred Story offers to our Thoughts and Observations, *viz.* that *the younger Brothers*, who are but otherwise meanly accommodated, are made amends by the singular Blessing of God, and are preferred before their Elder Brethren, as *Abraham* before *Haran* his elder Brother, *Shem* before *Japhet*, *Jacob* before *Esau*. *Joseph* and *David* two despised younger Brothers, before many elder Brethren; *Ephraim* before *Manasses*. And the vulgar Observation is known that the inferior Brethren, who have little or nothing left them of the Paternal Estate, for the most part excel in those qualities which make way for their reception in the World. Thus there is an Equivalent given by *Providence*, and the Balance is happily kept even.

And to convince us further that the Scales of Providence are even, we see that these and Persons of a mean Original come to be very Eminent and Famous in the World. The Examples of this are innumerable both in Sacred and Prophane Records; and our own Country affords us many instances of this Nature. I will mention but two, and those of the same mean Occupation; the first is Sr. *John Hawkwood*, a Taylor, in King *Edward* the IIId's time, so Famous in *Italy* for his Valour, that his Statue is there erected; the other is *Speed* who was bred at first to the same Trade, but at last came to be the Greatest Historian in *England*. We might perhaps make the like observations on some in this Age; but it is not thought decent or Good manners to name them now, tho' afterwards it will redound to their Honour. Yet truly I don't see why they should be ashamed to hear their former circumstances mentioned at present. See in our *English Chronicles* what *Thomas Chichley* Archbishop of *Canterbury*, wisely replyed to King *Henry* the Vth, who thought to disgrace him by reminding him of his *Fathers Trade*, the same that was mentioned before. Thus Providence presides over the different Ranks and Qualities of Persons, and is plainly to be discerned in the Endowments, Tempers, Studies, and Advancement of them. So that we may truly say with that Wise Man, *The Divine Wisdom reacheth from one end to another mightily: and sweetly doth she order all things*, Wisd. 8. 1.

Having thus shew'd (according to what I propounded) that the *different conditions and states* of men are over-rul'd by *Divine Providence*, I am in the next place to shew that *this* doth superintend in all the *Events* and *Occurrences* of Men's lives, whether private or publick, whether personal or national, whether common or unusual. Whatever we see happens in the World, carries on it the impression of the Divine hand and Governance. But some Events do more especially carry this mark with them, and do most palpably attest the Management and Guidance of Divine Providence. It is evident that things are brought to pass in such a way and manner that a Divine Art and Skill are to be seen and admired in them. Here the instances are very numerous, and I might make choice of some of those which have relation to us of this Kingdom particularly. Many of us remember that memorable Occurrence in the Year 1660, when General Monk invaded *England* with an Army of but nine Thousand and six Hundred Foot, and fourteen Hundred Horse and Dragoons, and therewith restored King *Charles* the IId, tho' that Army consisted of Men trained up in an utter dislike of Kingly Government, and tho' there were at that very time thirty Thousand experienced and victorious Soldiers in *England*, bred up in the same aversion to Monarchy.

The great and mighty Sway of Providence was again observable, at the Prince of *Orange*'s coming into *England*, when great numbers of Officers and Common Soldiers in that very Army which was raised by King *James* on purpose to introduce and establish Popery and Arbitrary Government, abandoned his Service, and came over to the Prince, who otherwise could have effected little with his Army of fourteen Thousand Men, which he brought with him.

I cannot but reckon it among the peculiar acts of God's Providence that he made use of —— I could add one thing more that hath a peculiar relation to us of this Church and Nation, that —— But I pass from these Occurrences to others of a more General concern. And here I have many things to suggest which will abundantly prove that the *Events* and *Occurrences* which we may observe in the World are plain Testimonies of Divine Providence.

I. I will take notice of that *Fitness of things* and *Persons* and their *Actions* which doth so evidently redound to the Honour of the Supreme Ruler of the World. He raises

raises up such Instruments as are *proper* for that work which he designs. Thus the Great *Cyrus*, Emperour of *Persia*, was raised up by the Divine Hand to restore the banished *Jews* to their native Soil, and no Man was so fit as he to begin and set on Foot such an arduous Enterprize. *Athanasius* was stirred up to assert and maintain the Orthodox Faith about the Holy Trinity, and if we consider what courage and spirit he was endued with, we must own that he was the fittest Man in that Age, to go through with that Controversy, and endure what he did in defence of that Cause. So for *Luther* he was made and framed by Heaven on purpose for that difficult and dangerous task which he undertook. Which reminds me of an excellent passage in *Theodoret*, * *God*, saith he, *the Governour of all things, gives Pilots suitable to the greatness of the Tempest, he wisely opposeth the Valour of the Captains to the sharp incursion of the Enemy; he gives Medicines which are wholesom, and fitted for the iniquity of the time.* Yea, he makes use of the different dispositions of Men, and adapts them to the same end, namely the good of his Church. *Moses* and *Elias* are both made use of, the one Meek, the other Fierce; but they equally advanced the Cause of Religion. So in order to the *Reformation*, *Erasmus* and *Luther* whose Tempers and Genius's were vastly different, were both of them very serviceable to the main purpose: the one did the Pope and Papal Cause as much harm by his merry and facetious way of speaking and writing, as the other by his rough and surly Humour. Thus as *Philo* saith of Nature, we may say of Providence, † It makes up an excellent Concert and Harmony even from Contrarieties.

* Ἀντιῤῥόπους τῷ μεγέθει τῶν κλύδωνῶν ἔδωκε κυβερνήτας τῶν ὅλων ὁ πρύτανις, καὶ τῇ τῶν πολεμίων προθυμίᾳ τὴν τῶν στρατηγῶν ἀντέταξεν ἀρετὴν, καὶ προσφορὰς τῇ τῶν καιρῶν δυσκολίᾳ τὰ ἀλεξίκακα ἔδωκε φάρμακα. *Hist. Eccl. l. 4. c. 28.*

† Τὴν συμφωνίαν τῶν παντῶν ἐξ ἐναντιοτάτων ἐναρμοσαμένη. *De vitâ Mosis.*

There is also another sort of *Fitness* in Providence that we may discern, if we will give our Minds to it. There is a certain *Decorum* in Events, and one thing appositely *answers* to another, or congruously comes in the place of another. Thus a *Woman* was first in the Transgression, and the cause of all Misery: but behold a recompence! for from a *Woman* a Saviour springs, from her Womb comes the *Messias*; therefore 'twas emphatically said by the Apostle Gal. 4. 5. *God sent forth his Son made of a Woman.* So the *Tree of the Cross* makes Satisfaction for the *Tree in the Garden*, whence Man's Misery came. There is a Proportion between the Sin and the Remedy. This remarkable way of a fitting Compensation is observable in many other instances of a different Nature. When any excellent Man leaves the World, another is somewhere Born the same Day, say the * *Jews*, applying that of *Eccl.* 1. 5. to this purpose, *the Sun riseth and the Sun setteth*; when one Light of the World sets, another like him arises. To this purpose they say, before *Moses*'s Sun-set, that of *Joshua* appeared: and before *Eli*'s Sun-set, that of *Samuel* arose. And they have this saying to the like purpose, † *Before one chief person in a Family dies, another is appointed to succeed him in that Station.* The meaning of all this is that God takes care to raise up Good Men to supply the place of those that are gone. He leaves not his Church destitute of fit persons to serve him. Providence seasonably substitutes one in the room of another, and fills up the place that is vacant. That Over-ruling Hand which took away King *Edward* the VIth before he had finished the work of Reformation, did also remove Queen *Mary* before she had accomplished that work which she and her Prelates were intent upon, and set up Queen *Elizabeth* to destroy what the other had begun.

* *Bereshith Rabbah.*

† *Antequam moriatur aegrotus, constitutus est alius praefectus domûs ejus.* Talm.

The Fitness of *Time* is thus particularly exemplified by some, on the same day *Pelagius* (who proved a pestilent Heretick) was Born here in *Britain*, St. *Austin* was Born in *Africa*, who was the great Maul of the *Pelagian* Heresy. The *English* won *Normandy* the very same day 40th year, whereon the *Normans* had won *England*. And we may add here what we not long ago observed, namely King *William*'s Happy Arrival in the year *Eighty Eight*, and on the *Fifth of November*, to deliver us from *Popish Invasion* and *Popish Conspiracies*, which those particular Times were infamous for. Both the Year and the Day of the Month are remarkable, and tell us that the former Deliverances at both those times are included in this, in as much as the *Invasion* and *Conspiracy* were both intended at that time. Heaven would have this seen and observed in the *Time* of our Deliverer's Arrival, and of the Deliverance it self, which undoubtedly was the Greatest that ever this Nation had, if we consider all things. It is observed that the Re-settling of the Protestant Religion in the Country

Country of *Neufchatel*, by the Decision in favour of the King of *Prussia* to be their Sovereign, was on the *same day* that the *Popish* Religion was expelled from that place a hundred seventy and seven Years before. And some other Remarks of the like kind might be produced. Though there are a great many that are meerly Fanciful, and have nothing remarkable in them; as that which *Sanders* mentions, that at the same time that the Abbeys and Friaries and all Orders belonging to them were dissolved in *England* by K. *Henry* VIII. the Society of *Jesuits* began beyond the Seas; namely in the Year of our Lord 1538, and the 30th of that King's Reign, which is false as to the Date, as might easily be proved: or if it were true in that Respect, yet the inference which may be made from it makes for us, and is against the *Roman* Cause; for we learn hence, that at the same time that *Popery* is getting up in one part of the World, Providence blasts it in another. So *Calvin* sprang up about the same time with *Ignatius Loyola*, the divine Wisdom and Providence so ordering it that he and his Friends should be raised up at that Season as Antidotes against the Poison of the Society of the *Jesuits*, and of *Popery itself*. Of this sort there might be several Observations offer'd, and it might be shew'd that one Event happily makes amends for another; there is an Equivalent (as I said before) afforded us by Providence, and the Balance is kept even. In a Word, There are strange *Fitnesses* in Providence, and we may discern them to be very Remarkable.

II. I might further take notice of the *diversity of Methods*, which God useth to effect his Designs in the World, and thence evince the wonderful Conduct of Providence. It was rightly observ'd by a wise Historian, that *God is not wont to administer things in the same manner: but, to declare his Variety of Governing the World, he orders things sometimes one way, and sometimes another.* And the like is attested by a Christian Philosopher in these Words, † *God's Providence takes care of Man not one way only, but in many and diverse.* Nature, we see, loves to vary; thus there are *white Teeth* in the swarthiest *Black-moors*; there's a *black Bill* in the *whitest Swan*. And so it is in higher things; it seems good to the All-wise Being to vary in his Administrations towards the Sons of Men. It is not his Will, that they should be all of a piece, and that his Dealings with Mankind should be alike. This we see in the various Dispensations of Religion, that have been on foot in the World, namely, The *Adamic*, *Noachic*, *Abrahamic*, *Mosaic* or *Jewish*, *Christian* or *Evangelic*, and that whether in our Saviour's and the Apostle's times, or afterwards. In which admirable *diversity* of Oeconomies the *manifold Wisdom* of God hath most signally been display'd.

* Οὐ τὸ θεῖον φιλεῖ διὰ τῶν αὐτῶν ὡσαύτως κινήσεως καὶ ἐφορμήσεως τὰ κατὰ τὸν βίον μεθιστᾶν καὶ διακυβερνᾶν πράγματα, ἀλλὰ καὶ τὸ ποικίλον πειρῶν τῆς τοῦ παντὸς τῶν διεξαγωγῆς τε καὶ διοικήσεως, ἄλλοτε ἄλλως ἁρμόζει. Nicet. Coniat. Annal.

† Οὐ γὰρ καθ' ἕνα τρόπον μόνον ποιεῖται τὴν ἐπιμέλειαν τῶν ἀνθρώπων, ἀλλὰ κατὰ πολλὰς καὶ διαφόρους.

And this *Variety* may be seen as to Places likewise; *Asia* was that Region of the World, which God first of all chose to manifest himself in. The Church of God was seated here; here was the earthly Paradise; the main Transactions recorded in Scripture were done here. This was the place of Arts and Sciences; the great and celebrated Monarchies of *Assyria* and *Persia* were here. But, which is far greater, Christ was born and lived, and did his transcendent Miracles in this part of the World; this Place was honour'd with the first preaching of the Gospel, and the propagating of the Christian Religion, which renders it famous to all Ages. But see a Revolution in Countries, as well as in Things and Persons! This Place hath long since lost its prestine Eminency; and so hath *Africa*, which was heretofore famous for many Fathers of the Church who flourish'd there, and render'd Christianity very illustrious and renown'd in those Parts. But now *Europe* is the most celebrated Part of the Earth: and as the *Greek* and *Roman* Monarchies made her famous of old, so at this Day all things concurr to raise her Worth and Fame. She is the most Populous, and the most Learned, and, which sounds higher with religious Minds, she is the most Christian. But perhaps afterwards *America*, or some of those Regions in that Division of the World, will bear the Name; according to the Methods of the divine Dispensation, which are not always the same, but very different; for this is the usual guise of Providence.

And here also there is occasion to take notice, how the very same Actions and Events of Providence are for *different Ends*. The division of Tongues, which at *Babel* was a *Curse*, and the Punishment of Pride and Insolence, became a *Blessing* at Pentecost. The confusion of Languages was at first design'd to *disturb* the *Babel-builders*;

ders; but afterwards by this diversity of Tongues the dispersed *Gentiles* were gather'd and *united* in one Faith. And several such Instances might be mention'd to illustrate the marvellous *Variety* of the divine Administrations, which exceedingly set forth the Wisdom of the great Ruler and Disposer of all things, who can turn Evil into Good, and Judgments into Mercies.

III. Let me offer this to our Consideration, That those Actions, Occurrences and Events which seem to disparage, and even to disprove a Providence, do most palpably manifest the Reality of it. Thus *Monsters* and *Prodigies*, which are thought to be Errors and Flaws of Nature, and Defects in the Government of the Universe are Arguments of the contrary. These happen with design, and are to shew that God can alter the Course of Nature when he pleases. And he is pleas'd to do it for good Reasons; for Men are apt to impute things to the mere instinct and impulse of Nature, and exclude God out of the World: wherefore 'tis expedient that there should be these preternatural Accidents, to cure Men of that Malady. Besides, By the things that are usual and common, Men are not moved; whence 'tis requisite that God should shew himself by some Works, that are against the Course of Nature, and which are strange and surprizing. There is a Necessity of this to rouze and startle the World, and by these extraordinary Events to let Men see that God is the great Controuler and Ruler of all things, and that he can put them out of their usual Track when he thinks fit, and moveover, that he can make the most frightful and dismal Occurrences to be instrumental to the Good and Wellfare of those Countries where they happen. Accordingly turn over the Annals of former Ages, and particularly consult the Chronicles of our own Country, and you'll find as many (and perhaps more) affrighting Accidents in the Reigns of the best Kings as in those of the Worst. But this is certain that God speaks to the World by these Supernatural Signs, and intends them as Premonitions of what is afterwards to be expected. I have insisted on things of this Nature before, under *the Proof of a Deity*, and therefore shall not add any thing further on this Subject. That, only which I'm to observe at present, is, that what is irregular and out of course proves serviceable to the designs of *Providence*, and is an Evidence of it. For it is from Providence that the Nature of things is changed, and that such unusual Signs and Wonders appear. It seems good to the Divine Wisdom thus to alarm the World, and powerfully to remind them of that All-mighty Hand which swayeth all things, and which oftentimes by strange and wondrous Ways, and sometimes by *contrary* ones, effects his Will and Pleasure among Men. Which *latter* might be insisted on as a distinct Consideration, to set forth the influence and efficacy of Divine Providence, but I shall have occasion to speak on that Head afterwards.

But I will now further enlarge upon this, that those things which seem to disparage Providence, are Proofs of it. We see how frequently * Injuries and Losses make way for some successful and happy thing to befall us. A low and mean Condition, a depressed State of Life are made the forerunners, and even the very occasions of being wealthy and honourable and great in the World. We behold in *Joseph*'s Case what advantages sprung from Slavery and Imprisonment. *The King sent and loosed him, even the Ruler of the People, and let him go free; he made him Lord of his House, and Ruler of all his Substance, to bind his Princes at his Pleasure*, (he had Authority to send these, if they were unruly, to those Fetters he came from: or it is probable this *binding* referrs to his obliging them by Laws and Injunctions, as it follows in the next Words) *and teach his Senators Wisdom*. Lo here the admirable Dispensation of the Wise Governour of the World! A poor distressed Youth is taken from Slavery to a Kingdom, from a Prison to a Palace, from Shackles and Fetters to the Ensigns of Honour and Majesty. God often makes distress a passage to Prosperity. Many a good Man may thank God that ever he was reduced to Streights, on this very Score: for God hath hereby taken occasion to conferr upon him outward Blessings and Enjoyments. *Job* is an eminent Instance of this, his Goods and Possessions were taken from him, but he had them back again with a better sort of Replevin. *God gave him twice as much as he had before*, Job 42. 10. *God blessed the latter end of* Job *more than his beginning*, v. 12. To which I'm apt to think St. *James* alludes in his fifth Chapter v. 11. *ye have heard of the Patience of* Job, *and have seen the end of the Lord, that the Lord is very pitiful and of tender Mercy*. This referrs to *the latter end* of *Job*, which was a bountiful Recompence for

* *Majori sæpe fortunæ locum facit injuria.* Sen.

for all his Losses. His Poverty made way for his Promotion, and it did no less inhanse and commend it. This many times hath been observ'd to be God's Method, he leaves a blessing behind him proportionable to the Afflictions he exercised his Servants with. Look how God in the distributions of his Justice torments the Wicked so much *the more*, because they once had the full enjoyment of earthly Pleasures and Delights (as the Sentence runs against *Babylon*, *Reward her even as she rewarded you, and double unto her double according to her Works; in the Cup which she hath filled, fill her double; how much she hath glorified her self, and lived deliciously, so much sorrow and torment give her*, Rev. 18. 6. &c.) so on the contrary, according to the Afflictions and Distresses good Men have undergone, their Comforts and Joys are Multiplyed, and that even in this Life: according to that Promise which God made by his Prophet *Joel*, *I will restore to you the Years which the Locust hath eaten, the Canker-worm and the Cater-pillar: the Floor shall be full of Wheat, and the Fats shall over-flow with Wine and Oil.* This was it that comforted the Psalmist after all his Troubles, *Thou who hast shew'd me great and sore Troubles, shalt quicken me again, and shall bring me up again from the depths of the Earth. Thou shalt increase my greatness, and comfort me on every side*, Psal. 71. 20, 21.

And so as to common and national Calamities, we shall find that these are made by Providence the instruments of great benefit to the World. *Wars*, which are so Hazardous, Expensive, and Bloody, have recompensed the bold Aggressors, with what is most acceptable and welcome, if *Knowledge* and *Arts* may be said to be such. When the *Romans* invaded and conquer'd *Greece*, and when at last they settled the Fourth Monarchy at *Rome*, the *Grecian* Arts and Sciences were brought thither; and from *Italy* they were derived to all the Western Countries, and to our selves among the Rest. As they proceeded to conquer Rude and Barbarous Nations, so they taught them Civility and Learning, and useful Trafick, or rather, beat them into these. That Wars and Hostilities, the greatest murdering Evils, are very beneficial, will be denied by none who consider that a Wise *Roman* advised that *Carthage* should not be utterly destroyed, because it might serve to keep up the *Roman* Valour: Some Enemies are needful: Security breeds Idleness and Luxury. As long as *Rome* was busie in Wars abroad, the State was well at home: but afterward they grew distemper'd, and out of Order, when they joy'd Peace and Repose, and their hostile Commotions were over. Which makes good the Lord *Bacon*'s Observation, that * to the Body Politick a just and honourable War is as Exercise to the natural Body: it keeps it in Health: whereas in a slothful Peace not only Courage is Effeminate, but Manners are Corrupt. And here I will insert a remarkable Passage, which I lately met with in an ingenious Philosopher of this Age. " † [Wars, Poverty and other Calamities (saith he) are sent us for this very good " End; namely, the exercising of our Wits, and sharpning our Inventions, by force- " ing us to provide for our own necessary Defence against our Enemies. It is " to the fear of Poverty and Misery that we are beholden for all our Arts, and for " that natural Knowledge which was the product of laborious Industry, and " which makes us that we cannot but admire the Power and Wisdom of the Creator, " which otherwise we might have passed by with the same indifference as Beasts. And " if Men were to lead their whole Lives in an indisturb'd continual Peace, in no fear " of Poverty, no danger of War, I don't doubt they would live little better than " Brutes, without all Knowledge or Enjoyment of those Advantages that make " our Lives pass on with Pleasure and Profit.] And therefore this Philosopher, when he was shaping out a *World* in the *Planets*, and settling Men there, he chose not to exempt them from these or any other Calamities and Hardships, but concludes them to be necessary for them.

* *His Essays.*

† *Mr.* Huygens's *Conjectures concerning the Planetary Worlds.* Book II. p. 39, 40.

From what happened in *Europe* in the Fourteenth Century me may gather the usefulness of the worst of Evils that befall us here on Earth. In that Age Learning increased strangely and to a Wonder; but it was occasion'd by the *Turks* invading and possessing of *Greece*, and inhumanely treating the Inhabitants of those Countries. This made several Learned Men among them leave their native Soil, and thence the knowledge of the *Greek* Tongue (which was Rare before) was spread through other parts of *Europe*. Then it was, that the *Greek* Learning, (which was scarce know in the *West* for some Hundreds of Years) was brought into *Italy* by *Emanuel Chrysoloras*, *Theodorus Gaza*, *Georgius Trapezuntius*, and many other Excellent and Noble Persons, and from that quarter of the World, the study of

of *Greek* was propagated to *France*, *Germany*, and other parts of *Europe*. This was all from the Cruelties and Barbarities of the *Turks*. And 'tis observable that these *Greek Refugees* spread the Knowledge of that Tongue not long before the *Reformation*, and thereby (*viz.* by propagating of Knowledge, and advancing of Learning) made way for that happy Change and Revolution in Christendom. It is to the Persecution of the *Protestants* afterwards in *France* and the Low Countries that we owe our Skill here in *England* in several Handicraft Trades and Works, for some of those Persecuted *Protestants*, who fled hither, instructed us first in them, and taught us some of the most useful Manufactures.

And we may cast our Eyes yet further backward, and observe that the best interest of the Church of God, which is the increasing of its Members, and the propagating of the Knowledge of the True God, hath been advanc'd by *Persecutions*. When the *Jews* were carried Captives into *Assyria* and other Countries, this was the happy occasion of the *Gentiles* hearing of the one True God: and thereby the way was made easier for the preaching of the Apostles afterwards. Wherefore *Theodoret*'s Remark on this matter is very apposite, * God *by one Nation brought all Nations to the Knowledge of himself*. The Divine Wisdom first chose the *Jews* out of all People, and by them intended to bring other Nations to the Knowledge of the true Religion. God called other People in choosing of them. And when, in process of time, the Apostles appear'd in the World, the *Jews* persecuting and harassing of them was extremely advantageous to Christianity, and to the Cause of the Gospel. By the violent dispersion of the Christians after St. *Stephen*'s and St. *James*'s Death the Gospel it self was dispersed, and carried by the Apostles and Disciples into the remotest parts of the Earth; and thereby our Saviour's Prediction was fullfilled, that *the Gospel should be preached in all the World*, Matth. 24. 14. And St. *Paul* witnesses that it was accomplished, *Col.* 1. 6. 23. This was the blessed effect of Persecution; and hear what St. *Jerom* said afterwards † *From the Apostles to our times* (saith he) *the Church of Christ flourished by Persecutions; but afterwards, when it came to be under Christian Emperors, it grew greater indeed in Power and Riches, but lesser in Vertues.* And from other Writers we are assured that under bloody Tyrants the Christian Church was famous for it's Faith and Martyrdom, but under Christian Emperours, it was infamous for Ambition, Covetousness, Pride, and Contention. When the Church in the Primitive Age was under Ground, yet then it exalted its Head most vigorously. When it was retired into Caves, and seemed to be buried there, it rose every day with the greater Lustre. *Pagan* Idolaters let out her Blood, but this Bleeding did her good, and made her more Active and Vigorous. Religion grew warm in those Fires, and shined in those Flames. There was not one drop of Blood fell to the Ground, but there arose thence new Converts. As soon as the Judges had past Sentence on the arraigned Christians, others came and confessed themselves to be such, and with Joy and Alacrity received the same Doom. Thus that of the Pious Father is verified, ‖ amidst the Persecutions which the Church suffer'd from her Enemies, she is Multiplyed, and flourishes more and more. Their Oppressions and Hardships contribute to their Wellfare. Their Cries and Complaints conduce to their Spiritual Health; as they say when Young Children vigorously cry, they grow hale, the Members, Veins, and Nerves are extended, and the Body is exercised and strengthen'd thereby.

* Διὰ τοῦ ἑνὸς ἔθνους ἅπαντα ἐπωδήγει πρὸς θεογνωσίαν τὰ ἔθνη. De Provid. Orat. 10.

† *In vitâ Malchi.*

‖ Ἐν τοῖς παρὰ τῶν ἐχθρῶν δεινοῖς πληθύνεται ἡ ἐκκλησία, καὶ μᾶλλον θάλλει. Basil. Epist. ad Alexandrinos.

IV. Further to evince the Doctrine of *Providence*, I will shew how by the *meanest Accidents* and *smallest Occasions* the most *considerable things* are sometimes brought to pass. King *Abasuerus* could not Sleep, and therefore sent *for the Book of Records* to be read to him. It happen'd that that place above all others was turn'd to, which made mention of what Services *Mordecai* had done for the saving of the King's Life. And this happily prov'd a means to deliver the *Jews* from that Destruction which was design'd against them. And so by the over-ruling Hand of Heaven there are many such *accidental* and *small* Beginnings, which are the occasions of great Transactions. In Pope *Leo* the Xth's time the *Reformation* had its rise; but was set on Foot by an Occurrence that was but inconsiderable, and none could have thought would have produced such great things. That Luxurious Pope wanted Money, and he resolv'd to try whether it could be compass'd by the plentiful

tiful Sale of *Indulgences* among the People. Accordingly he sent out his Pardon-mongers; some of whom coming into *Germany*, behav'd themselves very impudently and imperiously. *Tezelius* a Monk was the Chief of these, and both discours'd and wrote in behalf of Indulgences. Whereupon *Martin Luther* discours'd and preach'd against them, and more especially stood up against this bold and chief Merchant of Indulgences, and handled him with such force of Arguments, that 'twas plainly seen he had Truth on his side: and several *German* Princes join'd with him, and *back'd* him; and so the *Reformation* commenced. *Tezelius*'s managing the Sale of Pardons was the occasion of *Luther*'s renouncing *Rome*, and of many thousands (by his Example) doing the same, and making a solemn Defection from the superstitious Practices and erroneous Doctrines of that Church. Who wou'd have thought that King *Henry* the Eighth's marrying his Brother *Arthur*'s Relict should prove the occasion of expelling Popery out of *England*? But we see that by the Divine Management the most considerable Effects have their rise from unlikely Causes, and small and despicable Accidents give birth to the greatest Events.

If we look to the Beginnings of things, we shall see they are *little* and *inconsiderable*. *Rome* set up first with a few roving Shepherds, and began from a lawless Rabble of People. The Capitol at first was cover'd with Thatch: the greatest Houses were but Huts. A poor Beginning had the *Scirifi*, two Brothers in *Barbary*, who desired nothing of their Father but a Drum and an Ensign: but with them they over-ran the two Kingdoms of *Fez* and *Moroco*. *Mahomet*, whose Impostures now possess the *East*, had but a mean Foundation to build upon; it was but a little Spark, which since hath been blown into a great Flame. It is not Bulk and Size we are to observe. In the divine Permissions or Administrations here on Earth the meanest Things and Persons are often most remarkable. And so 'tis in the Earth itself, which is but a Spot in comparison of the spacious Heavens: here we find, that *Europe* is the least of the four greater Parts of the World, and yet is the most considerable of them all.

V. I proceed to another Consideration, to demonstrate the powerful Influence of Providence; and that is this, Men's Words and Actions are so over-sway'd that they speak and do things besides their Intentions and Purposes, that thereby some great End and Design of the Almighty may be accomplish'd. Thus *Baalam* and *Caiphas* spoke God's Mind and Will, and knew it not. Especially this is remark'd by the Evangelist concerning the latter of these. *It is expedient for us* (saith he) *that one Man should die for the People*, John 11. 50. *This spake he not of himself, but being High-priest that Year* (for his High Office and Dignity wou'd give Authority to what he said) *he prophesied that Jesus should die for that Nation*, ver. 51. Which had a higher Meaning than he design'd, for he meant only, that Christ's Death was necessary at that time to keep the *Jewish* Nation from ruine: but there was a farther Sense in his Words, namely, That *Jesus should die not for that Nation only, but for all the Children of God*, in any other Nations, *that were scatter'd abroad*, ver. 52. It is said, That he spake thus, *not of himself*, of his own Mind and Intention, but God moved his Mind to deliver Words which proved true in a higher Sense than he intended them. See this in another Example, The Title which *Pilate* order'd to be set over our Saviour on the Cross was, *This is the King of the Jews*, by which he design'd only to signify Christ's Fault; namely, of aspiring to be King, *Mat.* 27. 11. but behold, he with his own Hand testifies that he is a King, and the King of the Jews. Therefore the High-priest observing this Writing, thus corrected *Pilate*, *Write not*, say they, *The King of the Jews, but that he said, I am the King of the Jews*, John 19. 21. But he wou'd not alter the Superscription: *What I have written*, saith he, *I have written*, ver. 22. Thus he was over-ruled by Providence, and publickly own'd that Christ was the King of the Jews, tho' he never thought of any such thing.

So as to *Actions*, They are guided above and besides the Intentions of Men. *Pharaoh* unwittingly bred up in his own Court that *Moses* who afterwards was the Deliverer of *Israel*, and the Destroyer of another *Pharaoh*. *Paul* and *Barnabas*'s parting one from the other arose from a Quarrel between them: but their Dissention and their Parting were so disposed of in the Event, that they promoted the promulgation of the Gospel, beyond any such thought in either of them. It is not to be doubted that *Augustus Cæsar* was besides his own Thoughts and Intentions, directed by

by God in *Taxing the World*, that, every Man repairing to his City, Christ by that means might be born in the place which was long before foretold. For we must know, that that Tax (as learned Men have observ'd from the original Word ἀπογραφὴ) was not such a one as commanded the paying of *Tribute*, but it was only an Inquest after the Names and Numbers of Persons throughout the whole Empire: it was taking a Catalogue of all Persons, Men and Women in the Empire: and so by vertue of that royal Decree *Joseph* and *Mary* travell'd from *Navareth* to *Bethlehem*, (the City of *David*, because *Joseph* was of the House of *David*) to be there put into the *Census*. *And so it was, that while they were there, the Days were accomplish'd that she should be deliver'd*, Luke 2. 6. By which means the Prophecy, concerning our Saviour's being born in *Bethlehem*, was fulfilled, and his Nativity was hereby made the more Noted and Publick. So that it appears from the whole, that this general Enrolling or Taxing throughout the World, was not so much from *Augustus*'s Curiosity, as God's secret Counsel. It was order'd by divine Wisdom, and contriv'd on purpose to the Designs of our Saviour's Incarnation, tho' the Emperour knew it not. But this we may say, as St. *Chrysostom* long since did, that * *the Emperour* Augustus *was serviceable towards the Birth of Christ in* Bethlehem, *by means of the Tax which he ordain'd.*

* Ὁ Αὔγυς ὑπηρετῆναι τῷ ἐν βηθλεὲμ τόκῳ διὰ τῆς προστάγματος τῆς ἀπογραφῆς. *Hom. in Matth.* 8.

By this divine over-ruling Hand it was, that St. *Augustine* (as *Posidonius* relates in his Life) ran into a Discourse against the *Manichees*, when he was preaching on another Subject, and had forgot the Heads of his Sermon: then, beside his Intentions, he betook himself to that Theme, and one *Firmus* a *Manichean* was converted by that part of his Sermon. So in other Instances we might observe, that many Men's occasional and transient Actions are more useful and eminent than their intentional and studied Undertakings, which arises from this, that the divine Influence is more to be acknowledg'd than their own Forecast and Discretion. I will shut up this Head with a *memorable Passage* in the Life of a good Man, (whom some of us have heard of, and do honour his Name) *viz.* That when a Person, who labour'd under a very great Temptation to murder himself, and had prepared a Halter to that very purpose, and intended to make use of it on such a Night; one who was his Friend, and always was tender of the Welfare both of his Soul and Body, but wholly ingorant of the black and hellish Design, which his Friend had upon himself; this Person (I say) found himself inwardly prompted to take a Journey that Night, and to go and visit him, but he could not tell upon *what account*, no Business calling him thither at that time, and he was some Miles off from his Friend's House. But he was restless and impatient till he went, and lo! when he came, he found the Person just ready to be his own Executioner, he having shut himself up in a convenient place to that end; but he coming in so critical a Season surprized this intended Self-murderer, and prevented his Ruin both here and hereafter. Thus by secret and uncontroulable Motions, and such as are none of their own, God sometimes by a hidden Providence directs his Servants towards the accomplishing of his good Will and Pleasure.

Nay, Men are so over-ruled by Providence, that they oftentimes act (not only *besides*, but) *contrary* to their Intentions and Designs. Thus the Design of the *Babel-builders* was to unite themselves, *lest they should be scatter'd abroad upon the face of the whole Earth*, Gen. 11. 4. And by their Union and Association they thought they should be able to oppress all those that wou'd not be of their Side, and conform to their impious Projects. But we may observe, that this Device of theirs produced a contrary and fatal Event: for God by confounding their Language put a stop to their bold Attempt, and *scatter'd them abroad upon the face of all the Earth*, ver. 8. Their Building was to prevent their Dispersion, but nothing did more effectually bring it to pass. So in the Case of *Joseph*, who was sold by his Brethren, *ye thought evil against me*, saith he to them, *but God meant it unto good*, Gen. 50. 20. You design'd to ruin me, but what you did, tended to mine and your Promotion. The Sorcerer *Balaam* came with an intention to curse God's People, but he was forc'd to bless them. *Achitophel*'s wicked Counsel and deep Plots, which aimed at his own Safety and his Prince's Ruin, ended in his own Destruction and *David*'s good Success. *Reboboam* and *Jehu*, two furious Kings, serv'd their own ends in what they did, that is, they satisfied their Malice and Revenge: but in the mean time they carried on the Design of the Almighty, and fulfill'd his Decree. *Haman* intended the Death of *Mordecai*, and the Destruction of the *Jews*, and by both these the Advancing of him-

himself: but behold his fatal Preferment, he is exalted to a Gibbit of fifty Cubits high, which he had prepared and set up for *Mordecai.*

And so in other particulars, we might observe how the evil Intentions of Men are rectified by Providence, and how their cruel Purposes and bloody Enterprizes, are directed to a far different Issue and End than what they design'd. The *Jews* that sought after the Life of our Saviour with that fair Pretence, *If we let him alone, the* Romans *shall come and take away both our Place and Nation,* were mad to see at last that their Fears were their Ruin, and that which they most of all endeavour'd to prevent, they brought upon themselves, to their utter and final Destruction. In putting of Christ to Death they plotted their own unavoidable Extirpation. And to add a higher Instance than all these, *Judas*'s Treachery, the *Jewish* Priests Malice, and the Peoples Fury in crucifying Christ, were made, by the Divine Disposal, the Means of the Salvation and Redemption of Mankind. There was a sort of mad Hereticks of old, who pretended to * worship *Judas*, as the Author of the greatest Good to Mankind: for, said they, he was beneficial to the World by betraying him whose Death and Passion are the choicest Blessing. But tho' we must not be so extravagant, yet we are to observe the Good which comes to us even by the Hands of the worst Men some way or other, God in his infinite Wisdom causing those Undertakings and Actions to end well, which were evilly purposed.

* Tertul. *Præscript. adv. hæret.* c. 4.

And in general, The disposing and ordering of the sinful Actions of Men to good and excellent Ends is an undeniable Proof of God's providential Care of the World. * "It is the greatest Work of Divine Pro-"vidence, saith an admirable Person among the Ancients, not "to let Sin and Wickedness, which arise from the voluntary De-"fection from our Duty, to be Unuseful and Unprofitable, but to be altogether Be-"neficial: for it is the Work of the Divine Wisdom, Vertue and Power not only to "do good, (for this I may say is the Nature of God, as 'tis the Nature of Fire to "heat, and of Light to enlighten) but to do this much more by bringing to pass a "good and laudable End and Event from those things which are sinfully and "wickedly design'd, and advantageously to make use of those things which seem to "be evil. Which is to be accounted for upon this Truth which I have suggested, namely, That God causes Men, when he pleases, to act contrary to their Thoughts and Purposes; and he wonderfully directs the most vitious Designs of Persons to the best Ends.

* Μέγιστον τῆς θείας προνοίας, &c. Clem. Alex. Strom. *Lib.* 1.

VI. There is another Topick which I shall prosecute, and somewhat largely. I shall take notice of the *various ways of God's preserving and delivering those that are in Distress.* For his *Providence* is manifestly discover'd in the particular Methods of protecting and rescuing them, and of disappointing and punishing their Enemies. Here I will offer these several Particulars,

1. God provides Places of Refuge to shrowd and conceal them, till his own Indignation and that of the Adversaries be over-past. Thus an Ark was prepared for *Noah* and his Family, when an universal Deluge over-spread the whole Earth. And when another, and as furious an Element, was to be made use of to devour the Cities of *Sodom* and *Gomorrah*, *Lot* and his Family were call'd forth, and a *Zoar* appointed for them. King *Ahab*'s Steward was the hospitable Entertainer and Preserver of great Numbers of God's Prophets, whom he dispos'd of by Fifties in close Caves. *Ebedmelech* was serviceable in hiding and securing the Prophet *Jeremiah*. A little before the final Destruction of *Jerusalem* there was a Voice heard, saying, *Come out of her*, which was reckon'd as an Admonition from Heaven to leave that Place: and accordingly the believing *Jews* fled out of that City, and retired to *Pella*, a Town beyond *Jordan*, which declared for the *Romans*, and therefore was a convenient Resort for that purpose. Here the Christian Church was safe, whilst *Jerusalem* was besieg'd. It is probable, that when our Saviour advised * *them who were in* Judæa *to fly to the Mountains*, he meant this place, which (as † *Eusebius* tells us) was situated on the Hills. Our learned *Annotator* is of opinion, that the 7th Chapter of the Book of the *Revelation* gives an account of the great Numbers of Believers that were deliver'd from the common Judgment on the *Jews*, when the *Roman* Army sack'd *Jerusalem*: he understands the place of those *Jewish* Christians who fled to *Pella* before the Seige. Or, if that place be not meant of those People, yet it was verified of some other elect Servants of God who were *sealed* by him,

* *Luke* 21. 21.

† *Hist. Eccl.* l. 3. c. 5.

that they might be exempted from the effects of the fatal opening of the *Seven Seals*. We read that when the great Red Dragon was ready to devour the Woman (the Church) with her Child, *she had a place prepared her of God*, Rev. 12. 6. How often have Good Men been preserved in the common Overthrow? How often hath God provided for them a Hiding-place, a Refuge and Sanctuary in the day of Calamity? The Year before the Rebellion and barbarous Massacre in *Ireland*, the Pious *Usher* left that Country and came over into *England*. And several particular instances of the like Nature might be produced. This is according to that gracious invitation, *Come my people, enter thou into thy Chambers, and shut thy doors about thee: hide thy self as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be over past*, Isai. 26. 2 last verses. God hath his Receptacles and Retiring places for those that fear him, and there they shall be safe and secure. He is pleased sometimes in a very distinguishing manner to make provision for his Servants, when they are exposed to great dangers, and not to suffer the Righteous to be destroyed with the Wicked. A door of escape is opened to them, and they are delivered.

2. The Providential Goodness of God is eminently seen in disappointing the mischievous Enterprises and Bloody designs of the Wicked against the Faithful, by immediately depriving them of a power to effect what they intended. Thus the Armed Force which was sent by the King of *Assyria* to apprehend *Elisha*, was smitten with Blindness, so that they could not so much as discern the Prophet, 2 *Kings* 6. 18. So when a Band of Soldiers was dispatched by the Emperour to seize † *Athanasius*, they took no notice of him, tho' he was in the midst of them, and thereby he escaped safe from among them. Some of St. *Augustine*'s Enemies went on purpose to meet him, and take away his Life, but he that was their Guide mistook the way, and led them into another Road, and by that means the Holy Man was delivered from his Persecutors. Thus, and in several other instances is verified that in Job 5. 12. *He disappointeth the devices of the crafty, so that their Hands cannot perform their Enterprize.*

† *Theodoret. Hist. Eccl.* l. 12. c. 13.

3. God's care of his Servants is remarkable in defeating the mischievous contrivances and plots of wicked Men against them, by raising up such as are able to discover their plots and to baffle them. An *Hushai* is left at *Jerusalem* to countermine *Achitophel*; and accordingly he effected it, and happily unravelled the Politicks of that cunning Statesman. And in all Ages of the Church there have been Men of Wisdom and Counsel, who were endued with Skill to obviate the subtilest designs of wicked Conspirators. The instances of this Nature are frequent, and are easily called to remembrance by those that are conversant in Ecclesiastical History, so that by them we may be confirmed in the Doctrine of Divine Providence.

4. Sometimes Providence hath done this by making those Men discover the Plots themselves. * A Ruffian who was set on work by the *Arians* to assassine *Gregory Nazianzen*, came and confessed it to him, and begg'd his pardon. And sometimes the discovery is made by unvoluntary Mistake, as when † the Vitious Woman who charged *Athanasius* with debauching her, took another Person for him, and so detected her own wicked contrivance to her confusion. We need not alledge any foreign Examples; we have enough at home: but I will only mention the Notorious Gunpowder-Treason, which when the Fatal Time of its accomplishment approached, was brought to light by a Letter, which was sent by one of the Complotters to a Nobleman, wishing him to absent himself from the Parliament. This Note, which was the occasion of the Discovery of that Hellish Conspiracy, like the Devotion of the Papists, spoke in a kind of unknown Language. It was so mysterious, that it had been hard to make Sense of it, had not the Divine Wisdom been the Interpreter. But that which I chiefly remark at present, and which with Thankfulness we ought to recount is, that this Horrid Conspiracy was, by the over-ruling hand of God, revealed first by themselves. They strangely unlock'd their own Intrigues, they divulged what by repeated Oaths and Sacraments they were obliged to keep close.

* *Greg. Naz. de vitâ suâ Carmina.*
† *Theodo. Hist. Eccl.* l. 1. c. 30.

5. The Divine Care and Conduct are seen in this, that wicked Men are cut off at the very time when they are designing Ruine to the Faithful. King *Ahab* threatned he would take off the Prophet *Michah*'s Head when he returned from the Battle, but we read that that miserable Man died in Battle. *Herod* the King stretched forth his Hands to vex certain of the Church: he killed *James*, and apprehended *Peter*, and imprisoned him, *and intended after Easter to bring him forth to the People*, to

to have him publickly Condemned and Executed: but this was prevented by an Angel, who cut that Menacing Prince off, in the midst of his Bloody designs. What had not *Julian* the Apostate done, what had he not contrived, what did he not threaten against the poor Christians? But that Bloody Emperour was taken off suddenly, and being mortally wounded in the Field by an unknown hand, was forced to confess that he was overcome. For throwing up his Blood towards Heaven he expired with such words as these, Thou whom I have so often in contempt called the *Galilean*, and whose followers I used to upbraid with the same Name, Thou hast got the Conquest over me at last. To this purpose is remarkable what *Theodoret* relates, that *Libanius*, a Witty Man of that Age, asked a certain Christian, in way of Drollery and Scoffing, what the *Carpenters Son* (meaning *Christ*) was then doing: to whom the Christian replied with this handsome Repartee, that that *Carpenter* was making a *Coffin* for *Julian*: and so it happened that within a few days after, Tidings came of the Emperour's Death. This is the Remark which I offer, that this implacable Enemy of the Christians who designed far greater Severities against them than he had ever before Exercised, and who had threatned that he would put them in Execution, as soon as he returned home from his *Persian* Expedition, was on a sudden taken away, and (as *Gregory Nazianzen* comments upon his Death) *among Barbarians lost his barbarous and brutish Life*. He who had resolved to destroy the whole Sect of the *Galileans* (as the Christians were then called) was destroyed himself: and that of the Psalmist was exactly fulfilled, *The wrath of Man*, his Persecutions and Outrages, *shall praise thee*, that is, tend to thy Praise and Honour: *the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain*, the farther designs of Malice and Cruelty thou wilt mercifully prevent: what is behind of Fury and Revenge thou wilt check, and not suffer wicked Men to Execute their whole intended Mischief. So afterwards, *Arius* and other Hereticks who vexed the Church of God with their Blasphemies, as well as those who persecuted the Church, were happily hindred by their unexpected Deaths, from proceeding in their designed Outrages.

6. Another Act of God's *Providence* is that he Succours and Relieves his people by Weak and Despicable means, and such as in the Eye of Man seem to be unfit for that End. Creatures of the lowest Rank and Order have plagued the Enemies of God's Church, and contributed towards the Deliverance of it. Lice and Flies have revenged Gods Cause on those who oppressed his chosen. God stands not in need of Great and Mighty Hosts, but can subdue the Haughtiest Tyrants pride by the weakest and vilest Insects. God destroyed the *Philistines* Corn as it grew on the Ground with an Army of Mice, 1 *Sam.* 6. 5. So afterwards the Prophets acquaint us, that Locusts and Caterpillars took God's part against an unworthy People. Some of the *Jewish* Writers, as well as *Mahometans*, tell us that Frogs came and spirted Water out of their Mouths on *Abraham*, when he was cast into the Fire by the *Chaldeans*. I will not vouch the truth of this Tradition, but this I am sure of that the most contemptible Creatures serve God's people, and the Meanest and Vilest things are made use of sometimes as instruments of their Deliverance. And Inanimate and Senseless Creatures, as well as those that have Life, are serviceable to this purpose. *Moses*, a Child of three Months old was cast out and exposed to Crocodiles in the River *Nile*, in a *Boat of Bulrushes*: but here he rid safe in his Reed-boat, in his little Flag-ship: and this small Paper-vessel came safe to Shore, and brought the tender Infant in it. From which eminent deliverance he had his *Name*, Ex. 2. 10. *because he was drawn out of the Water*: which shews that *Josephus* and *Philo* were in the wrong who tell us that *Moses* is an *Egyptian* word, from *Mo* or *May* water, and *yses* or *eses* was saved or delivered.

What glorious works have been atchieved by Poor and mean Instruments! The strong Fortifications of *Jericho* were dismantled, and the lofty Walls of that City fell down flat to the Ground, at the blast of Rams-horns, not with the shock and violence of Martial Engines and Battering Rams. *Sampson* with a single *Jaw-bone* dispatched a Thousand *Philistines*. What strange execution did *Shamgar* on those people with an *Ox-goad*, or (as some read it) a *Plough-share*? We find in *Roman* History that some were called from the Plough to the Dictatorship. This person was truly of that sort, he was preferred to be Judge and Deliverer of *Israel* from that Rural employment. (So afterwards *Elisha* was taken from the Plough to Prophesie. *Gideon* whilst he was Threshing out his Corn, was called by an Angel to be Captain of

Israel. *David* was fetched from the Sheep-fold to a Kingdom, from the Shepherds Crook to a Royal Scepter. That God who can bring his wise designs to pass by weak and slender Assistances, made this Pastoral Youth the Governour and Head of his people, the Pastor of the *Jewish* fold.) And before this, when that Monstrous Giant *Goliah* appeared at the Head of the *Philistian* Army, this same Beardless Strippling stept forth, and with a single Pebble which he took out of the next Brook and fitted to his Sling, pierced the Forehead of that formidable Champion, and at the same time put the amazed Enemies to Flight, and brought Joy and Exultation to all *Israel.* Thus by unlikely and small means God delivers his people.

And have we not had in the latter Ages of the Church evident experience of God's making use of inconsiderable Instruments, such as in Humane Judgment were not like to prove Effectual? When God in mercy to his Church designed to blast the corrupt Principles and Idolatrous Practices of *Rome*, no greater person was chosen out in *Germany* than *Martin Luther*, a poor sorry *Monk*; who was, one would think, a very unequal Match for the *Pope*, and his whole Conclave of *Cardinals*: insomuch that when he began first of all to stir against such Mighty Foes, he was advised by many of his Friends to go back to his Cloister again, and betake himself wholly to his Prayers. *That* they thought was the safest, and indeed the only course he could take. But how God blessed the attempts of this mean Man, and how he gain'd the Favour of the Greatest Princes of the Empire, and how wonderfully the Reformation of Religion prospered under his conduct, we have all heard in part, and some of us are acquainted with the more particular Narrative of it.

But I need not step abroad, I will instance in an Example or two at Home. How weak an Instrument was that Princely Child *Edward* the VIth, to whom we owe the first Happy Reforming of our Church, and restoring of the Purity of Religion? He that was to make so great a Change, to remove so many Mountains of Opposition, even the very famed *Hills* of *Rome*, and to purge the *British* Church from its Corruptions in Doctrine, and its gross Superstitions, and even Idolatry in worship, and its shameful abuses in Discipline, and its innumerable Irregularities in Manners; he, I say, that was to effect all this, was not Ten years of Age when he came to the Crown. Here most truly we may apply that of the Psalmist, *Out of the mouth: of Babes and Sucklings*, that is, of weak and feeble Persons, *God hath ordained Strength, because of his Enemies, that he may still the Enemy and the Avenger*, Psal. 8. 2. And as this Young and Tender Prince was the *Restorer*, so one of the weaker Sex was the first *Establisher* of the Protestant Religion in this Land, and by the Divine blessing reigned above Forty Years a Nursing Mother to it. The Memory of that Virgin Queen shall ever be fresh and blooming: she justly merits to be styled our British *Deborah*, or our English *Esther*, our Preserver, our Deliverer, for she delivered us from Popish Invasion and Tyranny. In short, who will not frankly confess that God hath delivered this Church and Nation by Weak and Feeble means, when he considers that so Great a Work hath been effected by a *Child* and a *Woman*? I might mention also under this Head how in the Reign of Queen *Mary* the Superstitions and Idolatries of *Rome*, the Corruptions of their Priests, and the Vanity and Deceit of their Religion were opposed with an unspeakable Courage, even by Illiterate Husbandmen, and Poor Labourers, and Ordinary Women, who were enabled in some measure to defend the Truth, and to lay down their Lives for it.

7. It may be observed further that God sometimes administers Relief and Succour to his People, in ways that are Prodigious and Unheard of, and besides the common course of Nature, yea in ways that are against it and truly Miraculous. I shall joyn both these together. God preserved his People in the *Red Sea*, and made the very Waves their Shelter, and yet at the same time a Grave to their Enemies. For we read that as soon as the *Israelites* attempted to pass thro', the Waves presently started back as it were affrighted, and stood as Immoveable as the very Rocks which they used to cover: but when *Pharaoh* and his mighty Host pursued these poor Fugitive *Hebrews*, the Sea beat in upon them, and those Liquid Walls which stood so firm before fell down and overwhelm'd them all. Afterwards these *Israelites* had a Guardian *Cloud* which went along with them in the Wilderness, and was a Light to them by Night, and an Umbrella to shade them from the Scorching Sun by Day. They had *Manna* from Heaven to feed them, and

Water

Water gushed out of an unpierceable Rock to quench their Thirst. *Elijah* was provided for in the Desart by a Raven, a Creature that is greedy of its Prey, and cannot spare any thing for a Hungry Prophet. We read that he was fed by an * *Angel*, but that the most *Rapacious Animal* should also do it, is Strange and Surprising. A Man would hardly wish to be left to the Charity of these Creatures. But this is to be imputed to that wonderful Providence, whereby a small Barrel of Meal, and a Vessel of Oil, were so strangely Multiplyed as to serve the Woman of *Sarepta* all the time of the Famine, and to furnish her likewise with Money to pay all her Debts. *Habakkuk* was carried with a Mess of Potage from *Jerusalem* to *Babylon* in a Moment, to feed *Daniel* in the Lion's Den. *Jonas* was three Days and Nights in the Belly of the *Whale*, whereas in three Hours Space, according to the natural course of things, he might have been Digested, and turned into the Nature of the Fish. But this devouring Creature was made the instrument of his Preservation, and disgorged him safe and sound on the Shore of the † *Euxine* Sea. *Daniel* thrown into the Lion's Den was not hurt by them, tho' they devour'd his Accusers and Adversaries. Those Savage Beasts, in stead of preying upon him, tamely truckled to him, and kindly kissed him whom their very Nature prompted to Devour. When Men become Cruel, and put on the Fierceness of Beasts, then by God's Order and Appointment Beasts shall be invested with the Humanity of Men. That blessed Triumvirate of Martyrs that were cast into the Fiery Furnace were safe and secure in the midst of that furious Element, which was so far from consuming them that it only warm'd and chear'd them. All the Efficacy and Force it had was to untie their Bonds, and set those Captives at freedom in the Flames. Nature leaves off working when the Almighty concerns himself for the deliverance of his Servants: but it returns to its own Elastick Course again at God's Command, and thence we read that though these three Young Men were untouched by the Flames, yet those that threw them in were devour'd by them.

* 1 Kings 19. 5.

† Joseph. *Antiq.* l. 9. c. 11.

In the *New Testament* we have as prodigious and amazing Instances of God's delivering his Servants; as when the Iron Gate opened of its own accord to *Peter*, and to his Good Angel. Even insensible things change their Nature, to serve the Divine Providence, or rather, this makes that change in them. Some think that that Passage in 1 *Cor.* 15. 32. *If after the manner of Men I have fought with Beasts at* Ephesus, relates to *Paul*'s being actually exposed to the Wild Beasts in the *Theater* at *Ephesus*, and that those Creatures fell at his Feet, and would not touch his Sacred Body. This literal and strict Sense is hinted by * *Origen*, and † *Theodoret*, and is positively embraced by ‖ *Nicephorus*. But I rather think those words referr to *Acts* 19. 29, 30. whence it may be inferred that St. *Paul* was indeed in danger of being hurried into the *Theater*, where Malefactors were wont to be exposed to Wild Beasts. It was the Peoples purpose to cast him in to them; and so the meaning of those Words [*after the manner of Men I have fought with Beasts at* Ephesus] is no other than this, I was as to the Eye of Man, or as much as lay in Man, as far as Men's Purposes could go, set to combate with Beasts in the *Theater*. But though S. *Paul* was not actually exposed to them, yet it is certain that the Christians were often thrown to them afterwards: and we read that sometimes they were spared by them, as it were to shew that these Brutes were milder than Tyrants and the Church's Enemies. *Eusebius* tells us that in the Persecution which was under *Diocletian*, he himself saw how the Wild Beasts, though they were set on by Hunger, and by burning hot Irons, yet ran back, and could not be brought on to fasten upon the Christians, yea not so much as to touch them. So likewise Ecclesiastical History assures us that the Fire had no power upon the Bodies of some of the Primitive Martyrs. When *John* the Evangelist was by the command of *Domitian* cast into a Vessel of Scalding Oil, he came out of it safe and whole. The Flames would not fasten on *Polycarp*: Or, as some relate, when a Spear was thrust into his Side, the Fire was quenched by the Blood that issued out of it. Thus Creatures of all Kinds forget their Nature and Inclination, that they may do Homage to their Maker, and be serviceable to those who are loved by him.

* Περὶ ἀρχῶν. Lib. 1.
† *In Loc.*
‖ *Hist. Eccl.* l. 2. c. 15.

There is plenty of Modern Passages which might be particularly alledged on this occasion: which though they may not be thought to be Miraculous, yet they are Wonderful and Prodigious. *Zuinglius*'s Heart was found whole and unconsumed in the Ashes after his Body was Burnt. So likewise the Heart of Archbishop *Cranmer*

mer remained untouched of the Fire, when the reft of his Body was quite consumed by it. That certainly is very Remarkable which we meet with in the Narrative of the *Irish* Massacre, that one of the *Assassines* threatning a Woman to sheath his Sword in her Bowels if she did not deliver him the Money which she had, she told him that he could not kill her unless God gave him leave: whereupon he ran three times at her with his Sword, and yet was not able so much as to pierce her Skin. So as to the manner of Relief, *that* was strange and stupendous that during the Siege at *Rochelle* in the Year 1573, the famished Inhabitants were provided for in an unexpected manner by the coming up of a Multitude of Fishes, and even of that sort which was never seen on that Coast before. And many other Occurrences might be named wherein Divine Providence hath thought fit to act even besides the course of common and natural Causes, when it was designed to shew a peculiar kindness toward Persons. But this is a Rare and Unusual way now under the more fixed and regular Dispensation, and we are not to depend upon it, or often to expect it. Wherefore when we have any instances of it, we are the more induced to admire and adore the Divine Providence.

8. I pass to another Particular; it is by vertue of this Divine Superintendency which I'm speaking of that the Enemies of the Church, and those that intend Mischief to the Faithful Members of it, become their Friends, and study to do them Kindnesses. It hath been commonly experienced that when Righteous Men have been in the Hands of those who seemed to have the greatest *Power*, and it is certain had as great an *Inclination* to hurt them, God hath changed the Hearts of these latter, and given them new Purposes and Designs. I will prove this by Sundry Examples. *Esau* was enraged against his Brother *Jacob*, and came with a vast Train to execute his Fury and Revenge: but God immediately restrained him, and so changed his Heart that his Anger and Indignation left him, and he kindly embraced his Brother, and * wept over him for Joy. Which is an Example so much the more to be observed by how much a harder matter it is to reconcile *Brethren* when they disagree than other Persons, as the wise Man hath observed, *A Brother offended is harder to be won than a strong City, and their Contentions are like the Bars of a Castle*, Prov. 18. 19. They are generally Immovable, and it is the most difficult thing imaginable to bring them to a Reconciliation. But God, in whose hand are the Hearts of all Men, to turn them whither he pleaseth, by his own Secret Power, and working drew the Heart of this Implacable Man to shew Favour to his Brother *Jacob*. When † *Laban* full of Wrath pursued *Jacob*, God pacified him in a Dream, and bid him not hurt that good Man. God gave ‖ *Joseph* Favour in the Sight of the Keeper of the Prison, and he committed all to *Joseph*'s Care, and nothing was done without his Order. The * *Egyptian* Midwives, who were commanded to strangle and destroy the *Hebrew* Children at the time of their Birth, obeyed not the King's Command, but saved the Men-children alive.

* *Gen.* 33. 4.

† *Gen.* 31. 23, 24.

‖ *Gen.* 39. 21, 22.

* *Exod.* 1. 18.

It is so admirably ordered by Providence sometimes that the Enemies of the godly shall unawares harbour and foster them even when they know nothing of it. Thus *Moses* was brought up and nourished by those who commanded the *Hebrew* Infants to be Slain, and to be Slain for *his sake*, if † *Josephus*'s Relation be true, who saith the King of *Egypt* was alarmed by a Prophecy which one of the *Egyptian* Scribes told him of, that one should arise of the *Hebrew* Race that should be Great, and exalt that People to Honour, and make them a Scourge to the *Egyptians*: Whereupon he put forth that Edict, that the *Hebrew* Infants should be drowned. As God *turned the Hearts of the* Egyptians *to hate* and oppress the *Israelites*, so *he turned their Hearts* to shew Kindness to that People, as we expressly read in *Exod.* 11. 3. 12. 36. *The Lord gave them Favour in the Sight of the* Egyptians, *so that they lent unto them Jewels of Silver, and Jewels of Gold, and Rayment.* ‖ *Balac* the King of the *Moabites* hired *Balaam* to curse the People of *Israel*, and he went with him on that Errand, but the Sorcerer in stead of cursing, blessed them (as I observed before) and prophesied against *Moab*. * The *Israelitish* Spies were kindly entertain'd by a strange Woman, in a strange Country, and were hid safe on the Top of her House when search was made for them. † When *Saul* sent pursuivants to take *David*, they forgot what they came about, and fell a Prophesying; and when *Saul* himself came, God so changed him that he turned Prophet also.

† Antiq. L. 5. 2. c.

‖ *Numb.* 24.

* *Jos.* 2. 1.

† 1 *Sam.* 19. 20. 23.

A more general Instance I might here insert, such as respects the whole Nation of the *Jews*, *Exod.* 34. 24. When all the serviceable Men of the whole Land of *Israel*,

Israel went up to appear before God thrice every Year, he promised and assured that People that *no Man should desire their Land*, they should not be in danger of Invasion from their Enemies in the mean time. The Heathens round about them should be so far from invading their Territories, that they should not so much as *desire* any such thing: they should not have any such Covetous and Ravenous Thoughts in their Minds. To this the Learned Dr. *Hammond* thinks those words of the Psalmist allude, *The Princes of the People are gathered together, even the People of the God of* Abraham: *for the Shields of the Earth belong unto God*, Psalm 47. 9. that is, when the People of *Israel* went to worship at *Jerusalem* (which they did three times a Year) and left none at home to defend and secure their Habitations, then God was their Shield and Defence: or, *the Shields of the Earth are Gods*, (as the *Hebrew* hath it) *i. e.* all means of Safeguard are in God's Power, he can and will defend his Servants whilst they are employed in his Work, and to that end he will mitigate the Hatred and Fierceness of their Enemies, and cause them for a time to lay aside all thoughts and desires of doing any harm to his Servants.

I proceed to other Instances, which are as remarkable; when *Jeremiah* was apprehended and arraigned, and his death was contrived, both by the *Grandees* and the Rabble of the *Jews*, and the Execution of their bloody purpose was continually expected, then it was that he who alone hath the Power of Life and Death, reprieved him from Perishing by their Cruel Hands, and by unexpected Motives and Arguments turn'd the Hearts of his Adversaries to him, as we read in *Chap.* 26. of *Jeremiah*, v. 10. *&c.* And afterwards, when the same Prophet was cast into the Dungeon, and sunk in the Mire, God stirr'd up the Heart of *Ebedmelech* the *Ethiopian*, one of the King's *Eunuches*, to sue for his Enlargement, and he obtain'd it, *Jer.* 38. 8. *&c.* When the *Jews*, his own Countrymen, treated him so evilly, a Stranger, a Foreigner was kind to him. And which is yet further remarkable to our present Purpose, this *Ebedmelech* who shew'd his Kindness to *Jeremiah*, found the like himself from the *Chaldeans* when they came and took *Jerusalem*: he was preserved in that General Destruction, as you read in *Jer.* 39. 17. He that favours good Men in time of Need shall be Rewarded; and for the effecting of this God will marvellously change the Hearts of Men. Thus *Jeremiah* was spared at that time by the particular Order of *Nebuchadnezzar* King of *Babylon*, who gave charge to the Captain of his Guards *to take him, and look well to him, and do him no harm, but do unto him even as he should say unto him*, Jer. 39. 12. Which was the actual accomplishment of that Promise which God made to this Holy Man, *Jer.* 15. 11. *I will cause the Enemy to intreat thee well in the time of Evil, and in the time of Affliction.* *Ahasuerus*, who had decreed the Ruin of the *Jews* alter'd his Purpose, and gave out a decree for the Rescuing of them, and the destroying of their Enemies. So in the time of the Captivity, *Daniel* and other *Hebrews* were taken to Court, and were in great Favour. So 'tis said *the Lord stirr'd up the Spirit of* Cyrus to put an end to the *Jewish* Captivity, 2 *Chron.* 36. 22. This *Pagan* Prince was a professed Enemy to the *Jews*, besides that they were his Captives and Bondmen; yet he unexpectedly released them, and in the most obliging manner took care about their safe return to their own Country, and favour'd their Religion and Worship. And afterwards, 'tis particularly recorded that *God turned the Heart of* Darius *King of Assyria*, to promote the Work of the House of the Lord, *Ezr.* 6. 22. And *he put it into King* Artaxerxes's *Heart*, to do the same, as we read in *Ezr.* 7. 27.

So when *Alexander* the Great was on his march with his Victorious Army to sack and overthrow *Jerusalem* (for being flushed with Success and Victory over other Countries, he design'd to make the *Jews* sensible of his Conquests by their own fatal Experience) he was met by *Jaddus* the High Priest, and was so pacified that he courteously embraced him, and not only spared the City, but shew'd favour to the *Jews*. He shed no Blood but that in Sacrificing, for * *Josephus* (who relates this Story) tells us that he offer'd Sacrifice to God, and gave Gifts to the Temple, and in stead of falling upon the *Jews*, shew'd great respect to them, and granted them several Immunities. In this and the forementioned Instances of Crowned Heads there are two Passages of Scripture eminently verified: the first is that of the Psalmist, *He shall cut off the Spirit of Princes*, Psalm 76. 12. God often takes away from them that Spirit of Enmity and Hatred which is in them against his Servants, and he so changes their Inclinations and Wills that of Enemies they become Friends. The other Text which is signally accomplished is that of *Solomon*,

* *Antiqu.* l. 11. c. 8.

mon, The King's Heart is in the Hand of the Lord, as the Rivers of Water. He turneth it whithersoever he will, Prov. 2. 1. Which Words seem to be an allusion to Nature's deriving the Waters thro' several winding Veins of the Earth for the use of Mankind: or it may referr to something artificial, *viz.* The Husband Man's or Gardiner's bringing the Water to his Grounds through several Chanels and Trenches, as he sees fit. Thus, saith the wise Man, God deals with Mens *Hearts*, he turns them out of their usual Course and Chanel, he makes them leave their proper Inclination and Propension, and come into that way which he pleases to direct them to. But more especially the *Hearts of Kings* are here said to be in God's Hand, and I have given particular Proofs of their being *turned by him whithersoever he will.* The Hearts of those Princes who were Strangers and Enemies to his People, have been strongly inclined to be favourable to them.

This remarkable Act of Providence was never more seen than in the times of the Gospel. God was pleased in a most visible manner to change the Minds of Men, and to divert their evil and wicked Propensions, and to make them favour the Gospel even against their Wills. Hence it was that many professed *Jews*, who had a natural Averseness and Hatred to Christianity, shew'd themselves kind to our Saviour and his Apostles. When the Priests and Rulers sent Messengers to lay hold on Christ, instead of executing their Commands, they applauded Him, and his Words and Actions, and were more ready to defend and protect him and his Disciples, than to offer any Violence to them. From many Examples it might be proved, that God kept their Enemies from doing that Evil which they were inclin'd to, and he stirr'd them up to do that Good which they never intended. When the Apostles were convened before the *Jewish* Sanhedrim, and were in danger of losing their Lives for their professing and preaching the Gospel, God raised them up a Friend even in the Council, who by his prudent Advice so wrought upon the rest that they saved the Apostles from suffering Death, *Acts* 5. 34.

Ecclesiastical Writers acquaint us, that some of the Heathen Emperours of *Rome*, notwithstanding their averseness to the Christian Religion, were very civil and obliging to the Professors of it. *Augustus* favour'd the *Jews* and their Religion, as * *Philo* testifies. The † Emperor *Tiberius* by Edict commanded that none of the Christians should be disturb'd for their Religion. Some of the *Roman* Emperors had a good Esteem for the Christian Cause, and wou'd have dedicated Temples to Christ. The bloody Emperor *Commodus* was kind to the Professors of Christianity. And some of them, tho' their inbred Antipathy to Christianity, and the Complaints and Outcries of the Pagans might have excited them to punish the Christians, yet never attempted it. Others caused the Persecutions which they had begun against them to cease, and strictly commanded, that none should trouble the Christians for the future. * *Pliny*, the *Roman* Emperor's Governour in *Spain*, writ to him in favour of them; and many others treated them kindly, tho' they were their Enemies. In the time of the primitive Persecutions, and afterwards, we hear of several Persons whose Hearts God was pleased so strongly to influence upon, that they pitied, reliev'd and favour'd those Sufferers and Martyrs, whose Religion they were Strangers to. He that out of *Stones* could raise up Children unto *Abraham*, did wonderfully mollify the *Obduracies* of Men's Minds, and gave them Bowels of Mercy and tender Compassion towards the distressed Servants of Christ. Thus the good Word of God was accomplish'd, *Prov.* 16. 7. *When a Man's ways please the Lord, he maketh even his Enemies to be at peace with him.* These shall lay aside their savage Nature, and put on Pity and Humanity, Kindness and Charity, and shew themselves obsequious to those who are so to God and his Laws. This lets us see how reasonable it is that we should not be afraid of Men. Do we fear Lions, and other fierce Creatures when they are muzzled, and chain'd up? Shall we tremble at our fiercest Enemies when God can, and many times doth restrain them and keep them in, when he makes them quite other Men, and puts new Tempers and Dispositions into them, or (which is all one) makes them act contrary to those Inclinations and Dispositions which they have? This is the marvellous Hand of God, and deserves to be reckon'd among the Testimonies of *Divine Providence*. Of which,

* *De Legat ad Caium.*
† *Hist. Eccl.* l. 2. c. 2.
* Lib. 10. *Epist.* 97.

9. This also is a very signal one, That God is pleased to deferr the delivering of his Servants, till he sees them involv'd in the greatest Dangers, and destitute of all Means of Deliverance. This is the admirable Juncture of Time which God choofes,

chooses, namely, When the Enemies of the Church are most strong and mighty, most proud and arrogant, and when his Servants are even despairing of all Succour. First, I shall shew that it is so; and, Secondly, I shall make it evident that the *Providence* of God is especially concern'd in this. It is abundantly manifest from the Records of the Sacred History, that the most proper Season of God's appearing for his Church, and rescuing the faithful Members of it, is when they seem to be void of all hope of Recovery. Then, then the Almighty steps in, and seasonably assists them. To begin first with single Persons, and so to proceed to whole Communities and Nations; *Abraham* and his beloved Son *Isaac* were reduced to the utmost Streights, were brought to the Extremity of Danger, for the latter was bound and laid on the Altar, and the former's Knife was lifted up to take away his Son's Life. Now this was the fit time for the Angel to appear and interpose, and to divert the fatal Weapon from the Youth's Throat. Therefore on that occasion it was said, *In the Mount of the Lord it shall be seen*, Gen. 22. 14. that is, God's Providence is to be observed and admired in such a wonderful Deliverance as this, namely, in so critical a minute. The Psalmist records of *Joseph*, that *his Feet were hurt with Fetters, he was laid in Iron*, he was used with the greatest Severity; or as it is according to the *Hebrew*, *his Soul came into Iron*, his Slavery was so grievous, that not only his Body but his Soul seem'd to be imprison'd: his Mind, no less than his Feet, was fetter'd: *until the time that his Word came: the Word of the Lord tried him*, Psal. 105. 18, 19. until that observable Time came, wherein God would relieve him, after he had suffer'd the Extremity of Pain and Misery, which was a great *Trial* to him. The Prophet *Jonah* is another eminent Example of God's preserving those who are reduced to the most deplorable Condition. Nothing could look more like Destruction and present Ruin than the gaping Jaws and direful Belly of a Whale, and therefore he styles this latter the *belly of Hell* or the *Grave*. But this was the time for God to deliver this distressed Man, by speaking to the mighty Fish to restore him to the dry Land.

St. *Paul* was a Prisoner at *Rome* when he wrote his 2d Epistle to *Timothy*, and there he lets us know that he had had a Hearing before *Nero* about the Matter for which he was kept in Restraint, but that *all Men then forsook him*, chap. 4. ver. 16. that is, When he was to plead for himself, and stood in need of their Testimony to clear him, they treacherously left him: or understand it thus, Those who by their Power and Interest might have proved his Friends, utterly abandoned his Cause, and denied him their Assistance. This was St. *Paul*'s Extremity, but this was the fittest Season for God to appear in his Behalf, as he adds in that place, *Notwithstanding the Lord stood with me and strengthned me, and I was deliver'd out of the Mouth of the Lion.* When all Persons relinquish'd him and his Cause, God was his Pleader and Advocate, and defended this forsaken Client. The Apostle in *Acts* 27. relates another remarkable Deliverance, to wit, in his Voyage to *Rome*. He was tost to and fro with a most violent Tempest: the angry Billows raged and rose high, as if they wou'd quench the very Lights of Heaven, for so we read, *Neither Sun nor Stars in many Days appear'd: and all hope that they should be saved was taken away*, ver. 20. But when they were thus hopeless, God was their Deliverer, and and after a most frightful and dangerous Shipwrack he brought the Apostle and all the Passengers safe to Land.

But 'tis observable, that not only Persons but Nations and Churches have been happily deliver'd at such a time, when all humane Helps fail'd them. I will instance in the *Jewish* and *Christian* Communities. The critical Season of God's rescuing the *Israelites* out of their Bondage in *Egypt* is remarkable. *I have surely seen*, saith God to *Moses*, *the Affliction of my People which are in* Egypt, *and have heard their Cry, by reason of their Task-masters: and I am come down to deliver them out of the Hand of the* Egyptians, *Ex.* 3. 7, 8. The Almighty is come down, and yet this Deliverance is not to be wrought presently: *the Bush* must still *burn*, the Calamity must continue yet awhile, as that Vision of *Moses* denoted. The Oppression of that People was not yet at its heighth, their Burden was not heavy enough. Therefore observe, that when *Pharaoh* doubled the *Israelites* Task of making Bricks, *Ex.* 5. 6. then their Deliverance drew near, then *Moses* bestirr'd himself, and went to *Pharaoh*, and never left off till he procured their departure out of *Egypt*. And when thro' the outstretched Arm of the Almighty they were come as far as the *Red Sea*, they seem'd then to be brought thither to be devour'd by it: but in that critical Season which

look'd so fatal and destructive, God's Providence concern'd it self for their Deliverance. And afterwards, we find that this is the Method which God promises the *Israelites* to make use of, *Deut.* 32. 36. *The Lord shall judge his People*, plead their Cause, and give Sentence on their side, and condemn their Adversaries, and *repent himself for his Servants*, he will as it were (for 'tis spoken after the manner of Men) repent of his Wrath and Displeasure against them, but this he will not do presently: he will delay it till he finds them in a helpless Condition, *when he seeth that their Power is gone, and there is none shut up or left*, that is, when there is nothing at home and nothing abroad to relieve them. It is a proverbial Speech to express the utmost Streights and Afflictions, and that all things are in a desperate State. Then, then it is that God assures his People that he will be their Helper and Deliverer.

See this also in the *Christian* Church: God hath deliver'd them when their Enemies have been in the heighth of their Rage and Fury against them. Thus when under *Diocletian* and his Collegues in the Empire the Persecution was the hottest, and the Storm highest, and the Torments more exquisite than ever, as well as more numerous, *Constantine* the Great appear'd, and put a Period to all the former Outrages that the Christians labour'd under. Then it was that the Servants of God were freed from Persecution, namely, after their Sufferings had come to the heigth. And so we are told it shall be with the mystical *Babylon*. When *she sits a Queen*, and *is no Widow*, and *sees no Sorrow*, but inflicts the extremest Sorrows on the Faithful, then is the time that her *Plagues*, *Death and Mourning* shall come upon her, *Rev.* 18. 8.

I am in the next place to shew how the *Providence* of God is concern'd in this matter, and how this Dispensation of Heaven is conducible to great and worthy Purposes. It is so, First, In respect of God himself: Secondly, In regard of his Servants who suffer: Thirdly, Because of the Wicked who are their Oppressors and Persecutors.

1. In respect of God himself, it is congruous that he should suffer his Children sometimes to be brought to the very brink of Destruction, before he conducts them into a place of Rest and safety, because this makes most for his Glory. First, For the advancing of his *Power* and *Might*. As appears in that notable Deliverance of the *Israelites* from the Hands of *Pharaoh*, whom *God raised up* for this Cause (as we read both in *Ex.* 9. 16. and *Rom.* 9. 18.) *that he might shew in him his Power*. The Enemies Strength invites God to display his Almighty Power, *Psal.* 18. 17. *He deliver'd me from my strong Enemies, and from them that hated me, for they were too strong for me*. And again, *Psal.* 35. 10. *All my Bones shall say, Lord, who is like unto thee, who deliverest the Poor from him that is too strong for him?* God delights at such a Season as this to exert his Omnipotency, and to let us know that he hath the command of all Creatures, and that he controlls all Second Causes, and that he hath the whole World at his Disposal, and can do what he pleases in the Kingdoms of the Earth. There shall arise Light to the Distressed out of the thickest Darkness: Relief shall arrive when they least expect it, and when humane Aids fail.

Again, This is to demonstrate, and at the same time to inhanse God's transcendant *Goodness* and *Mercy*. His Favours are most esteem'd and priz'd in such Circumstances: the loving Kindness of God is by this means exalted. For now the Righteous are throughly convinc'd, that *God is good to* Israel, that he is interessed in the Sorrows and Sufferings of his Children, that he is afflicted in their Afflictions, and that he will not suffer them to be continually under their Burdens, and to groan under long and tedious Oppressions.

Further, The Design of this Dispensation is to magnify the *Wisdom* of God, which is able to turn the Counsels and Contrivances of the Wicked into folly. *Come, let us deal wisely*, said *Pharaoh* and his Projecters: let us act like Men of great Prudence and a vast Reach: let us find out some new way to plague these sawcy *Israelites*: let us use our utmost Plots and Intrigues to be reveng'd on these aspiring Slaves: let us double their Task and Tale of Bricks, and by Tyranny and Oppression bring down their insolent Spirits. When thus these great Head-pieces and Politicians contriv'd the Ruin of these poor Bondsmen, the All-wise God appear'd in their behalf, and infatuated these mighty Statesmen, and confounded their Devices. So true is that in *Job* 5. 13. *He taketh the Wise in their own Craftiness, and the Counsel of the froward is carried headlong*. Thus with respect to the Glory of God's Power,

Power, Goodness and Wisdom; it is fit he should shew himself the deliverer of his People in that Season when they most of all stand in need of his Assistance.

2. In respect of *the Servants* of God it will appear no less accountable, because this is the best Expedient to check in them all Pride and Boasting: and it will likewise prove the greatest furtherer of all their Graces. As I have proved already that God's Glory is advanced, so it is as evident that the Creatures Boasting and Glorying is diminished, and that these two ways, First by discovery of their *Weakness*. It is no wonder that God relieves not the distressed Members of his Church, till they are reduced to the greatest Streights, if we consider that hereby they may be convinced of their own Inability and Insufficiency. Now they see that they are Weak and Feeble of themselves, and they have no reason to vaunt of any Power and Strength of their own. This cannot be better expressed, than in the words of that Holy Woman's Song, 1 Sam. 2. 3, &c. *Talk no more so exceeding proudly, let not Arrogance come out of your Mouth:* for (as it follows) *the Bows of the mighty* (those that boasted in their Might) *are broken, and they that Stumbled* (that is, the Weak and Feeble) *are Girt with Strength. God will keep the Feet of his Servants, and the Wicked shall be silent in Darkness, for by Strength shall no Man prevail.* Secondly, by a discovery of their *Sinfulness* in such a Season as this that I am speaking of. When they are brought into a very low State before they are relieved, they are thereby made sensible of their Guilt, and apprehensive of their Punishment they deserve; as Malefactors are sometimes brought to the place of Execution, and are offered there a Forfeit to Justice, and then are Reprieved.

Again, we shall be persuaded that this Method conduces to very important ends and purposes, if we remember that it is designed to try and exercise our Graces, and to put us upon the more vigorous performance of our Duty. When the Ship hath sprung a Leak in diverse quarters, and the raging Waves make their impetuous Inroads into her, when the implacable Winds shatter her Mast and tear her Tackle, when danger and death are threatned both from within and without, and all things look black and direfull, it is time then for the Mariners to bestir themselves, and to ply their work with indefatigable Industry, to be Active and Busie, and to take all care imaginable to secure their Vessel and themselves. In a resembling sort, God is pleased to let his Waves and his Billows go over us, and to exercise us with Storms and Tempests, and to render our condition extreamly dangerous, that this may be the time of acting our Graces with extraordinary diligence, that our Zeal and Vigour and Activity may be exerted, and that no Endowment bestowed upon us may be idle and useless. God rescues not his Servants till their crying Necessities invite him to it, that he may give them occasion to bring every Vertuous and Holy Disposition into actual Exercise. And lastly, his main design is that we should live to the praise of our Gracious Deliverer, and dedicate ourselves entirely to his Service. And thus we see to what ends this Dispensation is serviceable in respect of the persons that are delivered.

3. I might shew it likewise in regard of the Persons, from whose Malice and Fury God's Servants are delivered. Even with respect to these, Good Men are not delivered till they are reduced to the utmost difficulties, upon this twofold account, 1. For the *Conviction* of the most implacable Enemies of the Church. Their mouths are stopped, they are Self-condemned, and their Thoughts and Words tell their Resentments, tho' their Lives do not. God acquainted *Moses* that this should be the effect of his wonderful rescuing the *Israelites* from the *Egyptian* Bondage, *Exod.* 7. 5. [The *Egyptians* shall *know* that I am the Lord, when I stretch forth my hand upon *Egypt* and bring out the Children of *Israel* from among them,] they shall *know* it, and be convinced of it. Such unexpected deliverances cause them to take notice and stand in awe of the wonderful Providence of God, to reverence and adore his marvellous Administration of things in the World. *All men shall fear, and shall declare the work of God*, as the Psalmist speaks on this occasion. 2. The *Conversion* of some of the most stubborn Adversaries of the Church hath been the result of God's wonderful dealings in this kind. There are several Instances of this in the Primitive times of Christianity; by observing these remarkable acts of Providence many Persecutors were kindly wrought upon, and led to Repentance and Amendment of Life, when all other means have proved ineffectual.

10*ly*, and *Lastly*, There is one way more of *Deliverance*, wherein the Divine Management and Providence are plainly discovered, and that is when Good Men

and such as are in God's favour are freed from all Calamities by his removing them out of the World, and taking them up to the Mansions of Glory. This is that which the Prophet *Isaiah* mentions, chap. 57. v. 1, 2. *The Righteous is taken away from the Evil to come: he shall enter into peace, they shall rest in their Beds, each one walking in his uprightness.* This is a singular Act of the Divine Care and Kindness to take them away, that they may be out of danger, that they may be safe and secure before the Storm comes, God is pleased to hide his Servants, to shelter them in the Grave, or rather to translate them to Heaven; where they shall be free from the insolences and outrages of the bloodiest Tyrants and Persecutors and where they shall be out of the contagion of this sinful World. Thus we read that *Enoch* was taken up to God before the profligate Generation of Men entered on the Stage. Good King *Josiah* was called away a little before the Captivity of *Judah*. He was *gathered into his Grave in peace, that his Eyes might not see all the Evil that God was to bring upon that place*, 2 Kings 22. 20. He being the only true Mourner for the Sins of the Land, was to be exempted from the Punishments which were to be inflicted on it, and accordingly was sent to the place of Rest. That Pious Father St. *Augustine* was removed hence just before the Sacking of *Hippo* (of which place he was then Bishop) by the Savage *Gothes* and *Vandals*. And in like manner, several who have been the Favourites of God have been by death secured from the approaching Calamities. The Gentile Moralist had arrived to a Notion of this, * Who knows, saith he, but that God who hath a Fatherly Care and Providence over Mankind, and foresees what will happen, snatches some out of the World by an Untimely (tho' unto them a Seasonable) death? So it is, God is pleased to take those from the common Calamity who had before separated themselves from the common Sins and Enormities.

* Τίς γὰρ οἶδεν εἰ ὁ θεὸς, πατρικῶς προνοούμενος, καὶ κηδόμενος τῶν ἀνθρώπων γένους προορώμενος τὰ μέλλοντα συμβήσεσθαι, προεξάγει τινὰς ἐκ τῶν ζώντων αὐτοῦς. *Plutarch. de Consolat. ad Apollon.*

And on this Ground is built an Observation that may be frequently made; namely, that one unhappy Sign of the Miseries coming upon a People is God's taking away from among them such as are eminently Good and Holy. He uses to call his chosen Servants aside when he intends Ruin to a Nation. It is an ill Presage of approaching Evil when the Godly are removed. It was often said by *Stilico* that if *Ambrose* the pious Bishop of *Milan* were taken away, *Italy* would soon be laid wast: nor was it a vain prediction, for that Good Father being dead, presently the *Vandals* invaded the Country. It is a peculiar favour vouchsafed to some Holy Men, to be called off when National Calamities and Distresses are at hand. This taking them from Calamities is a Blessed Deliverance, and far exceeds the taking away Calamities from them, for tho' God may for a time grant this latter, yet those Evils may return again, and with greater force than before: but the Saints being once rescued by death, are delivered for ever. And thus I have finished that General Head which I last proposed; namely, that the *Various ways of God's preserving and delivering his People, and punishing their Enemies* are a demonstration of his Providence.

VII. Another is this, that the *Outward Evils* and *Afflictions of this World* are made serviceable to our *Spiritual Advantage*, and wonderfully conduce to the welfare of our *Souls*. The Benefits of this Nature which accrue to us may be considered either as they belong to *this Life*, or to *that which is to come*. I begin with the former, and they may be comprised under these two Heads, 1. Those which respect *Sin*, and the Opposites of it, *Grace* and *Holiness*. 2. Those that regard *Comfort* and *Joy*.

First, as to *Sin*, the Crosses and Calamities of this Life are serviceable to discover it to us, and give us a sense of it. This is thus expressed by that great Sufferer *Job*, *If they be bound in Fetters, and be holden in cords of Affliction, then he sheweth them their work and their Transgressions, that they have exceeded*, Job 36. 8, 9. For pain and distress open those Eyes that Sin had shut, and remind Men of their Follies, and cause them to reflect on them with Remorse and Repentance. Thus *Joseph*'s Brethren, who in their prosperous condition felt no Anguish in their Consciences for the Cruelty they had shewed towards their Brother, when they were brought into Trouble in *Egypt*, and were imprisoned and hardly used, called to mind their Hard and Inhumane treating of him, and broke out into this Confession, *we are verily guilty concerning our Brother, in that we saw the Anguish of his Soul when*

when he besought us, and we would not hear: therefore is this distress come upon us, Gen. 42. 21. Their present Affliction did not only bring to remembrance their past Miscarriages, but produced in them an acknowledgment of it as the cause of their Calamity. And now they accuse and condemn themselves for that barbarous fact which they had committed twenty Years before, and which it is probable they would have quite forgot if such a distress as this had not refreshed their Memories. *Art thou come to call my Sins to Remembrance?* Said the sorrowful Widow to the Prophet under the dolefull apprehensions of her Child's Death, 1 *Kings* 17. 18. Now when her hopeful Son was taken away, she remembers her too great fondness and indulgence towards him, or the bad Example which she gave him: or she reflects on some other Delinquencies, it may be of an higher Nature, and is deeply touched with the sense of them.

Again, The Afflictions of this Life are not only serviceable to discover Sins past, but to hinder the Commission of them for the Future. *Before I was afflicted*, saith the Psalmist, *I went astray*, Psalm 119. 67. Which is a brief, but full description of a Prosperous Sinner: he wanders and goes astray, and furiously runs into the Paths of Sin and Vice: but Providence arrests him by some signal Calamity and Distress, and stops him in his Career, and brings him to serious thoughts of what he hath done, and prevents his acting of that Wickedness which he was before enclined to accomplish. *I will hedge up thy way with Thorns*, that is, sharp Afflictions, saith God by his Prophet *Hosea* to the Sinners of those times, Chap. 2. v. 6. There is a Necessity of this, for otherwise their Sins would grow so imperious and insolent, and they would be so hardned in them, that their eternal safety would be greatly hazarded. Therefore God oftentimes Hedges in the way of the Proud with Shame and Dishonour, the way of the Covetous with Losses and Poverty, the way of the Prodigal and Luxurious with Want and Scarcity (for the same *Hedge* serves for both of them, though they be Sinners of a different and contrary Quality) the way of the Intemperate and Unchast with sottishness of Mind, and Diseases in their Bodies. These are Restraints upon them, and block up the way to their beloved Vices, and sometimes are happily instrumental toward the utter expelling them. *By this*, saith the Prophet, that is, by this severe Chastisement, *shall the iniquity of Jacob be purged, and this is all the Fruit, to take away his Sins*, Isa. 27. 9. And it is fruit enough, it is ample and large Success. God is our good Physician: Affliction is the Medicine he prescribes and prepares for us: it is bitter indeed, but wholesome, for it is useful to purge the depravity of our Nature, and the vitiosity of our Manners. All the time before the *Babylonian* Captivity, namely in *Egypt*, in the Wilderness, in *Canaan* the *Jewish* People were given to Idolatry, even when they had Miracles of all sorts, and the appearance of Angels, and the visits of the Prophets; but after the Captivity, in which they were in greater Distress and Confusions than ever before, they left off their Idolatry, and never practised it afterwards, though they had neither Miracles, nor Angels, nor Prophets. Such was the vertue of their severe Afflictions in *Babylon*: such was the wonderful benefit of their Captivity.

Secondly, As to *Grace* and *Holiness*, these worldly Evils are advantageous for the discovering and trying, for the begetting and increasing of them. First, For the *discovery of Grace*: which sometimes lies Dormant, and appears not till a day of Affliction calls it forth. Here is the advantage of an adverse Condition, it shews a Man to himself, and to others, and gives experiment of inward and hidden Vertue to both. Affliction is *a Fight*, Heb. 10. 23. now, if ever, it will be seen what *Armour* we have, and what *Skill* we have to *use it*. Affliction is a *Fiery Trial, which is to try us*, 1 Pet. 4. 12, it is to disclose and try our Vertues and Endowments, to shew the Strength and Truth of our Graces. I can't but observe how one of the *Gentile* Moralists gives his Suffrage to this, † we cannot possibly (saith he) have a certain proof and assurance of our Strength and Abilities, unless when many difficulties appear on all sides, yea and sometimes approach very near to us.

† *Vires nostræ nunquam certam dare fiduciam sui possunt nisi cùm multæ difficultates hinc & illinc apparuerint, aliquando verò & propius accesserint.* Sen.

Again, These are serviceable to *beget* and *increase Grace*, as well as to discover it and make trial of it. *It yields the peaceable Fruit of Righteousness unto them that are exercised thereby*, Heb. 12. 11. This Fruit is Various and Manifold, which I shall shew in these ensuing Particulars.

1. The

1. The genuine effect of Affliction is *Faith* in God. *I have heard of thee*, saith *Job*, *by the hearing of the Ear, but now mine Eye seeth thee*, Chap. 42. v. 5. In trouble and distress the Eye of Faith is open'd and clear'd, so that the Man is able to behold those things which he could not discern by the Eye of sense and common Apprehension. We now arrive to a firm and steady Belief of all the great Articles of our Religion: we no longer question the reality of those profound Truths which we were enclined to doubt of before. We now heartily embrace the Promises of the Gospel, when we stand in need of them; we confide in *Jesus* the Author of them, and rest our Souls upon him as our only Support. When all outward Enjoyments are withdrawn, then by Faith we take a prospect of Heaven and Happiness, and those eternal Pleasures which are at God's Right-hand. This we see in *David*, he was taught to fly unto God, and to trust in him in the days of Distress and Calamity; and never did his humble Confidence rise to the highest pitch till he was brought low, and worn out with Trouble and Misery, as we may observe in his Excellent *Psalms*. It was in the times of extream Danger that the *just* were *to live by Faith*, Hab. 2. 4. This is the *Livelihood* of the Saints when they are in the greatest Wants and Perplexities. And God is pleased to exercise them with these, that he may train them up to *depend* and *trust on* him, that they may act Faith more vigorously than ever. The Apostle tells us this is the design of God's Severe Dealings with his Chosen, 2 *Cor.* 1. 8, &c. *We would not, Brethren, have you ignorant of our Trouble, which came to us in* Asia, *that we were pressed out of Measure, above Strength, in so much that we despaired even of Life: we had the Sentence of Death in our selves, that we should not trust in our selves, but in God who raiseth the Dead.* We were brought into those Streights, that we might with greater Confidence rely on him whose Prerogative 'tis to raise the Dead. And another Apostle lets us know that *Faith being tried with Fire*, that is, with Afflictions, *is found unto Praise and Honour and Glory*, 1 Pet. 1. 7. is improved, and exalted to the highest Degree, and is therefore commended and rewarded by God.

2. By the Divine Disposal and Providence *Repentance* is made another Fruit of that Righteousness which is the product of Afflictions. Therefore we may observe that it immediately follows in that above-cited Chapter of *Job v. 6. I abhor my self, and repent in Dust and Ashes.* With Faith (mentioned in the foregoing Verse) is join'd true Repentance, and both are the blessed effects of sanctified Troubles. When *Manasseh* was in Fetters and Chains, then he humbled himself for his Idolatry and other gross Offences, and turned unto the Lord. Hunger and Want sent the Prodigal Son home to his Father with penitential Resolves and Purposes. And in many other instances it is evident that Distress and Calamity are powerful Motives to stir Men up to Repentance. But nothing hinders it more in some Persons than a prosperous State. Take their Character from the Psalmist, *Psalm* 73. 5. &c. *They are not in Trouble like other Men, neither are they plagued as other Men. Therefore Pride compasseth them about as a chain, Violence covereth them as a Garment. Their Eyes stand out with Fatness, and they have more than Heart could wish. They are corrupt, and speak wickedly concerning Oppression: they speak lostily. They set their Mouth against the Heavens, and their Tongue walketh through the Earth.* That is, their Ease and Plenty administer to all sorts of Vice: these are the Parent of Debauchery, Pride, Presumption, Vain glory, Lust and Wantonness: they foment all extravagant Appetites, and stifle the remembrance of Death and Judgment. But *the Rod and Reproof give Wisdom*, Afflictions and Crosses beget that Wisdom whereby we loath and abhor our former Folly, and heartily repent of all our Miscarriages.

3. Another Fruit is the *Spirit of Prayer and Supplication.* Isa. 26. 9. *With my Spirit within me will I seek thee early: for when thy judgments are in the Earth the inhabitants of the World will learn Righteousness.* Hos. 5. 15. *In their Affliction they will seek me early.* Psalm 130. 1, 2. *Out of the Depths have I cried unto thee, O Lord! Lord, hear my cry: let thine Ears be attentive to the Voice of my Supplications.* Now the Voice of Prayer is Loud and Shrill, and now you may expect it will reach God's Ears. *Exod.* 2. 23. &c. *The Children of* Israel *sighed by reason of the Bondage, and they cried, and their cry came up unto God, by reason of the Bondage: and God heard their Groaning, and he remembred his Covenant with* Abraham, Isaac *and* Jacob, *and God had respect unto them.* When God's Servants have been streightned by Calamities, their Prayers have broken forth with a more than ordinary Force and Impetus. The Prophet observes this of the People of God in his Days, *Isa.* 26. 16. *Lord, in trouble have they*

they visited thee, they poured out a Prayer when thy chastning was upon them. What dull and drowsie Prayers do we put up in our Prosperity? How faint and cold are our Supplications? How frozen our Devotion? But Affliction blows up the Sparks into a Flame. This we see in Holy *David*, Psalm 116. 2. &c. *The Sorrows of Death compassed me, the Pains of Hell got hold upon me, I found Trouble and Sorrow: then I called upon the name of the Lord, O Lord, I beseech thee deliver my Soul.* And those of his *Psalms* which are most expressive of his Devotion, and composed of earnest Petitions and Supplications, were endited when he was in great Troubles and Distresses. It is this adverse and afflictive State that hath extorted Prayer from the most profligate Sinners; thus it is particularly Recorded of *Manasseh* that *when he was among the Thorns and bound in Fetters, he besought the Lord his God, and prayed unto him*, 2 Chron. 33. 11. &c. It is observ'd even of the Heathen Mariners, that when a dreadful Tempest arose, *they cryed every Man unto his God*, they became Loud and Clamorous in their Prayers, as if they would drown the noise of the Storm, with that of their lamentable Out-cries. The *Catholick* Law of Nature bids Men seek to God for help in their Miseries: even the most haughty despisers of him do now sue for Compassion and Favour, and are earnest Petitioners to Heaven. But it is in *Good Men* that this effect of outward Crosses is most Remarkable, because it proceeds from a truly religious Mind, and the consequences of it are such as are not to be found in any Bad Men.

4. The next grace which Affliction is very serviceable to promote is *Humility*. It is the wise design of Providence to exercise Men with Difficulties and Crosses that they may learn not to be Proud and Presumptuous. We know who it was that said in his Prosperity, *I shall never be moved*, Ps. 30. 6. which is the Language of Pride and Self-confidence: but it follows, *Thou didst hide thy Face, and I was troubled*, v. 7. His prosperous State was changed into another of a quite different Nature: which was very well for him, to check the growing insolence of his Spirit. *Hagar*, whilst she was in *Abraham*'s House, grew Proud and Malapert: she must therefore be sent into the Wilderness, and there she learns Humility. It is particularly Recorded of *Manasseh*, whom I mentioned before, that *when he was in affliction, he humbled himself greatly before the God of his Fathers*, 2 Chron. 33. 12. And from other Examples we are inform'd that bodily Grievances and Pressures are an excellent Remedy against a proud and vaunting Spirit. I will propound one notable one, that of the great *Assyrian* Monarch, *Dan.* 4. 29. &c. where we find him strutting in the Palace of the Kingdom of *Babylon*, and glorying after this manner, *Is not this great* Babylon *that I have built* (whereas 'tis well known that he was not the Person that built it: if he repaired it, that was all. Another had the honour of the first erecting it, namely *Nimrod*, called *Belus* in prophane Story. But with a proud Man *Repairing* must pass for *Building*.) *Is not this great* Babylon *that I have built for the House of the Kingdom, by the might of my Power, and for the honour of my Majesty?* Whilst these big words were in his Mouth, a voice from Heaven proclaim'd his doom, and he was driven from the Society of Men, and his dwelling was with the Beasts of the Field, and he eat Grass like an Ox. After this wonderful Metamorphosis was over, he was reduced to a *humble* and sober sense of himself. He talks no longer of *great Babylon*, and of his *Might*, and his *Majesty*, but in this more becoming style you may hear him speak, *v.* 34. *I lift up my Eyes to Heaven, and blessed the most High, and praised and honour'd him that liveth for ever, whose Dominion is everlasting, and all the Inhabitants of the Earth are reputed as nothing by him, and he doth according to his Will, and none can stay his Hand, or say unto him, what dost thou? Now I* Nebuchadnezzar *praise and extoll and honour the King of Heaven, all whose works are Truth, and his ways Judgment, and those that walk in* Pride *he is able to abase.*

Thus the day of Affliction is a good expedient to convince Men of God's Greatness and Soveraignty, and of their own Frailty and Insufficiency, and consequently to bring them upon their Knees, and to humble them. Had not *Nebuchadnezzar* been transform'd into a Beast, he had never approv'd himself a Man, he had not attain'd to wise and sober apprehensions of things, and understood his Maker and himself. The Days of Calamity teach Men what they are, and what they should be, and check them for their former Arrogance and Self-conceit. S. *Paul* himself tells us *that lest he should be exalted above measure, through the abundance of Revelations, there was given to him a Thorn in the Flesh*, some sharp and poignant Affliction,

ction, caus'd by the Messenger of *Satan*, or even *Satan* himself is meant here. And this without doubt is one reason why good and holy Men are under Pressures and Grievances, that they may not be puffed up with Pride and vain Conceit of their own Strength. They are compell'd to *take up their Cross*, that they may be taught thereby to *deny themselves*, to renounce their fond Presumptions, and to extoll the absolute Sovereignty of God. Thus Pride is cured by Afflictions. Which I take to be the Meaning of the Apostle's Words, *Tribulation worketh Patience*, Rom. 5. 3. that is, an humble Submission to God. It follows, *Patience worketh Experience*, that is, Trial of our selves and our Sincerity; *Experience hope*, that is, without this approbation of our Sincerity we could have no ground for Hope. So I pass to the next Head.

5. *Sincerity* is effectually procured by the Hardships and Trials of this Life. For this Refiner's Fire purges away all Dross and Dregs, the Defilements of Formality and Dissimulation. We cannot but observe, that *Hypocrisy* is a Sin, which for the most part attends a prosperous State of Life. But when the evil Day comes, then 'tis in vain for Men to counterfeit and dissemble. They must appear then as they are: for the Wind and Tempest will blow off all Masks and Vizours, all Pretences and Disguises. Now is the time when it will be seen whether Men serve God for sinister Respects and worldly Advantages, or whether they do it out of the pure love of Vertue and Religion. Now, if ever, it will be seen whether they will hold fast their Integrity amidst the most pressing Calamities, whether they will persevere in their Duty when the World frowns upon them, and even God himself appears angry, and exposes them to the greatest Hazards. Thus there was Proof of *Job's* Integrity: he pass'd the Fire Ordeal, and was found Innocent. And on this Account the Afflictive Providence of God is very useful and advantageous.

6. *Heavenly Mindedness* is hugely promoted by the evil Accidents which we meet with here. These make us pant and breath after a Better-state: these make us cry out with the Psalmist, *Wo is me that I sojourn in Meshech*, &c. *O that I had the Wings of a Dove, that I might fly away and be at rest! Whom have I in Heaven but thee?* &c. Affliction doth this by convincing us of the World's Vanity, Emptiness and Uncertainty. As that King of the *Vandals*, when he was taken Captive by *Belisarius*, and brought into the open Court to be look'd and laugh'd at, and when he beheld the Emperor on his Throne in great State, and all the People standing round and gazing at him, he with a loud Voice utter'd that Apophthegm of the Wise Man, *Vanity of Vanities! All is Vanity.* His Eyes which before were dazled and blinded with the Splendor of his Magnificence and Grandeur, were now enlightned by this strange Turn of his Condition: and that Vanity which he discern'd not before, he is now fully sensible of by an Experiment. Thus the wise Disposer of all things is pleas'd to check Men's inordinate love of worldly Greatness by the Disappointments and Crosses which they are liable to. By these the Sweets of Life are imbitter'd, and we are taught, that sensual Pleasures and Enjoyments merit not our noblest Affections, because they are changeable and uncertain, and have Vanity impress'd upon them all. We are too much inclin'd to use that Language, *It is good for us to be here; let us build us Tabernacles*: let us place our Rest and ultimate Satisfaction in the things of this Life. Wherefore a great Storm of Affliction is sent to beat down our Tabernacle, and with a *Linquenda domus & tellus*, proclaims in our Ears the Unstableness of all worldly Possessions. So that there is nothing better than Tribulation to convince us of the true Nature of our present State, and to bring us off from our earthly Dregs, to rack us from our Lees, to cure us of the love of the World. There is nothing better than this to wing our Souls with devout Thoughts of another Life, to stir up in us strong Desires and Pantings after Heaven.

Thus we see the excellent Contrivance of Providence in this Affair. All the supposed Evils and harmful things of this World are unspeakably profitable to us in respect of Grace and Holiness. They are serviceable to make us sensible of our corrupt Nature, and to bemoan it, which in this State is preferable to perfect Innocence: they humble us for Sin, which is more eligible in our present Condition than to be without Sin: they are powerful Means of Mortification and Repentance: they exercise our Faith and Patience: (Graces which wou'd lie dead, if they were not kept alive and made vigorous by Troubles and Distresses:) they are useful to teach us Humility, and profitable for the exploration of our Sincerity and Fidelity:

ty: for raising our Devotion to its utmost Pitch, and for fixing our Thoughts, or Desires and Affections on Heaven. If all these be great Blessings, (as certainly they are) then we are very much beholding to Afflictions, because they effectually promote and advance all these: yea, they augment and improve them, and bring them to Perfection. *Joseph* in the *Hebrew* Tongue signifies *increasing*: it seems to be a nominal Emblem and Representation of all those who suffer the *Afflictions of* Joseph: their Endowments and Graces thrive and increase abundantly.

In short, *All Religion* is completed by this Method of Divine Providence: for here we are fully instructed in every part and branch of our Duty. Rightly therefore is God said to *open Mens Ears to Discipline* in the time of their Trouble and Adversity, *Job* 36. 10. so that they are taught to submit entirely to the Will of God, and to comply with all his Commands. And we have it from the Experience of another holy Man, *that it was good for him that he had been afflicted, that he might learn God's Statutes*, Psal. 119. 71. than which nothing higher can possibly be said in the praise of Affliction. As our Lord, so his Servants *learn Obedience by the things which they suffer*, Heb. 5. 8. We may say of this, as the Apostle of the Law, *It is our School-master to bring us to Christ*, and effectually to teach us that Lesson which he hath order'd his Disciples to be instructed in. The foresaid inspired Author hath summ'd it up in brief thus, *God chastneth us for our Profit, that we may be Partakers of his Holiness*, Heb. 12. 10. Afflictions are God's Laboratory and Crucible in which he tries and fashions *his Gold*, (for so the Holy Scripture is wont to compare pious Sufferers to Gold in the fire) and now it is that he stamps his *Image* upon them. The Case is this, God takes care of our Souls as well as our Bodies, and therefore by his Wisdom hath made it requisite, that we should be sometimes afflicted. Some adverse Accidents are become necessary in this Life, some of them at least can't be spar'd, for God hath made them subservient to our greatest Good and Advantage, that of our Better-part. These Occurrences, which we commonly style *Evil*, are really Good, because they help to make us so. Or say that they are Evil, yet the wise Providence of Heaven extracts the greatest Good out of them.

I proceed to the second Spiritual Advantage which attends Affliction when it is sanctified, and that is *Joy and Comfort*. The * *Jewish Rabbins* tell us, that *David* had a Harp hung up at his Beds Head, which as often as the *North* Wind blew upon it in the Night, yielded a pleasant and agreeable Sound. This is a Fiction of those Men, and they are full of them, but it suggests a very serious and real Truth, *viz.* That the sharpest Blasts (which are a representation of Affliction) make a good Man Music at Midnight, and fill his Breast with heavenly Joy and Solace. When *Paul* and *Silas* were imprison'd, the Musick of their Songs compounded for all the Sorrows that Condition made them liable to. This is according to what that Apostle and his Companions had really found and felt, *As the Sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our Consolation aboundeth by Christ*, 2 Cor. 1. 5. This is that *hundred fold now in this time* which our Saviour speaks of, *Mark* 10. 30. and is the remuneratory Appendix to our Sufferings in this Life. All are not favour'd in that manner that *Polycarp* was, who when he was approaching to his last Suffering, heard a Voice from Heaven saying to him, † *Be strong, and of a good Courage*: but most are wonderfully supported by God, and receive here an earnest of those heavenly Joys which they hope to be soon Possessors of. Sometimes their Joy swells very high, and even over-runs the Banks: for now the Love of God appears to the full. A *Baton*, wherewith one is struck and beaten, is a Mark of *Illegitimation* and *Bastardy* in *Heraldry*: but in Divinity it is not so. Here *Chastisements* are honourable Badges, they are a Sign of *Sonship*, and that Legitimate. *If ye endure chastning, God dealeth with you as with Sons: but if ye be without Chastisement, then are ye Bastards, and not Sons*, Heb. 12. 7, 8. Paternal Correction carries great Benedictions with it, and clear Discoveries of the Divine Kindness and Favour: on which account it begets a great Joy and Gladness in the Mind. Thus I have shew'd how in respect of *Spiritual Blessings in this Life*, there is Advantage and Profit that accrues to us by *Afflictions*, and consequently that they are Arguments of *Providence*.

* *Talmud.*

† Euseb. *Hist. Eccl.* l. 4. c. 14.

I must in the next place make it evident, that they are much more Advantageous in respect of *Eternal Good*. And, 1. They prepare us for everlasting Glory. 2. They exalt and inhanse it. First, I say, they *prepare* us for it. The Apostle tells us, that this is the Road and Passage to Happiness, *we must thro' many Tribulations enter*

into the Kingdom of Heaven. And they fit us for it by causing us to wish for that better State where we shall be free from all Crosses and Calamities. We are told, that when *Zeno* had suffer'd Shipwrack and lost all he had, he laid aside all thoughts of Trafick, and set himself seriously to the Study of Philosophy. Our Crosses should have the like, but a higher and nobler Effect upon us; when we are Losers, as to the things of this World, we should negotiate and traffick for another, we should betake our selves to the study of the best Philosophy, and that is Christianity and a godly Life. The Bitterness of our present State should fit us for the pure Delights of the future one. The Uneasiness of our Condition now should make us the more concern'd for an unchangeable Duration hereafter. It is then the Contrivance of Divine Wisdom to dissettle us from this Earth by the Evils that happen in it, to make us entertain serious Thoughts of that Place where there is an eternal Sabbath.

Secondly, These evil Occurrences *increase* and *exalt* our Glory, as well as prepare us for it. This is implied in what St. *Peter* saith, 1st Epist. chap. 4. ver. 13. *Rejoyce in as much as ye are Partakers of Christ's Sufferings, that when his Glory shall be reveal'd, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy.* This at the last Day will add to the Glory of the Saints, to think of their former Sufferings, and to compare their past Sorrows with their present Enjoyments. This is the meaning of another Apostle's Words, 2 *Cor.* 4. 17. *Our light Affliction which is but for a moment worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of Glory.* The * Word in the *Greek* which is here translated *Affliction* is properly *pressing*, and it may intimate to us, that the Troubles and Distresses which are our Allotment here, are the *Wine-Press* of Heaven. Now, what doth the generous Grape lose by its being *press'd* but a Skin of no value? As for the noble Juyce which it contain'd in it, it is carefully preserv'd, and preferr'd to high Services: it is serv'd up in Gold and Chrystal, and runs in the Veins of Princes. And shall I add, that the † *Latin* Word which answers to the *Greek*, owes its Original to a Noun that signifies a *Threshing Instrument*? What doth the Wheat lose by the Flail but its Husk and worthless Film? But by this it is fitted for the Tables of Kings, nay, which is more, for the universal Need of Mankind. We see how useful a thought the *Words themselves* have convey'd to us, and how suitable it is to our present purpose, when we are discoursing of the great Profit of Afflictions. We gain by this *Pressure*: this Load, this Weight proves beneficial to us, because it works for us the *weight of Glory.* We receive advantage by this *Threshing*, for we are bruised and beaten to be made whole, and to be fitted for everlasting Happiness, which will receive an Improvement and Addition from the Hardships and Grievances of this Life. Our eternal Felicity will be inhans'd by reflecting on the Labours and Sorrows we underwent whilst we were in these Houses of Clay. The Difficulties of this present State will yield us a greater Sense and fuller Perception of our Bliss. The quiet Haven will be the more welcome to us after the Storms and Tempests which we have met with here. Thus on all Accounts it appears, that the Crosses of this present Life are of great Use and Advantage to us. And indeed, if the *Commission of Sin*, which is in it self Evil, and is the Original of all the Evils in the World, be contrived by God to good Ends and Purposes, (as we have all the reason to believe, that unless Sin could have been some ways order'd for God's Glory and the Good of Mankind, infinite Wisdom would not have suffer'd and permitted it) if *Sin*, I say, be thus suffer'd in order to most excellent Ends, surely then we may acknowledge, that when God exercises his Servants with *Afflictions*, they are designed for their Good and Advantage, which is the thing I undertook to prove, and at the same time to evince the *Providence* of God.

* Θλίψις.

† *Tribulatio.*

VIII. Having hitherto proceeded only *at large*, and shew'd, that *in general* the *evil Accidents* of this Life are beneficial to us, I intend now in the next place to go thro' the *several Kinds* of them, and particularly to demonstrate that *every one* of them is attended with considerable Profit and Advantage: and this I hope will be more evidently serviceable to assert and maintain the Doctrine of *Divine Providence.*

I begin first with POVERTY, which is deservedly reckon'd among the *Afflictions* and *Calamities* of this Life; yea, among the chiefest of them; especially if great Plenty and Abundance have preceeded it. For that of a known Writer is experimen-

perimentally true, * It is not so grievous a thing not to purchase and acquire Prosperity, as it is bitter and troublesome to lose that Prosperity which we were Possessors of. But suppose a Man fallen from a Condition very Wealthy and Prosperous to that which is very Mean and Poor, yet there is always something left to make an Advantage of. Concerning this one of the Ancient Sages hath this pretty Thought, † Water and soak'd Barly, (the common Food of the Poor) or a piece of Barly Bread, saith he, are not such horrible things as some imagine, but it is the greatest Delight for a Man to be able to derive a Pleasure from these, and to have reduced a Man's self to that which no adverse Fortune can rob him of. Whereas the Great and Rich are not without continual fears of being stripp'd of what they have, this Man is free from such uneasy Apprehensions, because Providence hath placed him in that State whence he can fall no lower.

* Οὐ γὰρ τὸ μὴ λαβὼν τὰ ἀγαθὰ ἔπω χαλεπὸν, ὥσπερ τὸ λαβόντα στερηθῆναι λυπηρόν. Xenoph. *Instit. Cyri*, lib. 7.

† *Non horrenda res est aqua & polenta, aut frustum hordeacei panis, sed summa voluptas est posse capere etiam ex his voluptatem, & ad id se reduxisse quod eripere nulla fortunæ iniquitas possit.* Sen. *Epist.* 18.

Again, The same Moralist suggests that Poverty is in this respect advantageous, that * it shews us who are our Friends, and what Regard and Kindness they bear to us. Tho' a Man wou'd scarcely call for Want and Penury, to make this Experiment, yet it is some satisfaction, when he is in want, to know who they are that are true and faithful to him, and have not built their Friendship on mere secular Interest. It might be further advanced, that Scarcity is the Parent of *Invention*, and this the Mother of *Arts*. Exigency and Industry do frequently go hand in hand, and excite Men to useful Discoveries. Thence among the *Gaditani*, saith *Philostratus*, there was erected an Altar in common to *Poverty* and *Arts*, because the former is a Friend of the latter: and 'tis commonly seen that Want and Necessity put Men upon wise Searches and Disquisitions, and as wise Attempts and Enterprizes. Thus it was *the poor Man that by his Wisdom deliver'd the City*, Eccl. 9. 15.

* *Ad hoc unum amanda est Paupertas quòd à quibus ameris ostendat.*

But there is a far greater Benefit in a mean Condition than this; namely, That Persons of this Quality are generally more capable of Religious and Vertuous Impressions, and are more favour'd by Heaven than the Rich and Prosperous. It is particularly recorded, that *the Poor had the Gospel preached to them*, Mat. 11. 5. they were the Men that were more especially affected with our Saviour's Discourses and Sermons, they were the Persons that were effectually wrought upon by his holy Doctrine. Conformable to which is that of St. *James*, *Hath not God chosen the Poor of this World, rich in Faith, and Heirs of the Kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him?* Jam. 2. 5. What would they have more than Grace and Glory? They are inrich'd with the Merchandice of that which is *better than the Merchandice of Silver, and the Gain thereof than fine Gold. It is more precious than Rubies, and all the things thou canst desire are not to be compared unto it.* Those who are deprived of worldly Goods and Estate, are often blessed with the inestimable Treasure of Wisdom, and the Fear of the Lord, which are infinitely preferable to Wealth. Tho' they have not Plenty of that *Food which perisheth*, yet they are not denied *that which endures to everlasting Life*. Having not the good things of this World, they are design'd for the better things of another. Being destitute of worldly Wealth, they have spiritual Riches and an eternal Treasure. In short, tho' they be Mean and Poor in this present Life, yet they are Rich in Reversion; and are certain of a future Inheritance.

Here I would observe, that it hath been generally voted by the wisest Men even among the *Gentiles*, (for *their* Judgment and Practice in this matter may provoke *us* to outdo them) That bodily Want and Scarcity do not hinder a Man from being *Good*. The Philosopher in his *Problems* pleasantly asks, Why Poverty dwells rather with the Good than the Evil. He answers, because Poverty is generally hated, and therefore she flies to the Good, thinking she may be well treated there, and being reputed harsh may find some Entertainment among those who meet with hard Usage from bad Men. * When *Heraclitus* invited his Friends to his poor House, he told them that the immortal Gods were even in that place, they chiefly vouchsafing their Presence to the Mean and Good. † It is possible, saith the great *Stagyrite*, for those who have no Dominion by Sea or Land

* Aristot. *de Partib. Animal.* l. 1. c. *ult.*

† Δυνατὸν γὰρ μὴ ἄρχοντας γῆς καὶ θαλάττης πρᾴττειν τὰ καλά. *De Morib.* lib. 10. c. 9.

to do honest and brave things. And again, saith he, * A Man of a mean Figure in the World is in a Capacity to act according to the Rules of Vertue.

And that he hath actually done so, is very evident. The Character which † *Plutarch* gives of *Aristides* is that he was the worthiest Man of all *Greece*, though he was Poor, and left not so much behind him as would bury him. * Another presents us with a great number of Examples of the bravest and usefullest Persons that were of a low Condition. He tells us that among the Ancient *Romans* * those that were called to Magistracy were poor Rusticks. The Consuls and Dictators and the most deserving Men were not owners of many Acres of Land, had no Retinue of Servants, no store of Furniture: their Daughters were without Portions, and their Sons without Inheritance. Their grand design and business was to do good to the Publick, not to enrich themselves. They looked not after Estates, but minded the Wellfare of the Community.

* Καὶ γὰρ ἀπὸ μικροῦ δύναιτ' ἄν τις πρακτικὸν καὶ ἀγαθὸν εἶναι. Ibid.

† *In vitâ Aristidis.*

‖ *Val. Max.* Lib. 4. cap. *De Paupertate laudatâ.*

* *Quos pericula Reipublicæ Imperatores arcessebant, angustiæ rei familiaris (quid cesso proprium nomen veritati reddere?) Bubulcos fieri cogebant.* Ibid.

If we should cast our Eye on the *Christian Church* (which we ought chiefly to have an Eye to) we should find *Christ* and his *Apostles* in a low and despicable State: and afterwards, the most eminent Fathers and Doctors of the Church, and those of the greatest Merit were reduced to Poverty and Want. And it were easie to give in a Catalogue of excellent Persons in all Ages that lived and died Poor. But no Riches can be compared with the *Poverty* of such Men: for think it not strange if I say they were generally rewarded with Poverty for their Goodness: and their goodness was increased and improv'd by their Poverty.

But on the other hand, we see what Evils and Mischiefs do commonly attend on the Wealthy and Prosperous. Such Men generally are indisposed for Religion and Goodness, yield to all Temptations, are corrupted by Flatterers, despise Reproof, hearken not to Reason, are led by their carnal Appetites, and are wholly taken up with sensual and earthly things. They are senseless and secure, and think not of a future State, and give not themselves time to be serious, sober and considerate. So that we cannot wonder at our Saviour's positive Doom, *A rich Man shall hardly enter into the Kingdom of Heaven*, Mat. 19. 23. This plainly evinces the singular Advantage of a mean State of Life, and shews that Providence concerns itself to make it easie to us.

But there is another thing I will add, and insist upon a little, wherein I shall further prove what I have offerr'd under this Head. The design of Providence without doubt in inflicting Poverty is to convince Men that *Godliness* and the blessed attendants of it are the *True Riches*; and to put us upon attaining these the wise Man tells us that *in the House of the Righteous is much Treasure*, Prov. 15. 6. And this Treasure is called *Durable Riches*, Prov. 8. 18. which are the same with *Righteousness*, in the same Verse, for I conceive this latter interprets the former. All other Treasures may be imbezell'd and exhausted, but this never can, but is a perpetual Spring and Fund. [* Thou hast *much wealth*, if thou feareſt God, and departest from all Sin, and dost that which is pleasing in his Sight] said that good Man in his Instructions to his Son. † That Soul is exceeding *Rich* which is filled with the Divine Graces, said an excellent Jewish Writer. But more especially this is the style of the *New Testament*. The Divine things offerr'd in the Gospel, that is, the Merits and Righteousness of Christ, the Graces of the Spirit, saving Knowledge, Faith, Repentance, the Word of God, and Eternal Life are compared to a *Treasure*, and are called *the Pearl of great Price*, Mat. 13. 44, 46. These are *the True Riches*, Luke 16. 11. and are opposed there to the *unrighteous Mammon*, or *False* and *Deceitful Riches*. In the Apostle's Writings the precious Benefits of the Gospel are styled *the Riches* of Christ, the *Riches* of Grace, the *Riches* of his Mystery, &c. To these referr the *Gold*, *Silver* and *precious Stones* mentioned by S. *Paul* in 1 *Cor.* 3. 12. in comparison of which all other things are but *Wood*, *Hay*, and *Stubble*. The Wealthy Men of the World are exhorted to look after a more eligible kind of Wealth, that is, to be *rich in good Works*, 1 Tim. 6. 18. And our Saviour before had spoken of being *Rich towards God*, Luke 12. 21. that is, being indued with divine and heavenly Riches.

* *Tob.* 4. 21.

† Πᾶμπόλλη γὰρ πλουσία τῆς Ψυχῆς ἡ τῶν χαρίτων τοῦ θεοῦ πιμπλήσεως. Philo.

This

This was the Sense and Language of the *Ancient Christians*, as we may gather from *Clement* of *Alexandria*, who hath a whole Chapter to this Purpose, * That a Christian, a Believer, a godly Man is the only Rich Man: he alone is possessor of the True Riches. And this was the Notion of the most improved *Gentiles*: it was the Assertion of the *Stoicks* that † all things are a wise Man's: he is Master of the amplest Riches and Wealth. The *Roman* Orator hath bravely descanted on this Maxim, ‖ That a wise and vertuous Man is the only Person who merits to be denominated Rich. And thence he takes occasion to inveigh most warmly against *Crassus* the wealthiest Man in *Rome*, because he boasted so much of his Baggs, and made such a noise with his Money, and twitted other Men with their empty Pockets, and emptier Coffers. "Are you the "only Rich Man? Saith he; this is strange. What say you, if I prove that you are "not Rich at all? What if I make it appear that you are Poor? For whom do we "mean by a Rich Man? On what Person ought we to fasten that Term? I con-"ceive on him who is blessed with such a Portion of this World's Goods that he is "easily induced to live freely and contentedly, who covets nothing which he is not "in Possession of, and which he sees is denied him by the great Governour of the "World. An estimate of True Riches is not to be made from the common Vogue, "or from the great Heap and Amassment of Riches, but from the Mind and Soul "of a Man. So then he that hath never so much, and yet is eager after more, "and is of a restless and unquiet Mind in the midst of his greatest Affluence, can't "be styled *Rich*. His Purse and his Chests are more properly Rich than he: they are full and satisfied and can hold no more, but he pines and is poor in the greatest Abundance. Then he adds, "Not to be Craving and Covetous is to be "Wealthy: to be content with what one hath, is the greatest and most certain Riches. I will mention only another great Man among the Heathen Writers, who raises himself higher, and speaks divinely, though very concisely and briefly, * *He that is like to God*, saith he, *doth on that very account possess the True Riches.*

* Ὅτι μόνος πλούσιος ὁ Χριστιανός. In Pædagogo.

† Τῶν σοφῶν δὲ πάντα εἶναι. Laert. in Zenone.

‖ Ὅτι μόνος ὁ σοφὸς Πλούσιος. Cic. Paradox.

* Τὸ γὰρ θεῷ ὅμοιον τῇ ὁμοιώσει εὐθὺς πλοῦτον ἔχω τὸν ἀληθινόν. Porphyr. de Abstinent.

Thus you see 'tis agreed who they are that deserve the Title of *Rich*, and what it is that makes them so. We are (as we have heard) taught this by mere Moral Men, as well as by those of a higher Principle, which shews that such Maxims are to be universally received. To resemble God is to be really *Great* and *Rich*. Contentment and a good Conscience are a fair Estate, and the Favour of God a plentiful and never-failing Revenue. Now, to convince Men of this important Truth, to take them off from their greedy pursuit of worldly greatness, to invite and encourage them to make their most zealous Efforts toward the purchasing of the heavenly Treasures, the spiritual Riches, which make us truly and substantially Rich, it was requisite in the Administrations of Divine Wisdom that *Poverty* should sometimes be our lot in this World: that there might be some actual Experiments of this Truth. Yea, our Saviour himself by his own Poverty, and that of his Apostles, by his frequent conversing with the Mean and Poor, by shewing the greatest favour to them, hath acquainted us that the outward Enjoyments, Riches and Possessions of this World ought to be of the least Consideration, and of the lowest value in the judgment of the wisest and the best Men. Thus *Providence* concerns itself, I say, to render the State of Poverty acceptable to us.

2. It doth the same with relation to *DISGRACE*, *REPROACH* and *DEFAMATION*, which are reckoned another *great Evil* in the Life of Man. But this is made tolerable, nay eligible by such Considerations as these which I shall now mention. First, The Obloquies and Aspersions which are cast upon us give us occasion to shew the greatness of our Spirit. It is observ'd that the despising of Reproach and Calumnies is the mark of a Noble Genius. Thus the famous *Socrates* was never moved at the Censures which were past upon him: and we are told that when a Play of *Aristophanes*'s was acting, he stood to hear himself abused openly. That great Triumvirate of generous Princes, *Philip* King of *Macedon*, his Son *Alexander* the Great, and *Augustus Cæsar* forgave those that spake evil of them, and let them go unpunish'd. And we read that at the Ancient Triumphs it was permitted to the † Common Soldiers to Scoff at their Generals, and make the matter of their

† *Materiam dictis nec pudet esse Ducem.* Martial.

their Raillery. These were willing to shew the generosity of their Minds in undergoing that Penance.

But further, Calumnies are a sign of *Worth* and *Goodness*. And accordingly we find that the most deserving Persons have been forced to run this Gantlope. We have it on *Plutarch*'s Testimony that the Elder *Cato* was accused, impeached and articled against fifty times by the Citizens of *Rome*. And most of the Ancient Worthies among the *Greeks*, as well as *Romans*, were defamed for their vertuous Carriage. And if we come down to the times of *Christianity*, there we see that the blessed Author of that holy Institution and all his immediate Followers were recompensed with Contempt and Disgrace for their exemplary Acts of shining Goodness. And afterwards, those famous godly Bishops, *Athanasius*, *Chrysostom*, *Hilary*, with other illustrious Patterns of Sanctity, were persecuted in their Names and Credit, as well as in other Respects. Now, as praises are for the most part founded on that which deserves them not, so Defamation is grounded on Merit. They are the best Men usually that suffer in their Reputation, and generally because they are so. For real worth is hated and calumniated by those that have none of it themselves, but are conscious that their Character is of a contrary Nature. These Men do but what was to be expected from them, for being Bad, they cannot but wound the Reputation of the Good. It would be strange and prodigious if they did not Act thus. But seeing they do it, there is encouragement to good Men to bear those Reproaches, because they are badges of Honour, and demonstrations of real Worth.

There is also this benefit in the Calumnies thrown on good Men, that they are serviceable to the *clearing their Innocence*, for though Slanders are easily received, yet time doth always discover and confute them. Hence a suspicion falsly and groundlesly conceiv'd of one may be profitable to him, because hereby his Reputation will appear more perspicuous to the World, and Praise and Honour will follow him. An eminent proof of this we have in *Socrates*, who was accused and condemned and put to Death at *Athens*: but when the *Athenians* reflected on what was done, they openly shew'd how dissatisfied they were by procuring the banishment of those that had accused *Socrates*, and they would not be quiet till *Melitus* (who was the chief of them) was condemned to Death. They erected a Statue of Brass in the most remarkable place of the City to the Honour of *Socrates*, and his Name hath ever since been renowned. But a greater than *Socrates* is to be mentioned here; our blessed Lord and Master Jesus Christ and his Holy Apostles, and the succeeding Christians who had been defamed and traduced, and blackned with the most Ignominious Titles, and even *made as the Filth of the World, and the offscouring of all things*, had at last their Names and Reputations brightned, and it became *Honourable* to be a *Christian*, and Princes and Emperors gloried in that Profession.

Moreover, *Obloquies* from our Enemies are useful to make us *Circumspect*. Seeing those Men are wont to prie into our Lives, and rifle our Actions, this may remind us of being upon our Guard, and watching over our selves, and living blameless Lives. For though they will find fault even with these, yet their Malice will hereby be the more discover'd, and some even out of Ingenuity will abhorr their Practice. This is the way to be Revenged, and that in a lawful Manner, on those that slander us.

Lastly, That worthy Father of the Church, *Gregory Nazianzen*, who was exceedingly reviled and reproached by the *Arian Hereticks*, suggests this admirable Consideration to comfort both himself and others who suffer'd in the like Nature with him at that time, * There is this great and brave thing in our Reproach that we are reproached and reviled together with *God*. Those who cast ignominy upon us for being Good, do so upon the Divine Majesty. And thus by being reviled we are made like unto our heavenly Father. And now I ask, Is there any great Evil in this sort of Calamities? May we not bear it with ease? Yea, may we not rejoice in it? The *Moralist* could say, † An evil Name for doing good is delightful. *Christianity* will much more enable us to experience this. The great Apostle *took pleasure in Reproaches*, as he tells us himself, 2 *Cor.* 12. 10. he was not only not displeased and troubled because God permitted malicious Spirits to vent their Venom, and disgorge their Poison in his Face, but he was well pleased and satisfied with

* Μέγιστον ἔχει τὸ καὶ μεγάλον τοῦ ὀνείδους ἡ λοιδορία, ὅτι μετὰ θεοῦ βλασφημούμεθα. Orat. 14.

† *Mala opinio bene parta delectat.* Sen.

with this Divine Permission, because (as hath been said) it is serviceable to good Ends and Purposes.

And among others this is not the least of which I shall now speak a few Words, That the Design of Providence in inflicting Dishonour, Disgrace and Reproach is to shew what is *true Honour*, and to excite us to aspire to it. The *Jewish* Masters proverbially say, The Crown of the Law surpasses the Crown of Priesthood and the Kingdom: that is, the Observers of God's Law and Will are more honourable than Kings and Priests. For it is true Fame and Honour to be good: and there is no valuable Repute but from what is Righteous. The *Jewish* People were told by God himself, that it was *the keeping all his Commandments* that should *make them high above all Nations in Praise, and in Name, and in Honour*, Deut. 26. 18, 19. *To praise* is to extoll ones Worth: *a Name* is due for Excellency. The Godly therefore, who are the only Persons of Worth, *the Saints in the Earth* that are *the Excellent*, are those that are truly Honourable and Renowned. *Ye have heard of the Patience of* Job: all the World proclaims it, and extolls this holy Man for that shining Vertue. *Whereſoever this Gospel shall be preach'd in the whole World, there shall also this that this Woman hath done be told for a Memorial of her.* A lasting Name, Repute and Glory are the Recompence of generous and pious Deeds. And truly there is no Glory but in Godly Actions: all the rest is but a Mock-honour. Religion and Holiness are esteem'd by God himself: they have the Approbation and Applause of Heaven, and of all good and righteous Men. And tho' the Votes of these latter are but few, yet they coming from those that are the best Judges, they are to be preferr'd to the more numerous Suffrages of the Wicked.

And I will add this, That when good Men adjudge Honour to those that are of that Character, they at the same time consult their own Repute and Dignity: as a wise and grave Author long since observ'd, * To them that are truly and stedfastly good it is the fairest Honour to give Honour to the Worthy. And much more might be said, to shew how God and Man conspire to bestow Respect and Honour on those that are the truest Objects of it. And it is reasonable to believe, that this was one end and reason why Providence suffers so many good Men to lie under Disgrace and Disrepute from the World, that thereby they might be convinc'd, that this is no real Evil or Damage, because it befalls the best Men; and that they may be effectually stirr'd up to be ambitious of true and substantial Honour, which consists only in being sincerely Good, and being the Favourites of God.

* Τοῖς γὰρ ἀληθινῶς καὶ βεβαίως ἀγαθοῖς τιμὴ τε καλλίστη, τὸ τιμῆσαί τινα τῶν ἀξιῶν. Plut. περὶ τῆς ἀκύσεως.

3. Among the Grievances and Hardships of this World *CONFINEMENT* or *WANT of LIBERTY* is justly number'd. And yet if we consider the thing rightly, we shall perceive that it is no hard matter to be reconciled to it, and even to wish for it as in some respects useful. That it is in some Cases desirable is manifest, as we see in the Example of some Monks and Nuns, who out of Choice confine themselves. We read of some *Anchorets* that never stirr'd out of their Cells. The *Parthian* King dwells retir'd, and turns his Palace into a Prison. Or if you speak of that which is Unvoluntary and Forced, even *that* carries with it something laudable and praise-worthy. Imprisonment (as was said of Calumny in the foregoing particular) is frequently a Sign of great Desert. The choicest Birds, of sweetest Voice, and able to sing best, are shut up in Cages, but others have their Liberty, and none undertakes to restrain them. So it is sometimes with the best Men, their Worth is the Cause of their Confinement: their Liberty is taken from them because they wou'd be a Reproach to others if they were abroad and convers'd with them.

But now let us more narrowly take notice of our Prisoners, and observe how beneficial their loss of Liberty hath prov'd to them. *Joseph* was cast into Prison by his angry Master, but the *Lord was with him, and gave him favour in the sight of the Keeper of the Prison*, Gen. 39. 21. So that he was rather the Keeper than a Prisoner, and soon after he was made the Vice-Roy of *Egypt*. The Prophet *Micaiah* was by *Ahab*'s Command imprison'd, but this severe Treatment gave him Resolution and Courage, and render'd his Prediction concerning the fatal end of that King the more remarkable. *Jeremiah* was first put into the *Court of the Prison* by *Zedekiah*, and then clapt into the *Dungeon*, but his Prophetic Spirit still was free, and he now had the most illustrious Discoveries vouchsafed him concerning the *Messiah* and his glorious

glorious Kingdom: and at last he was honourably dismiss'd from his Confinement. The Apostles were put into the *common Prison* by the *Jewish* Officers, but an Angel open'd the Prison-door, and brought them forth, and commission'd them to return to their former Employment, the preaching of the Gospel, which accordingly they did. When *Peter* was imprison'd, he was soon releas'd by an Angel, upon the Prayers of the Church. Tho' *Paul* and *Silas* were *thrust into the inner Prison*, and *their Feet made fast in the Stocks, they sang Praises unto God*, and were deliver'd by an *Earthquake*, which did so shake the Prison that *immediately all the Doors of it were open'd:* and the Gaoler himself was converted and baptized. At another time when St. *Paul* was shut up close, the Gospel had its free course, for *he begat* Onesimus *in his Bonds*. It was in Prison that this Apostle wrote his Epistles to the *Ephesians*, the *Colossians*, and to *Philemon*, and his Second Epistle to *Timothy*. So *Ignatius* penn'd most of his Epistles when he was shut up by the Heathen Powers.

And in Instances of an inferiour Nature it might be shew'd, that Confinement hath administred an Opportunity to some Persons of employing their Pens to excellent purposes. *Luther* in his Retirement in the Castle of *Wittemburg*, where he was confined a considerable time, composed several Books of great use to the Church of God. *Boetius* writ his Treatise of *Consolation*, *Raleigh* his *History of the World*, and *Grotius* his *Annotations* in the time of their Imprisonment. These have been the Advantages of lost Freedom. And it is worth our notice how backward some good Men have been to quit their Durance. *Socrates*, when condemn'd, did not only talk chearfully with his Friends, but refus'd to leave the Prison when *Crito* advised him to make his Escape. Dr. *Sandys*, in the *Tower* of *London* in Queen *Mary*'s time, refus'd to fly, tho' the Prison-door was left open. I am in Prison, till I am in Prison, said one of the Martyrs in that Queen's Reign.

And we know a much ancienter Instance than these, recorded in the *Acts* of the *Apostles*: *Paul* and *Silas* would not quit the Prison they were in till the Magistrates of the Place came *and besought them, and desired them to depart*. Surely there must be something very desirable in want of Liberty, when Persons must be courted to have their Freedom. Yes indeed, a good Cause and a good Conscience make a Prison a Paradise. You must no longer give it the ordinary * Name: *it is* not a Prison, but a Retreat, where we more freely enjoy God and our selves. Here thro' the Iron Grates Men can best see how precious Liberty is: as from the Dangers and Disorders of War they best relish the Sweets of Peace. They prize a Blessing which they before despised: they learn the Worth of it by its absence. Hither some have gone to School, and have been taught those useful Lessons which they could never learn before. *Manasseh* could not have been without his Bonds and Confinement, for this was the happy means of his Conversion: and his Soul was never so free as when his Body lay in Chains. Such have been, and will be the Advantages of a seasonable Restraint: and herein the Divine Care and Management are evidently discern'd.

* *Auferamus Carceris nomen, Secessum vocemus. Etsi corpus includitur, etsi caro detinetur, omnia spiritui patent.* Tertull. *ad Martyr.* cap. 2.

4 So they are in that so much dreaded Penalty, *BANISHMENT*, or living out of ones Native Country. One represents it thus, † Death is the end of Calamities, but Exile is not the end, but beginning of new Evils. But notwithstanding this frightful Character, I will make it appear, that those who are sent out of their own Land, have something considerable to entertain their Thoughts with, whereby they may make this Condition supportable, and even beneficial. For, First, They are to consider that to a good Man every Place is alike. All the Earth, in respect of what surrounds it, is but a Point, so that there is no great difference of any Place as to Distance. And if we speak of the Seat of the Blessed above, it is certain that we are not further from it in one Country than in another. Therefore to one that complain'd, and bemoan'd himself that he should not die in his own Country, the *Cynick* rightly said, Be not troubled, Man: the way to Heaven is the same in every place. And * when *Anaxagoras*, who was banish'd *Athens*, lay on his Death-bed at *Lampsacus*, and was ask'd by his Friends whether he would not be carried to his own Country when he was dead, he told them that there was no need of it, for there is the same Distance from all places to the other World. This is that *Anaxagoras* who pointed to Heaven, saying, † *Lo, there is my Country.*

† Πέρας μὲν κακοπραγιῶν ὁ θάνατος, ἀρχὴ δὲ, ἢ πέρας ἢ φυγὴ καινοτέρων συμφορῶν. Philo *de* Abrahamo.

* *Cic. Tusc. Quæst.*

† *Laert. in Anaxag.*

Nay,

Nay, it hath been the Acknowledgment of very wise Men, that * every Place where a Man can live well and innocently is his Country. Hence it was, that *Diogenes* profess'd himself to be a † Citizen of the World: and the same said * *Socrates*. This Title belongs to all good Men, saith † *Philo*. And a *Christian* may with greater reason own this Character: for he is equally under the Influence of Providence and the Blessing of Heaven wherever he is: and therefore the whole World is his Country. What odds then is there between being at home and in another place? * No place excludes God, and Vertue, and Happiness. And if we have these, we can't properly be said to be Exiles; we are not left alone, we are not destitute of Friends, if we can converse with God. As for that Solitude which is talk'd of, it shall prove beneficial to us, for when we are separated from Men, we may expect the more intimate Communion of the Holy Spirit. It was in the time of St. *John*'s Banishment to *Patmos* that he receiv'd his Revelations.

* Πατρὶς γάρ ἐστι πᾶσ' ἡ ἂν πεσόντ' τις ἔυ. Aristoph. *in* Plut. *Omne solum forti patria est*——— Ovid. *Fast.* l. 1.

† Laert. *in* Diog.

* *Cic* Tusc. *Qu.* lib. 5.

† *De vitâ Mosis.*

* Ἀνθρώπῳ δὲ οὐδεὶς ἀφαιρεῖται τόπον εὐδαιμονίας, ὥσπερ οὐδὲ ἀρετὴν, οὐδὲ φρόνησιν. Plut. *de Exilio.*

Again, We must needs hold that to be excluded from our own Country, is that State which may be of great use and profit, because it is the Lot of very deserving Persons, and even of the best of Men. For this is a certain Maxim, That whatever in the Divine Administration befalls God's Servants, is for their Good. *Abraham* the Friend and Favourite of God was bid to leave his own Country, *Ur* of the *Chaldees*, and travel into *Palestine*. *Joseph* was warn'd by a Divine Messenger to fly into *Egypt* with the Child *Jesus*. Of the blessed Prophets and Martyrs 'tis recorded, that *they wander'd about in Sheep-Skins and Goat-Skins*, Heb. 11. 37. that *they wander'd in Deserts and in Mountains, and in Dens and Caves of the Earth*, ver. 38. Afterwards, there were Multitudes of those that profess'd the Christian Religion who were thus treated, and were forc'd to be Fugitives and Vagabonds. St. *John* the Evangelist, before mention'd, was sent into the Isle of *Patmos* by *Domitian*, And those eminent Doctors of the Church, *Athanasius* and *Chrysostom*, were formally banish'd. And I might also observe, that this had been the Practice among the *Greeks* and *Romans*. *Lycurgus* was sent packing by the *Spartans*: for among that People it was usual to expell their best Patriots and Benefactors. *Themistocles*, *Phocion* and *Aristides* were driven out of *Athens* and all *Greece*, merely for out-vying others in Justice and other commendable Vertues. *Theseus*, *Miltiades*, *Pericles*, *Solon* had the same fate. And generally the *Grecian* Republic rewarded their worthiest Men, and the flower of their Country with Exile. Those Accomplishments which evinc'd a Person to be capable of serving that Common Wealth, render'd it dangerous for him to serve it. And as the *Grecian* Ostracism, so the *Roman* Proscription expell'd many brave Men, because they were better than the rest. *Camillus* and *Scipio* found very ill Usage from that State after all their Deserts: for the former, who restored *Rome* when it was almost sunk, and the latter who preserv'd it, and added another State to it, was rewarded with Exile. And others of their best Friends were serv'd after the same rate. Eminency in Goodness was envy'd and hated, and the Presence of it could not be endured. Thus at last Banishment came to be accounted a creditable thing: and it was an Honour to be so punished.

The Advantage of it is further seen in this, That those who are compell'd to abandon their Native Country, and to wander in a Foreign Region are hereby induced to entertain that useful Truth, that they are but *Strangers and Pilgrims on the Earth*, and that *having no continuing City*, they are *to seek one to come*, Heb. 11. 13——13. 14. This will naturally push them on to place their Confidence in God, *whose is the Earth and the Fulness thereof*, this will teach them to rely on the Divine Care and Providence. *Plutarch* observes, that as Shipwrack made *Crates* a Philosopher, so Banishment made *Diogenes* one of that Character. This in its own Nature is serviceable to check our immoderate affecting of Worldly things, to convince us of the Uncertainty of this present State, and to give us the best opportunity of exercising our Humility, Self-denial and Patience. The *Israelites* could very ill have spared their Captivity and Exile in *Babylon*, for it was an occasion of a more noble Liberty and Enlargement: it promoted their Vertues, and was an Inlet into their Temporal and Eternal Happiness.

* φυξιος Exulum praeses.

Among the *Gentiles*, * *the Patron of the banished and Fugitives* was one of the Epithets of their *Jupiter*. It was a natural Notion which they had, that those who are cast into strange Countries are under the more immediate Protection and Care of Heaven. When they fly from home, they meet with encouragement abroad. To this purpose there was a proverbial saying among the *Jews*, and Christ confirm'd it both by his Word and Example, *John* 4. 44. *A Man hath no honour in his own Country*. And the later *Jews* have another Proverb like it, A wise Man is worthy of Honour, and shall have many Friends in a strange Country. It is so order'd by Providence that Persons of worth find better usage abroad than in their Native Soil. Thus *Themistocles*, when he was banished *Athens*, lived in great Credit, Plenty and Grandeur in the *Persian* Court; whereupon he used to say to his Family, † We had perished, if we had not perished. Sometimes the banished are called back again to their old Home, and like *Tully* return in Triumph to their former Seat. However, those who are sent away into the most inhospitable Deserts for a good Cause, are honoured by all good Men; and as for themselves, they have that goodness of their Cause, and that of their own Consciences to Comfort and Relieve them.

† Plato de Exilio.

5. *BODILY SICKNESS* and *DISEASES* come next to be spoken of. Our frail Flesh is the scene of innumerable Infirmities; and whole Troops of Diseases environ it. We labour under the tedious Languishments of Chronical Distempers, and the dismal arrests and surprizes of acute ones. Every part of the Body hath its proper and distinct disorders which it is liable to. And there are Diseases peculiar to every Age, Country, Season, and way of Life. Besides that there are the proper and distinguishing Maladies of either Sex. On all which Considerations the Life of Man must needs be very Afflictive. But I will shew that these are not such formidable things as they are represented to be, yea that Divine Wisdom hath made them in some respect desirable. It may be generally observ'd that Persons of the weakest and crazieſt Constitution live longest, which may be imputed to this that they always take great care of themselves, and expose not their Bodies: whereas, the healthy and robust being not under apprehensions of Danger, are not upon their Guard, but run into those Mischiefs which the others Escape. This is the convenience and benefit of an unhealthful and sickly Temper of Body. Such Persons hold out longer than others, because they are in fear of dying sooner. So that the very thing which is complained of; namely, that their Lives are in danger by the Weaknesses they labour under, is one cause why their Lives are prolonged.

Again, There are some Diseases that are for the good of the Body, and contribute to future Health. They evacuate the depraved matter, and rectifie the Blood, and give it a new Crasis. It is not untruly said of the Gout in some Persons that it conduces to long Life, and there are some very dangerous Distempers that are perfectly eased and cured by others. Even Plagues and Pestilences are of use and benefit to the World on some Accounts, particularly to evaporate, disperse and carry off those noxious and venomous Steams in good time, which if kept up longer, would increase and grow more virulent, and create an universal Mischief. In many cases Epidemick Diseases and great Mortalities are of singular Benefit: thus Providence clear'd the way for Queen *Elizabeth* to the Crown by sending a raging Distemper that Year Queen *Mary* Died, whereby were removed such Persons as probably would have opposed her.

There is yet a greater advantage in the bodily Maladies that we actually suffer under, for the excellency of things is known by the Want as well as the fruition of them. Health is never so sweet and wellcome, never so lovely and acceptable as after Sickness. This is the best way to set it off, and really commend it to us. We learn by Weakness and loss of Sleep, and disorder of Body, to prize the blessings of Strength, Repose, Ease and Refreshment.

And the Sickness of our Bodies administers to the Health of our Souls, and cures the Diseases which they are subject to. For this we must be sensible of, that *Vices* are the *Diseases* of the *Mind*; and they are * more hurtful and dangerous than those of the Body. But Providence hath so happily contrived it that these shall be a Remedy against those, and that a diseased Body shall contribute to a sound and hale Mind. This is effected by our being reminded of our Sins in the

* Vide Max. Tyr. Diss. Πότερα χαλεπώτερα νοσήματα τὰ τῶν σωμάτων ἢ τὰ τῆς ψυχῆς. Et Cic. Tusc. Quest.

the day of Sickness. *For this cause many are Weak and Sickly*, 1 Cor. 11. 30. The *Jewish* Dreamers tell us that there are four sorts of Diseases or Maladies that are signs of four Capital Sins: Ulcers are a sign of Idolatry: the Yellow Jaundice of willful Hatred and Malice: the Squinancy of Scurrilous and Filthy talking: and another of Pride. This we must look upon as *Rabbinical* Conceit, but it is most certainly true that these and all other bodily Evils are signs of Sin, and of our displeasing God, and are the Fruit of it. The most barbarous People have had a sense of this. Thus I have read that the inhabitants of *Angola* in *Africa* believe they are never *Sick* but when their Idol is angry with them. Wherefore these are proper means to help us to call our Sins to Remembrance, to examine our past Lives, and to repent of our former Miscarriages. The Man is now confined to his Chamber, he comes not into Company, yet is he not alone, for he visits himself, converses with his own Heart, and reflects on his Actions, and ponders his Guilt. He had not leisure to be acquainted with himself before, he was a Stranger to his own Thoughts, but now he holds communion with them, and rifles his whole Life. Though he is uneasie, and hath but little Sleep, yet his conscience is awake, which reminds him of Heaven and Hell, of Eternal Rewards and Punishments. He is considering how he shall account for his former Follies, Idleness, Lewdness, and Forgetfulness of every thing that was worth remembring. These are the good Effects and Fruit of a diseased Body.

We have some Examples of this in Prophane and Ecclesiastical Writings. In the former we are told that *Tullus Hostilius*, a King of the Ancient *Romans*, who immediately succeeded *Numa*, derided all Religious Worship and Devotion, and became a mere Atheist, but being surpriz'd by a very sharp Disease, and apprehending he was not long to live, he was soon of another Mind, and called upon the Gods, and attended Religion for a time. In the latter we read that when *Maximinus*, the *Roman* Emperor, and bloody Persecutor, was visited with Pain and Sickness, and thought he should die, he gave order that none should persecute the Christians, and granted them the liberty of their Religion. And several Instances might be produced of Persons in the Christian Church. But I will mention only a notable Example which we have had of late in our own Nation, I mean the Remarkable Conversion of the *Earl* of *Rochester*, whose life was notoriously Infamous and Scandalous, who had given himself up to all manner of Lewdness, Prophaneness and Debauchery: but this Young Gentleman, when he was afflicted with Pain and Diseases, and was on the confines of the Grave, entertain'd quite other Apprehensions than he had done before, he professed he had serious and reverent Thoughts of Religion and Holiness, which before he laught at. This Noble and Illustrious Convert, who had been so flagitious a Criminal, most earnestly and affectionately warn'd others to abandon their evil Courses, and to live Religiously and Soberly, and to look upon Religion as the greatest Reality in the World. He particularly retracted all his Impious and Prophane Language, wherewith he used to reflect on God and Goodness, and he most willingly attested and signed his dying Remonstrance with his own Hand, us you may see in the Sermon that was preach'd at his Funeral.

I would to God some of our great Men, some of our Nobles and Gentlemen, and some of the Wild Sparks and Hectoring Gallants of this Age would look into this Example, and think of reforming their Lives by it before it be too late. They see here that Sickness gives a true sight of things, for it opens Men's Eyes to behold Sin in its proper Colours, and Religion in its true Shape. They that have made a mock of Sin all their Lives, have been taught by bodily Sickness to abhorr that Practice. When Death is drawing near, then they see their Folly, then they begin to have an esteem of godliness, then the Bible is a good Book, then a Pious Sermon is wellcome, then a Religious Minister is valued and sent for, then those that never prayed before have a great desire to be frequent in that Holy Exercise, then the Ordinances and Institutions of Christ are acceptable, and they would willingly be partakers of them, as of old they used to call for Baptism, when they thought they should die. And as Death comes nearer and nearer to the Man, his Thoughts and Reflections are more Lively, he is more serious and concern'd in providing for his Dissolution. And being provided, there is this advantage further of his Sickness that it is serviceable to give him a great Willingness to Die, and make him long to depart and to be with Christ. Thus Sickness is a-

bundantly profitable, it being a happy Remembrancer and a Monitor, it checking us for our Sins, and putting us upon our Duty, making our lives good, and our death comfortable, * Sickness, saith that Ancient Christian in *Minutius Felix*, is not a Penalty but a Warfare, wherein our strength is increased by our Infirmities, and the Pain we feel is the exercise and discipline of our Vertues. The *Health* and *Prosperity of the Soul* (as 'tis called 3 Ep. *John* 2. v.) is promoted by Corporal Infirmities. The Sanity of the Mind, the strength of the Spirit is advanced by the weakness of the fleshly part. Who then can deny the benefit of bodily Maladies and Distempers?

* *Quod corporis humani vitia sentimus, non est Pena, militia est: fortitudo enim infirmitatibus roboratur, & calamitas sæpiùs disciplina virtutis est.*

6. Nor is that of *OLD AGE* to be denied, notwithstanding that ill Character which generally it hath. *The evil days and the years in which there is no Pleasure* is the Description of it, according to *Solomon*, Eccl. 12. 1. And in the following Verses he enumerates the particular Inconveniences and Infirmities which accompany it. So the *Jewish* Masters in a proverbial way tell us that Youth is a Crown of Roses, but Old Age is a Crown of Thorns. All things are uneasie and troublesome in it. And * others talk freely of the unhappiness of those that are far advanced in Years. Yea, one is peremptory that † *Old Age makes all People Spiteful.* Though it is very strange that any should talk thus when they are themselves in the rank of Old Men, unless you will say they shew their Ingenuity in acknowledging their own Faults. We constantly see that this part of Man's Life is one of the Themes of course that the Satyrists play upon, and nothing less than *Dregs* and *Caput mortuum* are Epithets fit for it. But notwithstanding these severe Representations of Old Age, I shall shew that by the Appointment of Heaven, and by the Laws and Constitutions of that All-wise Being who rules the World and all Mankind, this Stage of Life is made very acceptable and agreeable, and hath sundry advantages above Youth.

* *Multa senem circumveniunt incommoda*, &c. Horat.

† Dr. Lister's *Journey to* Paris.

First, It is an honourable and venerable Age. *Thou shalt rise up before the hoary head, and honour the Face of the Old Man*, Levit. 19. 31. To vouch and maintain which, those graceless Children who made the Prophet *Elijah*'s Years the matter of their Scorn and Derision were cut off in their blooming Age, and not suffer'd to attain to the Honour of that Prophet's Years. To render this Age worthy of Esteem, it is represented to us as a choice Blessing, and vouchsafed to the Friends of God. As to *Abraham* it was promised that he should *be buried in a good Old Age*, Gen. 15. 15. and the accomplishing of it is taken notice of in *Gen.* 25. 8. *Abraham died in a good Old Age, an Old Man, and full of Years.* The same is recorded of that famous Judge of *Israel*, Judg 8. 32. and of *David*, 1 Chron. 29. 28. and of *Job*, Chap. 42. v. 17. *Length of Days* is the Promise annexed to the Fifth Commandment. Thus it is a Blessing and an Honour, and more especially when it is in Conjunction with Vertue and Goodness. *The hoary head is a crown of Glory, if it be found in the way of Righteousness*, Prov. 20. 29.

Secondly, This is more frequently, than that of Youth, an Age of Health. This is an Observation as old as the great *Hippocrates*, for he asserts that aged Persons are less subject to Sickness and Diseases than the Young. And I may add, that as these latter are sooner distemper'd, so their Distempers are more Grievous. For the boisterous Passions which they are liable to contribute to the disorder of their Bodies, and render the Diseases with which they are afflicted, more dangerous. Besides, this sort of Persons expose themselves to the injury of Weather, run headlong into Mischief, and call Pains and Maladies to them. But those that are in Years are generally Wary and Cautious, and take care of their Health, and consequently enjoy that Blessing more undisturbedly than the others.

Thirdly, It is an Age of Knowledge and Wisdom, and Maturity of Judgment. *With the Ancient is Wisdom; and in length of Days, Understanding*, Job 12. 12. And with *Job* agrees his Friend *Elihu*, Job 32. 7. *Multitude of Years should teach Wisdom.* Reason and good Sense and Exactness of Thoughts and Words come now to be discern'd, and seldom before. You can hardly name a young Writer (*Calvin* excepted, who wrote his *Institutions* when he was but four and twenty Years of Age) and say that there is that accuracy of Judgment in his Writings that might be expected after long Study, and many Years Experience. And so with respect

ſpect to Action and Buſineſs, the Philoſopher obſerves that *Old Men* are *Slow* and * *Heſitating* in giving Judgment and Pronouncing concerning things, they having been deceived in many things in their Lives: therefore they proceed with Deliberation and Prudence: and from the experience of many years gather a clear knowledge of things. They ſee them in their own Colours, and as indeed they are. On which account theſe are the Men that are fit to be conſulted and adviſed with. Thus *Agamemnon* would do nothing without *Neſtor*'s advice. But Youth is ignorant and ſhallow, and the exceſſive Vapours which the heat of their boiling Blood ſends up, cloud their Minds, and ſtifle their Judgments. On this (though undadviſedly) was grounded the Practice of the *Jews*, who ſuffer'd not ſome part of the Book of *Geneſis* and *Ezekiel* and *Canticles* to be read by thoſe of younger Years, becauſe they thought them not capable of ſome Myſteries contain'd in thoſe Writings. But this is certain that Age mellows the Underſtanding, and gives Judgment and Diſcretion, and ſets things in a true Light: but the dictates of Green Heads are generally Fallacious, and oftentimes dangerous. Thus it is recorded that when *Reboboam* refuſed the advice of his Ancient and Experienced Counſellors, and conſulted with the Young Men, it cauſed the Revolt of the Ten Tribes from him. Therefore all Aſſemblies for Conſultation, as *Parliaments*, *Convocations* and *Synods*, &c. ſhould conſiſt of ſome Perſons of conſiderable Age, fifty at leaſt, for ſuch have the knowledge of young Men, and their own beſides. And though ſome young Men are of extraordinary Parts, and admired for their Wit and Penetration, yet experience is wanting. In ſhort, generally with Age comes Wiſdom; and when bodily Strength is gone, there is a Recompence made by the Acceſſion of Skill and Prudence: and the endowments of the Mind make amends for the loſs of thoſe of the Body.

* Ἀμφισβητοῦντες. Ariſtot. Rhet.

Fourthly, It is an *Age of Action and Employment*. I do not pretend that it is fit for *ſome* Buſineſs, that which requires Labour and Strength of Body: but this is no Diſparagement, any more than it is to youth that that alſo is unfit for ſome Employments. For God hath in his Providence temper'd the Ages and Conditions of Men, ſo that ſome of them are agreeable to ſome Works, and others unto others. The *Levites* and Prieſts under the Law were exempted from their Office when they were fifty Years of Age, becauſe their work was Laborious, and there was bodily Strength and Vigour requiſite to the performing it. So the *Romans* diſmiſſed their Officers and Magiſtrates at ſixty, but it is meant only concerning that part of their Duty which called for publick Appearance and Intereſting themſelves in matters that were attended with Labour and Fatigue. But both the *Jewiſh* and *Roman* Officers, even when they had laid down their Places, were conſulted with upon emergent Occaſions and Buſineſs (as both the *Jewiſh* and *Roman* Hiſtories acquaint us) and were thought to be the fitteſt Perſons for that Purpoſe. We read that Dominion and Rule were founded heretofore in Age: the firſt *Governours* were they that were *Eldeſt* in Families. And all Nations ever ſince have thought that thoſe are the beſt Props of Government, and the ableſt Supporters, not only of Families but of Kingdoms and Common-wealths. The *Hebrew* Maſters had a great Opinion of the worth of Old Age, as appears from that proverbial Speech, an Old Man in an Houſe is a good ſign in it. Yea, they go higher, and tell us in the *Talmud*, that if it were not for Old Men, the World would not be upheld, but immediately ſink. The reaſon is becauſe their Aid and Aſſiſtance are abſolutely requiſite to the ſucceſsful Conduct of all worldly Affairs. Their Age is not an impediment to noble Actions. The old Stateſmen and Patriots are the beſt. The great Counſel of the wiſeſt *Romans* was called the *Senate* from their Elderſhip and Seniority, as *Tully* in his excellent piece *concerning Old Age* obſerves. That Diſcourſe was written by him when he was Old, and he ſaith the writing of it ſo pleaſed him that it made him young again. It is a juſt encomium of advanced Years: and more particularly as to the Head I am now ſpeaking to, he ſhews that Maturity, Gravity, Experience are proper to this Age, and that thereby it is that they are calculated for brave Actions. There is † another excellent Author among the Ancients that hath a Treatiſe on this Subject worth the peruſing, where he admirably pleads for Old Men's governing in the Common-wealth, as fitteſt Perſons every way. I will ſhut up this particular with a much more Authentick Teſtimony, that of the Prophet *Iſaiah*, Chap. 3. v. 1. &c. where it is threatned as a great Judgment and Calamity on a Nation, that *the Ancients ſhall be taken away from them,*

† Plutarch Ἐι πρεσβυτέρῳ πολιτευτέον.

them, and that *Children and Babes shall rule over them*; that is, those who by reason of their want of Years are unwise, and unfit for Action. Hence it appears how Beneficial the Aged are.

Fifthly, It is an Age of *Vertue* and *Piety*. For there is no part of a Man's Life so fitted for Religion as this, because the fierce and unruly Temper is generally allay'd by this time. Now the Persons are free from those impetuous Inclinations which are so troublesom, and are the great Source of all Vice in young Men. On this account it was the Opinion of the great Philosopher, that this latter Rank of Men are not fit Auditors of *Ethicks*, they are not old enough for the strict Lectures of Morality, their Affections and Appetites being for the most part ungovernable. But Ripeness of Years restrains the sensual Desires, and thereby introduces a Fitness to receive Impressions of Vertue and Religion, and also to retain them. Fruits that are come to Maturity have lost their Sowreness, and are become mellow and palatable. Age and Years sweeten Men's Minds, and inspire them with Moderation and Temper, and thereby capacitate them for universal Converse, and the most edifying Communion.

And it were easy to shew under this Head what particular Disorders are remedied, and what special Temptations are baffled by Old Age; namely, those predominant ones of Lust, and Pride, and vain Glory. Again, Here is now time to retire and to live to God. For the noise of troublesom Business is over, and Carnal Allurements have no prevalency, and these Persons have an opportunity given them of devoting themselves wholly to the great Concerns of Religion, to retrench their Lives, to correct their Manners, to regulate themselves, to influence upon others, to be frequent in Prayer, and in all religious Exercises: for they bow down with Devotion as well as Years; and in the Cold of Age there Zeal is fervent.

Moreover, *Experience* hath instructed them, which is a singular help to Religion and Godliness. They have seen the Follies of Youth, and have had trial of the Vanity of the World, and now their Convictions are strong and powerful, and they cannot resist the force of them. Thence we see, that many grow Wise, and Sober, and Religious by Age, who were never observ'd to be so before. By Age, I say, as a proper Means, but by the special Grace of God as the efficient Author of this Change. For in aged Persons that are not born again by the Holy Spirit, but remain in their corrupt and depraved Condition, it is otherwise. Where there hath not been the *Operation* of the Divine Grace, their latter End is worse than their Beginning, and their gray Hairs are dishonour'd with the worst of Sins, as Apostasy and Revolting from God, Hardness of Heart, and Impenitence. Yea, all their Vices are Habitual, and, like their Maladies, Chronical and Inveterate. But I speak of those whose Hearts God hath chang'd, and made their Years contribute to their Repentance and Conversion. For I have shew'd that there are great Advantages of Old Age for Religion and Heaven, and that it is the most desirable State of Life, if we have respect to that which is the most eligible in any Man's Life, namely, Vertue and Goodness.

Sixthly, It is an Age of *Pleasure*, yea, of the greatest Pleasure. This follows from what I said before, that it is an Age of *Vertue*, for this is always attended with the greatest and choicest Delights. It is true, the bodily Senses are not so brisk and lively as in Youth: the greatest part of Corporeal Delight is impair'd: but there are higher and nobler Pleasures which these Persons are capable of. And as for those of the Body, it is a Happiness to have their Desires stinted, it is a Kindness done them to be render'd in some measure uncapable of Sensual and Carnal Sweets, for these are generally excessive and exorbitant. The Absence of these is the Felicity of the Aged, if they could see it. For that is it which renders Youth so unhappy, that they are not confin'd and restrain'd in their Pleasures, but indulge them too much, and are corrupted and perverted by them. This therefore, among others, is reckon'd by *Tully* as one Advantage of great Age, That it deprives Men of unlawful Pleasures. * O the excellent Gift and Privilege of it, saith he, that it takes that away from us which is the most vitious thing in young Men, and that it rewards us with mental and solid Delights! For now with the most ravishing thoughts we can look back on God's Goodness, and the manifold Instances of it, and entertain our Minds with agreeable Observations and Remarks on the past Acts of Providence. It is delightful to recount the divine Mercies and Favours which by long Experience we have been Sharers in. But especially, the pleasure of old Age is to reflect on a Life well spent, wherein we have attain'd to a Habit and Custom

O præclarum munus ætatis, &c. De Senectute.

Custom of doing good, which renders it pleasant and chearful, and experimentally convinces us of the sweetness of Religion.

Seventhly, and lastly, Senescency approaches to *Death* and *Dissolution*, and in that respect is the best Age of a good Man's Life. For, First, It encourages Perseverance in his Duty: Secondly, It brings him nearer to Happiness. First, I say, Old Age is an Encouragement to Perseverance in all Holiness and Godliness of Life. That we have lived long, is an Argument to use with our selves, to confirm us in our Duty to the end. It is a shame for us to draw back in our Christian Course, when we have gone so far. Having *begun in the Spirit*, and made such Progress in it, shall we *end in the Flesh?* * Fourscore and six Years have I served Christ, and he hath been a good Master to me, how then can I now deny him? said that pious Martyr *Polycarp*, when he was bid by the Proconsul to renounce the Christian Faith, and to revile Christ. And a meaner, but yet a remarkable Instance is that of a notable Man among the *Gentiles:* when some would needs know of *Solon*, why he durst oppose himself alone against the great Tyrant *Dionysius*, and what were the Weapons he trusted to, he told them plainly, That his Old Age was all his Armour, he had one Foot in the Grave, and he was not afraid to put the other in after it. He was to leave the World in a short time, and he wou'd not baulk his Duty for gaining the Favour of any Prince upon Earth. The thoughts of our Years should excite us to brave and heroick Acts, and to stand firm and unshaken in the Discharge of our Consciences: and the Consideration of this should make this last part of our Life very acceptable.

* Euseb. *Hist. Eccl.* l. 4. c. 14.

In the next place, Those that are full of Years, are approaching the nearer to their Happiness. They have finish'd their Voyage, and are now in sight of the Haven. Nature's Provision is spent, her Stock is exhausted, and now the good Man doth not so much descend as fall into the Grave, and from thence he rises to Heaven and eternal Bliss. And shall he be disturb'd at this? shall he be afraid to be made happy? If I mistake not, this is the meaning of the Psalmist's Words, *Psal.* 49. 5. *Wherefore should I fear in the Days of evil, when the Iniquity of my Heels shall compass me about?* They are generally interpreted concerning *his ways* in general, but they seem to me to referr particularly to the Calamity which his Old Age was incident to: for the *Days of Evil* are Old Age, and are so call'd by the Wise Man, *Eccl.* 12. 1. and as the *Heel* is the extreme part of the Body, so it is here applied to the last part of Man's Life, his declining Age: and *Iniquity* (as the Word is sometimes used among the *Hebrews*) signifies here penal Evil, and denotes the Infirmities and Decays of the concluding part of a Man's Life. So that the true meaning of the Psalmist's Words is this, I will not now in my last Days be dejected with fear and trouble of Mind, for I am coming towards my Happiness, my declining Years shall deliver me up to Death, and that shall consign me to everlasting Life. This certainly is matter of Joy rather than of Fear. For this reason I account my last Days to be the most eligible part of my whole Life.

7. With Old Age I will join *BLINDNESS*, which sometimes is the Effect of it, as in the Patriarch *Isaac*; and at other times is owing to other Causes: but this is certain, that whencesoever it proceeds, it may be made serviceable to good ends: and a wise Man may turn this Calamity into a Kindness. In the *Night*, which makes up a great part of our Life, yea, half of it almost, we are as if we had no Eye-sight: but we may then use our Memory, and recollect and contemplate better in the Night than in the Day, in the Dark than in the Light, with Eyes shut than open. Therefore the *Arabian* Adage is, *Shut thy Eyes, that thou mayst see*, i. e. that thou mayest meditate and think. The same is done in a State of *Blindness*, which is as it were a continual shutting the Eyes, or an uninterrupted Night. If we be Contemplative and Studious, the delight of Thinking is not hindred, but augmented by the loss of the Eyes. One of the acutest Philosophers thought so, and * deprived himself of his Sight to contemplate the better, by not being disturb'd with visible Objects. And tho' *Plutarch* denies † this to be true, yet he confesses, that those who most of all employ their Minds, make the least use of their Corporeal Senses, and consequently they can best spare them. It can't be denied that the Intention of Men's Minds is increas'd by Blindness, because they are not diverted by External Objects.

* *Cic. Tusc. Quest.* lib. 5. *Aul. Gell. Noct. Attic.* lib. 10.

† Ἐκεῖνο μὲν ψευδός ἐστι, τὸ Δημόκριτον, &c. τοῦτο μέντοι πάντες μᾶλλον ἀληθὲς ἐστι ὅτι τὴν αἴσθησιν ὀλίγα κινοῦσι οἱ πλεῖστα τῇ διανοίᾳ χρώμενοι. *De Curiositate.*

Hence

Hence it is that *Tully* thus speaks of *Democritus*, the Philosopher before spoken of, (for it seems he took it for a true Report that he was blind.) * Tho' he could not distinguish between White and Black, yet he could between Good and Evil, Just and Unjust: without variety of Colours he could live happily. The Reason is plain, for tho' he was destitute of the common and bodily Sight, yet his Intellectual one was stronger and more vigorous than it was before: his Reason was clearer and brisker. So we read, that *Anthony* comforted *Didymus* of *Alexandria* after this manner, † Let not the loss of thy Sight trouble thee, for thou hast lost such Eyes indeed as Flies and Fleas can see with; but rejoyce that thou hast still such Eyes as Angels see with, and with which God is seen, and his Light perceived. And besides, Those who have not the use of the Corporeal Eye-sight, have not the trouble and uneasiness of seeing such Things or Persons as wou'd be ungrateful to them, and give them great Dissatisfaction. Thus the aged blind Bishop whom *Julian* the Apostate upbraided for his Blindness, told that Emperour, that * he thank'd God he had taken away his Sight, that so he might not see his impudent and wicked Face.

* *Tusc. Quæst.* lib. 5.

† Socrat. *Hist. Eccl.* lib. 4. c. 25.

* Phot. *in vitâ* Athanasii.

Here I might take notice, that † *Plutarch* reckons up several worthy Generals and Commanders that had but one Eye: and * *Valerius Maximus* mentions sundry brave Men that could not see at all. *Homer*, *Appius*, *Aufidius* and others, great Men, were stark blind. He observes, that † such Persons love Retirement, and are more intent on Thinking and Meditating than others, which unspeakably adds to their Knowledge and Wisdom. He gives Instances of some that pleaded Causes when they were old and blind. And concerning the forementioned *Appius*, a *Roman* Senator, he saith, he was able to advise, to keep up Authority and Discipline. And he hath this very fine Passage about him, * Can any one call this Person a Blind-man, by whose Help his Country was made to see and understand what was Honest and Good, 'tho' it could not discern it of it self? This is highly in Commendation of the loss of Sight.

† *Tali incommodo perculsi secessum petunt, duplicantq; tenebras, fortuitis voluntarias adjicientes.* Ibid.

* *Hunc Cæcum aliquis nominet, à quo Patria quod honestum erat per se parùm cernens, coacta est pervidere?* Cap. 13.

8. *BARRENNESS* or *WANT of CHILDREN* is another thing complain'd of by some, as an intolerable Affliction. Ask *Abraham* and *Sarah*, *Rachel* and *Hannah*, *Zachary* and *Elizabeth*, and they will say so, because Children are *a Blessing, and a Heritage of the Lord*, and among Temporal Blessings not the least. The key of the Womb is proper to God, say the *Rabbies*, and he only can open it. Pregnancy and Fruitfulness are * a Divine thing, and as it were something Immortal, saith the Philosopher. But several things may be said to convince any sober Persons, that this is not a Blessing of such a Nature that they are to murmur and repine at the want of it. First, It is to be consider'd, that tho' (as some have thought) every *Jewish* Woman had hopes of being the Mother of the *Messias*, and therefore was desirous of Children, and tho' under the old *Jewish* Dispensation it was a sort of Curse to have no Children, yet under that of *Christianity* it is not so, because the things of a Spiritual Nature are the chief Matter of the Evangelical Blessings and Promises, and not those that are Temporal and Bodily. Those who are uncapable of having Children, but take care to please God, are promis'd *a Place and a Name better than that of Sons and Daughters*, Isa. 56. 5. It is very observable, that when one spoke these Words to our Saviour, *Blessed is the Womb that bare thee, and the Paps which thou hast suck'd*, he corrected her, saying, *Yea, rather blessed are they that hear the Word of God and keep it*, Luke 11. 27, 28. The *Virgin Mary* herself was not blessed because she bore the Child *Jesus*, but because he was her Saviour.

* Θεῶν τὸ πρᾶγμα καὶ ἀθάνατον. Plat. *in Sympos.*

Secondly, Those that over-magnify, and immoderately wish for the Temporal Blessing of Child-bearing, should consider the Attendants of that Condition. They should think of the Difficulties and Hazards of Teeming Women, and the *Sorrow*, which, according to the Primitive Curse on Womankind, is Entail'd on *Bringing forth*, Gen. 3. 16. It is observ'd by the Natural Philosopher, who it is probable knew nothing of this Malediction pronounced by God, that † whereas other Animals bring not forth their Young ones with Labour, *Women* have most vehement Pains in Child-bearing. That passionate Woman who cried out, *Give me Children, or else I die*, died in bearing a Child: which may instruct that Sex not to sally out

† Τοῖς μὲν ἄλλοις ζώοις οὐκ ἐπίπονοι γίνονται οἱ τόκοι, ταῖς δὲ γυναιξὶ συμβαίνουσιν οἱ πόνοι ἰσχυότατοι. Aristot. *Hist. Anim.* l. 7. c. 9.

out immoderately in their Desires of this Nature, for they oftentimes prove fatal to them: and what they most earnestly long for should rather have been deprecated by them.

Thirdly, This also may be consider'd, that Children are not absolute Blessings, for we see that even the worst Persons have them in abundance. *The Wicked*, and those *who have their Portion in this Life*, are (according to the Psalmist's Description of them) *full of Children*, Psal. 17. 14. There cannot then be any real and absolute Blessing in that which is common to the most Vitious. Yea, the multiplying of the Species by Generation is common to Beasts. And I might further remark, that the most vile and hurtful Creatures are most Fruitful, and bring forth in the greatest Plenty.

Fourthly, The want of Children can't be the just Subject of Complaint, when we consider, that they are continual Occasions of Anxiety, Trouble, Grief and Fear to their Parents. Especially this is seen in times of Danger and Calamity, for then our Saviour's Words may be seasonably repeated, *Wo unto them that are with Child, and to them that give suck in those Days*, Mat. 24. 19. And on the contrary, *Blessed are the Barren, and the Wombs that never bare, and the Paps which never gave suck*, Luke 23. 29. For those of this Condition are free from the Cares and Horrors with which the Minds of others are fill'd, and they are not overwhelmed with the double Misery which befalls them, that of their Children as well as of themselves. But substracting from this Consideration, in the most favourable Times the Charge of Children is attended with piercing Cares and Sollicitudes, and say the best of them, they are * *a most bitter pleasure.* But,

Fifthly, If Children be Wicked, Disobedient and Graceless, and Sons of *Belial*, they are then the greatest Crosses imaginable. And no Crosses are more common than these. When *Eve* brought forth her Son *Cain*, she seems to speak as if she thought he was the promis'd Seed, *I have gotten*, saith she, *a Man the Lord*: (as it is in the *Hebrew*) she took him for the *Messiah*. A strange Mistake! for *Cain was of that Wicked one*, that is, the Devil, 1 *John* 3. 12. It was the Affliction of our first Parents to have an Ungodly Son, even one that was the Murderer of the Good one. And this is a Calamity that hath usually befallen some of the best Parents ever since. *Noah* had a *Cham*, *Abraham* an *Ismael*, *Isaac* an *Esau*. *Moses's* Sons, *Eliezer* and *Gerson*, were unlike their Father. *Eli* had wicked Sons, and was put by his Office for it. Nor were the Sons of *Samuel*, who succeeded him in his Place, any better; yea, they were extremely lewd and debauch'd, and caus'd the Name of God to be blasphemed. *David* had an *Absalom*, an *Ammon*, an *Adonijah*. *Hezekiah* had *Manasseh*, and *Josiah* had three wicked and unhappy Children.

And Examples of the like Nature there are in all Histories; namely, of Sons degenerating from their Fathers Vertue. *Socrates* had Children more like the Mother than the Father. *Tully* had a Son far unlike him. *Marius*, *Cato* and other eminent Men had either dull or debauch'd Sons. *Scipio's* was a Prodigal and Wanton: *Commodus*, the Son of *Antoninus*, was such another. *Tiberius* and *Caius Gracchus* were the seditious and turbulent Sons of *Titus Gracchus*, that brave and honest Patriot of his Country. *Ochus* was the degenerate Offspring of *Artaxerxes*, *Caligula* the impious Issue of good *Germanicus*. We may see abundant Examples of this kind in *Ælius Spartianus* in the Life of *Severus*. And frequently (I wou'd not say *generally*) it may be observ'd, that either the best and worthiest Men have no Children, or they have such as are a disgrace to them.

And now what do you think of the passionate Complaint of having no Children? May not many Persons rather complain that they have any? How Un-manly a Lamentation was that of *David* for the Death of his Rebellious Son? Such Passions are the Product of that inordinate Love which some bear to their Offspring. Divine Providence seems to design a Check to it by what I have been mentioning; namely, Permitting that Disorder and Undutifulness which are so common in Children. The so frequent sight of this might be serviceable to curb and restrain in some Persons that immoderate and excessive Desire of Issue which they are adicted to. They may set before their Eyes the preceding Examples, and a thousand more which their own Times present them with. Whence they may learn how happy some Parents had been if it had not been for their Children, who were not only a Discredit to them, but the very Plague of their Hearts, and the Ruine of their Families. The *Jews* express it thus, * The War of *Gog* and

* *Liberorum amarissima voluptas.* Tertull. *ad uxor.* l. 1.

* *Talmud.*

and *Magog* is not so grievous as to have degenerate and evil Children in one's House.

But then there is that which may be some Relief to us in this case, viz. that the *Providence* of God is served by this, and he is pleased to exercise and try the patience of Parents by this means, and sometimes to punish their too great Indulgence and Fondness, and to teach them to place their Happiness aright, and not to fix it in things here below. And besides, the privilege of having vertuous Children being so rare and uncommon, we are instructed thence that Grace is not Hereditary, and runs not in the Blood, that it passeth not like an Estate from Father to Son. Piety is not of the Nature of a Patrimony, and Children may be Heirs to their Father's Wealth, but not their Vertues. And therefore we should always prefer the latter to the former; and with great zeal and fervour implore the Divine Grace and Blessing, which alone are able to make Parents and their Children happy. But if it be the lot of other wedded Persons to be Childless, I desire them to entertain that Condition with a quiet Spirit, remembring what the wise Son of *Sirach* saith, *Better it is to die without Children than to have Children that are ungodly.* Eccl. 16. 3. and what the Author of the Book of *Wisdom* saith, *Better it is to have no Children, and to have Vertue, for the memorial thereof is immortal,* Wisd. 4. 1.

9. *The DEATH of Children*, of *Relations*, *Friends* and *Neighbours* comes into the number of those afflictive Circumstances which most are Subject to. But I shall endeavour to make it clear that the Divine Providence here (as well as in the foregoing instances) is very accountable. But before I do this, that I may not be misunderstood, it will be necessary to premise that it is not unlawful to *Mourn* and *Lament* at the death of our Relatives or Friends. For there is a *Natural Grief*, such as flows from the very make of our Natures, and necessarily accompanies any Loss or Disappointment, and especially it shews it self at the loss of Kindred or endeared Friends. These are parts of our selves, and it is impossible they should be snatched from us, but we must be affected as when we lose a Limb or Member. This is a harmless and innocent Sorrow, and every one that hath not put off Humanity knows what it means. It being lawful to love our near Relations whilst Living, we cannot but Mourn for them when they are Dead. For what is delighted in when present, is lamented when absent, and taken away from us. Thus far *Natural Affection* justifies our Mourning. But it is allow'd of also by the Laws of *Religion*, for there is a *Christian*, as well as a *Natural* Grief. Accordingly if our deceased Friends were Wicked, then Mourning is a token of our resentment of their deplorable Condition. If they were Good, and such as fear'd God, then Lamenting and Weeping are Testimonies of their Worth, and of our Esteem of it. Again, when we are depriv'd of our Relations, it is the Hand of God upon us, and we ought to be sensible of it. Especially the death of those that were Holy is to be Lamented, because of the great loss the Survivors sustain by their being taken away.

And Lastly, The Example of the wisest and best Men will authorize our Mourning for the Deceased. We read that this was practised by *Abraham* at *Sarah*'s Death, and by *Jacob* for the supposed Death of his Son *Joseph*. This *Joseph* solemniz'd his Father's Funerals with a whole Weeks Lamentations. The *Israelites* bewailing the departure of their great Prophet *Moses* was of a longer Continuance, not expiring till the end of Thirty Days. *David* expressed his passionate Sorrow at the Death of *Saul* and *Jonathan*; I say, of *Saul*, who though he was forsaken of God, and possessed by an Evil Spirit, was solemnly Lamented by his Royal Successor, and even praised for those things which were laudable in him. The Pious Widows stood Weeping about *Dorcas*, and devout Men carried *Stephen* to his Burial, and made great Lamentation over him. But what greater Example can we have to warrant our due Morning for the Dead than that which we find in *John* 11. 35. even that of our Blessed Saviour himself? *He wept* over *Lazarus*'s Grave: whereupon the *Jews* said, *Behold how he loved him.* True Love and Friendship will extort this solemn Tribute of Tears. That affectionate Grief which is the extract of Natural Tenderness and Rational Sympathy and Kindness is not unworthy of a Christian: but much more that Religious and Pious Resentment for the loss of those whom Nature and Grace had made near to us, is highly commend-

mendable, and may justly be reckoned among the Offices of our most Holy Religion. Whereas on the contrary, to be insensible and stupid and unrelenting on such an occasion is both Unnatural and Unchristian. Wherefore it was condemned as a thing most Barbarous and Savage in the Emperor *Tiberius* to forbid the near Kinsfolks of those that were put to Death by him to Mourn and Lament for them.

Having premised these things, to prevent mistakes about the matter in Hand, having shew'd that it is innocent and lawful to bewail the afflictive departure of our Friends, I proceed now to prove that there cannot be the least shew of Reason pretended for complaining of Divine *Providence*, when by it we are bereav'd of them. First, It is against the Law of Nature, as it is now settled, that we should enjoy our Relations or any others always; for we all carry about us the Fewel of Mortality, our Bodies are made up of such Principles as of necessity tend to Dissolution. This is the Effect and Penalty of the first Transgression, and therefore we must blame our selves, and not our Maker. And it may be attributed to the actual Sins of Men, whereby their Bodies are depraved, that Death comes upon them sooner than it did at first. Besides, to speak only in an ordinary way, if all the multiplyed Generations of Men should live so many hundred Years now as they did at the Beginning, I question whether the Earth would hold them It is probable there would not be room enough for them all; and moreover, there would not be sufficient Food for them.

But there are higher Reasons to be assign'd why the All-wise Disposer of all things removes Men from off the Stage of this Earth, and why we should acquiesce in his Disposal. This World is but in order to another; here we are in a State of Probation, and after our appointed time is expired, we are to be translated hence to receive a Reward or Punishment according to our Actions. Wherefore it is irrational or absurd to be displeased with the Divine Order and Constitution relating to the departure of Men out of this World. Yea, 'tis Prophane and Blasphemous to quarrel with the Laws which God hath fixed concerning them. Willingly and Contentedly to take our leave of our Friends is the most rational thing that can be thought of, because herein we shew our selves Obsequious to God's Will and Pleasure, which is the standard of our Behaviour, and we act as those that have a right Notion of things. We are * told that when *Socrates*'s Friends desir'd they might have his Body to bury it when he was Dead, he granted their Request on this Condition, that they would not think that they buried *Socrates*. So when we carry our Friends to Burial, we must understand what it is that we do: we deposite Earth only, the Spiritual part is fled, and is not capable of being Interr'd. Our loss therefore is not very great.

* Plato *in Phadone.*

Especially, If our Relations be the Friends of God, as well as ours, we should always reckon them as fitter for Heaven than for this place of Sin and Vanity, and therefore we should be continually expecting their Translation. Whilst we have them here, we should enjoy them as if we were to part with them, and we should part with them as if we yet enjoyed them. We knew they were mortal when we had them, and we know now they are alive when they are gone from us: yea, if we have good ground of believing that they died in the Lord, we are certain that their Condition is infinitely better than it ever was or could have been here, for they are pass'd into a Life of Happiness, Heaven hath receiv'd their departed Spirits, they are taken into the Embraces of Christ Jesus, they sing eternal Hallelujahs with the Lamb: and therefore it is but kind Folly to lament their removal from this Valley of Tears, from Toil and Labour, from Disease and Pain, from Trouble and Vexation, and from all the numerous Evils of a miserable distracted World. Wherefore in stead of immoderately grieving for them, we ought to prepare our selves to follow them, that we may for ever be with the Lord and with them.

Lastly, Let it be remember'd that though our Friends are gone, though our nearest Relations are taken from us, yet God is able to repair this Loss: and if he doth it not in the same kind, yet he can recompense us in some other manner and kind. He is a Father and a Husband, and he is the best Friend, for he can supply us with all Mercies and Blessings. Though the Streams should be dried up, yet the Fountain still remains, and can never be exhausted. Wherefore comfort one another with these Words.

And here, before I leave this Head, it may not be improper and unseasonable to shew how immoderate Grief for the deceased hath been universally disapprov'd of and condemn'd. Under the *Jewish* Dispensation God forbad his People *to round the corners of their Heads, and to make any cutting in their Flesh for the Dead*, Levit. 19. 27, 28. and again Chap. 21. v. 5. *ye shall not make any baldness on your Heads:* which referrs to the Practice of the neighbouring Nations, those deluded *Pagans* who miserably slashed and cut themselves, and tore their Hair, and put themselves into an affrighting Posture by reason of the *inordinate Grief* which they had conceived for the death of their Friends. Such a wild and raving practice is here prohibited: the People of God must not be guilty of such extravagant Behaviour: they must check all excessive Sorrow and Lamentation, and bridle and restrain their Passion at the departure of their Friends. And this was the Judgment and Practice of the better sort of *Heathens*; I say of the *better sort*, for 'tis not to be denied that the more rude and barbarous Nations were highly immoderate in their Lamentations. It is related of the *Egyptians* * that at their Funerals they made horrid Cries, and maimed their Flesh, and bruised their Breasts with repeated Strokes. Others among the ruder Countries used to retire into dark Dens and places under Ground; and there they lay for many Days, and would not by any means see the light of the Sun, which the Persons they mourn'd for were deprived of, they said. They gave themselves up wholly to Sadness and Despair, and refused to listen to arguments of Comfort. And at this day among the very *Persians*, † at the death of one of the Family the whole house rings with Cries and Howlings, especially of the Women who tear their Hair, and almost run distracted.

* *Sext. Empir. lib.* 3.

† Tavernier's *Travels.*

But the more civilized People among the *Gentiles* were always averse to such Behaviour. * The *Twelve Tables* forbad the use of Effeminate Outcries and Roarings at Funerals. *Plutarch* tells us that *Solon* made a Law to forbid those † *unmanly* and *womanish Passions*, and all excessive Mourning. Whence this Grave Writer takes occasion to say, that ‖ we must not exorbitantly run out into unprofitable and degenerate Lamentations, beyond what Nature and Moderation dictate to us. And again, * "To be transported "ed beyond Measure with Grief, and to heap up Sorrow immo"derately is besides the Law of Nature, and proceeds from a "depraved Opinion and Sentiment. Let us then avoid it as "hurtful and vitious, and as that which doth not in the least "become Men endued with Principles of Vertue. The same Author reports that in *Lycia*, a Country in *Asia* the Lesse, it was a Law given to the Citizens that when they mourn'd, they should wear Women's Apparel, to shew † that Lavish Grief is the Passion of an Effeminate, weak and ignoble Mind. This is that undue Lamentation which St. *Paul* cautions his *Thessalonians* against, *I would not have you to be ignorant, Brethren, concerning them that are asleep, that ye sorrow not even as others that have no Hope*, 1. Thess. 4. 13. It is unworthy of you who call your selves Believers to behave your selves like Infidels, that is, as the worst sort of them do, to give way to immoderate Passion, and to exceed the due measures in Mourning for the Dead. This becomes not those who know the Condition of those who sleep in Jesus, and who profess the Belief of a glorious Resurrection. *Others have not* this *Hope*, but you have it, and therefore you must not indulge an excess of Grief, you must not be inconsolable at the Death of your Friends. But,

* *Cic. Tusc. Quæst. & Lib.* 2. *de Legib.*

† Ἀναιδῆ καὶ γυναικώδη πάθη. In vit. Solon.

‖ Μὴ δεῖ περὶ τὴν φυσικὴν καὶ μέτριον, πρὸς ἄπρακτα πένθη καὶ θρήνους ἀγονεῖς ἐκλείπειν. De Consolat.

* Τὸ δὲ παρὰ τὴν μέτρον παραφέρεσθαι καὶ συναύξειν τὸ πένθος, παρὰ φύσιν εἶναι φημι, καὶ ὑπὸ τῆς ἐν ἡμῖν φαύλης γίνεσθαι δόξης· διὸ καὶ τοῦτο μὴ ἐάστέον ὡς βλαβερὸν καὶ φαῦλον, καὶ ἀπαιδεύτοις ἀνδράσιν οὐκ ἄν πρέπον. Ibid.

† Ὅτι γυναικώδες τὸ πάθος ἐστὶ——θῆλυ γὰρ ὄντως καὶ ἀδυνατὸν καὶ ἀγενὲς τὸ πάθος. Ibid.

10thly and Lastly, It is not *Death* simply consider'd in itself, but the *Manner* of it that is chiefly complained of, as that it is *Untimely*, or *Violent*, or the like. And therefore I must now clear the Wisdom and Providence of God in the Death of good Men, though it be of that Nature which I have mentioned. Here I will distinctly proceed and shew that though it be reckoned *Untimely*, though it be *Violent*, or *Suddain* (for I shall shew how this latter is distinguished from *Untimely*) or *Uncomfortable*, or even attended with the *Anger* and *Displeasure of God*, yet it is not unworthy of Divine Providence, nor is it the matter of our Censure.

First, Some are apt to judge their Brethren, and most are forward to bemoan them, because the Death which they die is *Untimely*, for so they are pleased to style it. The Persons are snatched away in their younger Years, or before they are

are come to Manhood, or when they are in the heighth of their Business and Action, and some great undertakings and designs are on Foot. If they die then, they are said to die before their Time. But all this is founded on a false bottom. For,

1. There is nothing of this kind *Untimely* in itself and in respect of God's Decrees. Particularly the days of Man upon Earth are determined and fixed, so that they cannot be extended to any greater length than we see they are. Therefore to say that this or that Man or Woman died *before their time*, is a false and groundless Assertion. *Plutarch* in his *Consolatary Discourse* to *Apollonius*, where he comforts him upon the death of his Son, a hopeful young Man, takes particular notice of this, " It will be said, saith he, that he was taken away before his Time: " others that were older should have gone before him, his Age did not call him a- " way yet, he should have stayed here longer. To which he an- " swers, * It is true, Humane Nature seems to require this, but " it is otherwise in the Accounts and Determination of Provi- " dence which governs the whole World, and this is according " to that Order whereby the Universe is disposed. And if a *Pagan* Moralist Discourses thus, shall not *Christians* satisfie themselves with the clearer and more confirm'd Discoveries of the Will and Decree of Heaven?

* Τοῦτ' εἶναι παρὰ φύσιν τὴν ἡμέτερον δηλονότι καὶ τὴν ἀνθρωπίνην, ἀλλ' ἐ κατὰ τὴν τῶν ὅλων πρόνοιαν, καὶ τὴν κοσμικὴν διάταξιν.

2. Those Persons that are said to be snatched away before their times, are gone but a very little time before us: so that there is no considerable difference between the day of their departure and ours. Thus the excellent Moralist before mentioned tells his Friends that the † longest Life is but short, and no other than a Point if compared with an Infinite Eternity. And therefore it is very weakly and ignorantly said that this or that Man's Death is *Untimely*. It is only our mean and short Conceptions that make us talk thus.

† Καὶ γὰρ ὁ μακρότατος βίος ὀλίγος ἐστὶ καὶ στιγμαῖος πρὸς τὸν ἄπειρον αἰῶνα. Ibid.

3. Sometimes the good are removed hence before they have lived long in the World, because they are loved by God, and therefore they are taken up to him. *Enoch walked with God, and God took him*, Gen. 5. 24. he was in his Favour above others of that time, and therefore he was translated from the wicked World. This *Enoch*, who was the godliest Man in that Age, lived the shortest life of all upon Earth, that he might eternally live with God, in whose sight he found Grace. The very *Gentiles* had a sense of this, ‖ *He whom the Gods Love, dies Young*, saith one of their Ancient Poets: and he is back'd by * another, in the very same Words.

‖ Ὃν φιλῶσι θεοὶ ἀποθνήσκει νέος. Menand.

* *Quem Dii diligunt, adolescens moritur, dum valet, sentit, sapit.* Plaut. in Bacchid.

4. Some godly Persons are soon called hence, because they dispatch their work in a short time, and are early ripe for Death. Though they die Young, yet they may be said to be Old, namely, in Vertue and Grace. They are fit for Happiness, and therefore they soon go to partake of it. This is thus represented by that wise Writer, * *Honourable Age is not that which standeth in length of time, nor that which is measured by number of Years; but Wisdom is gray Hair unto Men, and an unspotted Life is Old Age.* And again, † *Being made perfect in a short time, he fullfills a long time.* The summ is, he that lives *Well*, lives *Long*: and this gives us a Reason of his early departure hence.

* *Wisd.* 4. 8, 9.

† v. 13.

Secondly, No good Man is to be censured and judged because his Death is *Violent*, or, as some vulgarly speak, because it is not a *Natural* Death. For they call dying in their Beds, and every kind of Death which is attended with a foregoing Sickness a *Natural Death*, and the other kinds of Death are reputed *not to be Natural*. But if we will speak according to the true Conceptions of things, this distinction of *Natural* and *not Natural* is not here rightly applyed. I grant indeed that Death may be said to be Natural as it is the consequent of our Corrupt Nature. When *Adam* had hurt himself by his Fall, it became Natural to him and us to die, and so death is a debt or tribute which Humane Nature is to pay. But if we speak of Nature as it was at first, and call that Natural which is according to the Primitive Condition, Constitution or Nature of Man, then it is certain that there is not any kind of Death that is Natural. For as Sin was not Natural to our Primitive State of Innocency, so neither was Death: and the reason is plain, because death is the product of Sin, *the Wages* of it, as the Apostle speaks.

Man

Man was not made for Death, nor calculated for Mortality: *Adam* had not died if he had not sin'd, for Death was threatned to him on that account, *Gen.* 3. 19. but he sinning, Death was the Punishment of his Transgression But if Death were *Natural*, it could not be a Punishment or Evil, for what is Natural is agreeable to us, and what we desire. And therefore Death is falsly ascrib'd to Nature.

And to say, that even a *violent* Death is *besides Nature*, or *contrary to it*, is a false and ill-grounded Notion, for if we speak properly, we must confess that there is *no kind* or *manner* of Death whatsoever, but it may truly be said to be *violent*. The Death of that *English* King who was (as Historians tell us) stifled to Death between two soft Pillows, if we speak of the true Notion and Nature of Death it self, as it is an Enemy to Nature, was as violent as if he had been crush'd between two Millstones. For what is that but *violence* which parts asunder two such intimate Friends as the Soul and Body? Tho' a Man die of Joy, (as *Chilo* the *Spartan* did whilst he was embracing his Son a Conqueror at the *Olympic* Games, or as that *Athenian* Stage-player whom *Plutarch* makes mention of, who being crown'd with golden Chaplets by his fellow-Actors for acting his Part so excellently, went presently off the Stage of the World, as over-burden'd with too great Applause and Honour) tho' a Man die with excessive and profuse Laughter, as *Publius Crassus*, *Sophocles* and *Chrysippus*: tho' he expire merely with Imagination, (as *Cardan* and *Charron* have presented us with several Instances of it) tho' he should go away in a soft Sleep, as some say *Plato* did, than which there cannot be supposed a more gentle and quiet Departure, yet Death is still, in what guise soever it comes, *violent*.

The Ship which is far enough from dangerous Rocks, which is not hurried by Storms, nor toss'd upon raging Billows, yet with a flattering Gale, and in smooth Waters, all on a suddain, thro' some inward Breach, may sink and be irreparably lost. The Shipwrecks of Life are no otherwise, which may have Causes from within, as well as from without. This frail Vessel of our Bodies may not only perish by Storms, but in a Calm: but both of them are properly violent, for Death, as it is Death, and consequently one kind of Death as well as another, is against the Primitive Laws of Nature, and it is a forcible divorcing and separating of the Soul from its beloved Mate. But Persons are apt to think the better of it, because of those favourable Circumstances that go along with it sometimes: as a *Roman* Citizen, because he was loth to die in the ordinary way of Malefactors, prevail'd with the Emperour *Galba*, that the Gibbet whereon he was to be hang'd might be colour'd over. As if a painted Gallows wou'd make Death more easy and tolerable: as if Death were the less violent in it self, because the way to it is more gay and genteel. *Seneca* speaks well to this purpose, * "Why dost thou, O "Death, (said he) shew me thy Swords and thy Fires, and all "the ghastly Instruments of Destruction, and the whole Crowd "of Executioners making a noise about thee? Take away that "fatal Pomp under which thou skulkest, and then it will be seen "that thou scarest only Fools. Men are mistaken in their Notions about *violent* Death: they judge of it from its terrible Train and Equipage, more than from the thing it self. To be crucified, to be burnt, to be beheaded, to be run thro' with a Sword, and the like violent Deaths are very much dreaded, (and there is no wonder that they are so, because they are Enemies to our Nature, and dissolve the Union of those dear Companions, Soul and Body) but this is certain, that to die of the Stone, or Strangury, or Cholick, or some such Disease, is *more violent* (properly speaking) than those Deaths are. The Paroxysms, the Pains, the Disorder which accompany the one, are more favourable than the Pains and Tortures which attend the other. God might in as much Mercy have made *Isaac* a *Burnt-Sacrifice*, as have taken him away with a *Fever*. The former is more tolerable than the latter, if you consider, that tho' those Flames were more fierce, yet these are more lasting. Therefore *Maximus Tyrius*, enquiring into the Nature of a good Man's Sufferings, and shewing what a violent Death is to such a one, tells us, that † he dies no otherwise than if he died of some Disease, a Fever or the Stone, nor is he to be angry at the Authors of his Death.

* *Quid mihi gladios & ignes ostendis, & turbam carnificum circa te frementium? Tolle istam pompam sub qua lates, & stultos territas.* Epist. 24.

† Ἀποθανεῖται ὡς ὑπὸ πυρετοῦ ἢ λίθου, οὐδὲν ἀγανακτῶν πρὸς τοὺς ἀποκτεννοῦντας. *Dissertat.* 2.

But let us come to higher Considerations, let us remember that of the Psalmist, *Psal.* 116. 15. *Precious in the sight of the Lord is the Death of his Saints*: and if their Death be precious to him, then we may conclude, that he will not

not suffer them to be taken away by any kind of Death that is in it self *Evil* and *Hurtful* to them: for such a Death wou'd be inconsistent with that Kindness and Love which he bears to them. Therefore whatever Death a righteous Man, a Friend of God suffers, it cannot be the Object of our Censure, nor of our excessive Lamentation. To be murder'd, to be assassinated, to die by the Hands of violent and bloody Men, is no Token of God's Displeasure, and therefore we ought not to be offended at it, and to think them infamous that fell in that manner. Let us call to mind that the first Man that died was a Saint, and that Saint was murder'd, and that because he was such, and was accepted of God. Death began with one who was dear to the Almighty: and a violent Death was his Portion; whence we may infer, that it was not really Evil or Harmful. St. *Stephen*'s Death was, according to the usual Accounts and Names of things, a very violent one: yet the Holy Ghost saith, *he fell asleep*, which is a very gentle and soft Term.

5. Again, Shall we think that good Men wou'd even desire and court those kinds of Death, if they were in their own Nature hurtful? Do we not read that *Ignatius* long'd for Martyrdom? I will invite, I will allure the Beasts to devour me, said he. *Basil*, the famous Bishop of *Cæsarea*, when he was persecuted, and in Bonds for the Truth, against *Arianism* which then rag'd, and when he was threatned with Death, utter'd such Words as these, * I wish I may be taken out of this Prison of the Body for the Defence of the Truth. The Days of the Martyr's Sufferings were call'd by the Ancients their *Birth-Days*, *Nativities*, because they were Days of Rejoycing to them. And we have abundant Testimony from Ecclesiastical History, that the Martyrs flock'd with Joy and Gladness to the Flames, and to their Torments. † It would grieve me sorely, said *Martin Luther*, if I should carry my Blood into the Grave: tho' by the wonderful Providence of God he did so, and escaped the Papal Fury. I could wish, saith he at another time, that the Adversaries would slay me, for my Death wou'd be more profitable to the Church than my Life, as *Samson* at his Death slew more of the *Philistines* than when he lived. Tho' it is true, we may be enclined to preferr a Coffin to a Stake, and the cold Clods before the scorching Flames; that is, we wou'd rather die in Peace than in Persecution, yet it is certain, that this is more *Honourable* than that, and conduces more to God's Glory. We have no reason then to reproach a violent Death, and to entertain an ill Opinion of those that undergo it. Nay, let me add, That this was Honourable in the Esteem of the best *Pagans*. *Xenophon*, in his *Apology for* Socrates, tells us, that that excellent Philosopher, as soon as Sentence was past upon him, bravely spoke these Words, * I ought not to be ever the more dejected in Mind because I am unjustly condemn'd to die, for this is no Disgrace to me, but to those that have condemn'd me. And † when he was lifting the Draught of fatal Poison to his Lips, and his Wife cried out, and lamented that he died Innocently, What, saith he, would you rather have me die not Innocent but Guilty, and deserve this Death? And so he proceeded to take off his Potion.

* Τὸ ὅντο μοι διὰ τὴν ἀλήθειαν ἀπαλλαγῆναι τῶν δεσμῶν τῦ σώματος. Socrat. *Hist. Eccl.* l. 4. c. 21.

† *Colloq. Mensal.*

* Οὐδ' μὴν τοι ὅτι ἀδίκως ἀποθνήσκω, διὰ τοῦτο μᾶλλον φέρω πτόνον οὐδὲ ἐμοί, ἀλλὰ τοῖς κατηγοροῦσι τοῦτο ἀισχρόν ἐστι.

† *Val. Max.* l. 7. c. 2.

Is it not, think you, as Commendable and Praise-worthy in a *Christian* to lay down his Life for his Religion, for his Master, and his Cause, and for a good Conscience? Tho' cruel and savage Men commit a Rape upon his Life, tho' he dies never so violent a Death, as to the outward Means and Procurement of it, yet the bitterness of that Death is qualified, if not wholly remov'd by this Consideration, that they can meddle only with the outward Man, *they can only kill the Body*, but when they have done that, *they have no more that they can do*, they cannot hurt the inward and better Part. With all their Storming and Raging, with all their Fury and Madness they can't shut a good Man out of Heaven, they can't debarr him of everlasting Happiness. It was rightly said by a great Man among the *Gentile* Moralists, * Death is that greatest thing of all, beyond which there is not any thing that the most savage Tyrants have to threaten and fright'us with. Which exactly answers to the very Language of our Saviour before-mention'd, *after that, they have no more that they can do*: so that it is not improbable, that *Seneca* borrow'd this from the Evangelical Writings, which 'tis likely he had some knowledge of, being acquainted with

* *Maximum illud ultra quod nihil habent, sævissimi Domini quod minentur.* Sen.

with St. *Paul*, as *Jerom* reports. Men have nothing beyond a violent Death that they can terrify us with: this is the most, and this is the worst they can do. But no good and confirm'd Christian is affraid of this, because it reaches the Mortal part only, but cannot do the least hurt to the never-dying Spirit.

And here I might observe to you, that this excellent Notion and Persuasion, That a good Man can't receive any Hurt from the Wicked, was attain'd to by the Moralists, even among the Heathens. † One of them especially hath admirably asserted this noble Truth in an entire *Dissertation* upon it; where he reduces all to this Summ, * "Doing an Injury or Hurting is taking away some Good; now what is Good but Vertue? But this can impossibly be taken away by the Wicked: whence it follows, that the Vertuous Man can't be Injur'd or Hurt by them. Yea, (as this Author proceeds) "A good Man laughs very pleasantly when he sees the Wicked "drive at him with great fury, as if they were able to do some "great matter, whereas they can do nothing at all. They may "batter and bruise his Carkass, but they have no Power to injure "his Soul. Of this there was a notable and [illegible] Example among the very Pagan Philosophers; [illegible] when he was beaten in a Mortar with Iron Pestles, calling out this [illegible] of *Cyprus* (who had commanded him to be so used) *Beat on, and pound the Skin, the outward Case* of Anaxarchus, *but thou dost not hurt* Anaxarchus *himself*. And the Answer which another Philosopher return'd to *Lysimachus*, who threatned him with Death, is very remarkable, *Threaten your Nobles*, said he; *your Men of Power with this; it may without doubt affright those soft kind of Men, but as for* Theodorus (for that was his Name) *it is all one to him whether his Body rot above Ground or underneath, whether he dies a natural or a violent Death, as 'tis call'd.* If Men of Heathen Principles could speak and act thus, what must be expected from a *Christian*? With what Fearlessness and Courage should he entertain the Threats of his most cruel Adversaries? With what Submission and Cheerfulness ought he to receive the Menaces of Death from them? Such a one is relieved and comforted by the inward Settle hath of God's Favour, which is better than Life, unspeakably better than this Temporal Life, and is that which constitutes the Life Eternal. He suffers here, and reigns hereafter: he parts with his Life on Earth, but resumes it in Heaven; in a Word, with the converted penitent Thief he ascends from the Cross, the Place of his Sufferings and Death, to the Paradise of God, to the Regions of endless Blessedness. Who then can deny that this Man is a Gainer by this?

† Οὐ βλάπτει ἀγαθὸν ἀνδρὶ οὐδὲν ὑπὸ πονηρῶν βλαβῆναι. Max. Tyr. Diss. 2.

* Ἀδικία ἐστὶν ἀφαίρεσις ἀγαθοῦ. Τὸ δὲ ἀγαθὸν, τί ἂν εἴη ἄλλο ἢ ἀρετή; ἣν δὲ ἀρετὴν οὐκ ἀναιρεῖσθαι, ἐὰν ἀδικῶσιν πονηροὶ τὸν ἀρετὴν ἔχοντα.

† Ἀγαθὸς ἀνὴρ παιγνιωδέστατα γελᾷ τὰ ἀκεραίου, ὁρῶν τοὺς ἀδικοῦντας αὐτὸν ὑπὲρ μικρὸν σπουδῇ, οὐδὲν τι δρῶντας ἀδικοῦντας.

Thirdly, We ought not to judge or lament a good Man's Death because of the *sadness* of it. What tho' he be unexpectedly taken hence, what tho' his Death was unlook'd for; what tho' there were no Warnings and Forerunners of his Dissolution? what tho' he speedily gave up his Breath? This should not give occasion to any one to think the worse of him, or to censure his future State: and that for these two Reasons; first, A good Man is always prepared, and therefore no kind of Death can come amiss to him. Yea, It can't be said to be sudden and unexpected when there is a constant Meditating of Death, when the Person dies daily, and is continually fitting himself for appearing before God. Secondly, Sudden Death is on some accounts a Kindness, a very great Favour. For it is not so painful, so afflictive and hard to endure, as a Death that is accompanied with lingring Sickness and tedious Torments. Upon this account *Augustus Cæsar* always wish'd for an * easy Passage, a quiet and quick Death. And his immediate Predecessor was of † the same Mind. Further, This kind of Death is free from those Temptations and Failings which a long Sickness wou'd administer; and for that reason it is eligible. Which perhaps was the ground of Mr. *Brightman*'s Desire, namely, That he might, if God pleas'd, die a sudden Death: for thereby some Extravagances, which even the best Men may be subject to, are prevented.

* Εὐθανασίας. Suet. in Octav.

† *Finem vitæ repentinum inopinatumq; prævolerat.* Idem in Julio.

But doth not our Church in her *Litany* direct us to pray against *sudden Death*, and is it not lawful to do so? I answer, We may do it with certain Limitations, not otherwise; that is, We may desire that we may not be suddenly taken away, when it is inconvenient for the settling of our lawful Affairs, and ordering our Families; when our Souls are not set in order, and well prepared; when we have some

some good and holy Enterprize to finish, whereby we shall bring great Glory to God, and be beneficial to the Church. For such Reasons as these it is lawful to pray to be *deliver'd from sudden Death*, yet so as we wholly submit our selves to the Divine Will and Disposal, and prescribe not to the Almighty, who is the sole Arbiter of Life and Death, and of the Time and Manner of this latter especially. But on other accounts, namely, those before-named, a sudden Death is preferable to a lingring one: especially, this manner of Expiring is a Kindness to him that hath before prepared himself for his last End. It is a great Privilege to be *quickly Happy*. This therefore hath been desired and wish'd for by some good and holy Men.

Fourthly, Tho' a good Man should *die uncomfortably*, with disquiet of Mind, with terrours of Conscience, and with some degree of Despair, yet we are not to judge him for that. The reason is this, Because we are to impute these Troubles and Disorders either to the extraordinary Indisposition of his Body, as it sometimes happens, either in Persons whose Spirits are sunk with Melancholy, or enflamed and inraged with Fevers; or else we must ascribe these Distractions to the violence of *Satan*'s Temptations, whereby they are brought under sharp Conflicts, and are fill'd with horror of Mind and fear of Death, upon the constant Reflections on their former Sins. But these Disorders are no real Sign of the Badness of such Persons: which may be demonstrated to any impartial Considerer from this one thing, namely, That the *worst* Men very commonly die peaceable. Some of the most profligate Wretches, when they come to leave the World, have no seeming Troubles upon them, but, as 'tis vulgarly said, die like Lambs, tho' at the last Day they will be found among the Goats. This was of old observ'd by that holy Man, *Psal.* 73. 4. *There are no Bands in their Death*, they have no *Weights* and *Burdens*, no *Pressures* and *Grievances:* (as the *Hebrew* Word signifies) or as the *Chaldee* Paraphrase renders it, *they are not frighted nor troubled because of the Day of their Deaths*, but seem to leave the World with Ease and Satisfaction. Now, I ask any Man of good Sense, whether this be a Sign of the Goodness of their Condition. I suppose he will say, It is not. Why then on the other side should we think that a harsh Death, accompanied with extraordinary Disorder, which sometimes is the Lot of a good Man, is to be look'd upon as a Token of his ill State, and of God's Displeasure? No such thing. For a good and holy Life can never have an unhappy End. I will conclude this Particular with the Words of a * judicious Man, [The Child of God, most dear to him, may thro' the Gulf of Desperation attain to everlasting Happiness.] And again, [Despair, whether it arise from Weakness of Nature, or from Conscience of Sin, cannot prejudice the Salvation of them that are effectually called.]

* *Mr.* Perkins *of the right way of dying well.*

Fifthly, and lastly, Tho' a violent and sudden Death should be the Effect of *God's Anger and Displeasure* against a good Man, yet we are not uncharitably to censure and judge him for this. For this I assert as a very true Proposition, That the Deaths of the best Persons may be accompanied with, and proceed from the Divine Displeasure, and yet the Persons themselves may be happy. It is not improbable that *Lot*'s Wife, who was turn'd into a Pillar of Salt, so that she became her own Tomb and Monument, was saved notwithstanding this Judgment sent upon her by God. For I do not embrace † *Theophylact*'s Interpretation of the place, that she remain'd Obstinate and Impenitent, and that her Heart was hardned, and that is the meaning of her being turn'd into a Pillar of hardned Salt. But I rather take the truth of the Story to be this; When *Lot* and his Family were snatch'd out of the Flames, caus'd by Thunder and Lightning from Heaven, (for it is said, *it rained Brimstone*, the Materials of that Meteor, *from the Lord out of Heaven*) as they were travelling from *Sodom*, this foolish Woman turn'd her Head towards the smoaking City, as being loth to leave it and her Goods that were in it: (which was contrary to the express Command of God, That they should go forward, and not look back) whereupon God made her an Example to future Ages, that they may not be too intent on the Concerns of this World, but that they speedily obey the Summons of the Almighty. But I conceive (tho' I deliver nothing positively and peremptorily in this matter) she might enter into Peace and Glory tho' she died by God's Displeasure. We have no ill Character of this Woman in the Scripture: we cannot gather from any thing that is said in the Sacred History that she had been a wicked Person: but this we know, that she was the Wife and Consort of a pious

† *In* 7. *cap.* Lucæ.

Saint, and Beloved of God: and we know that she was mercifully deliver'd out of *Sodom*, as well as her Husband. But it pleas'd God to strike her with the Thunder which was then discharging it self on the Earth, because she disobey'd his particular Injunction which he gave her. But tho' her outward Condition was thus deplorable, yet no one can say on sure ground that she was damned. Tho' she was temporally lost as to her Body, yet her Sins might be pardoned, and her Soul saved.

But I will produce some other Instances which are past all Exception and Doubt. *Moses* without question was a Man in God's Favour: he had the Honour and sole Prerogative to speak with him Face to Face, as a Man speaks to his Friend: and abundant Proofs there are in the Sacred History that he was a Person beloved of God, and whose eternal Happiness we have no reason to doubt of: yet for his Offence at the Waters of Strife, for his Unbelief and Distrust which he was there guilty of, God punish'd him with the loss of his Life: he bid him go up to Mount *Nebo*, and die there; and there he died in the sight of the Promis'd Land. Which was a very sad and lamentable End, for this View of *Canaan* was but an upbraiding him for his Infidelity, letting him know that he should not enter that good Land because of his Unbelief. From this Example I think it is very evident, that Death may be a Judgment from God upon a Person, and yet that Person may be in God's Favour. We may charitably think the like of *Job*'s *Children*, who were violently taken out of the World, and that by a Tempest of the Devil's raising, but by God's particular Permission shall I say, or Commission. Upon which occasion *Job* religiously said, *The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away:* tho' *Satan* slew them, yet the Lord took them away, and we may safely allow them to be of the Number of the Blessed. We read that that godly Man *Eli*, even whilst he was waiting for some welcome Tidings concerning the Ark of God, for which he was so affectionately concern'd, fell from the place where he sat, and his Neck was broken with the Fall. We are sure he was a very good Man, but 'tis probable this was a Punishment for his former Transgressing in the Case of his Sons, whom he too much indulged.

In 1 *Kings* 13. there is an Instance of a true Prophet of God, a holy Man, who because he gave way to an old Seducer that met him and inveigled him, was met soon after by a Lion, who slew him. The Psalmist observes concerning some of the *Israelites*, that tho' Plagues were inflicted on them, such as prov'd fatal to them, yet this excluded not the pardon of their Sins, *Thou wast a God that forgavest them, tho' thou tookest Vengeance of their Inventions*, Psal. 99. 8. That good King *Josiah* died a violent Death, he was kill'd in Battle: and this was a Punishment and a Catholick Curse on the People, as we read, 2 *Chron.* 34. 24. *I will bring Evil on this Place, and on all the Inhabitants thereof, because they have forsaken me.* That People was to be plagued for their high Enormities, and what more compendious Method could the Divine *Nemesis* make use of than to take away their King from them, such a King as *Josiah* was? Yea, *Josiah* himself, tho' he was a good Prince, was not guiltless: he went to battle, even that Battle wherein he was cut off, without consulting God's Pleasure in that great Affair: yea, tho' he was warn'd by his very Enemy, who was extraordinarily stirr'd up to acquaint him with God's Will at that time, yet he refus'd to attend to it, and 'tis expressly said in the next Chapter, ver. 22. *He hearkned not unto the Words of* Necho *from the Mouth of God.* That is, God was displeased with him for his Disobedience, and this was the Cause of his inflicting Death upon him.

I will mention one place only in the *New Testament* to confirm this Truth, and so I shall shut up this Particular. 1 *Cor.* 11. 30. *For this Cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep.* The Cause of God's inflicting Death (as well as Sickness) on these Persons, was their irreverent and prophane receiving the Lord's Supper: but notwithstanding this severe Infliction, they were, as to the main, good Men and Children of God, as is clear from ver. 32. *When they are* thus *judged, they are chastned of the Lord, that they should not be condemn'd with the World.* They are here distinguish'd from the *World*, from wicked Men and Reprobates, and tho' they suffer temporal Death for their Sins, yet they are freed from eternal Death. Which is the Sense of St. *Peter*'s Words, 2 *Ep.* 2. 5. *They are punish'd according to Men in the Flesh, that they may live according to God in the Spirit.* Thus I conceive I have fully prov'd what I undertook to make good; namely, That God may punish and chastise

stise a righteous Man with Death, and yet receive him by that very death into his Favour. It would argue great Presumption to determine all those to be Reprobates, and rejected of God, who are taken hence in way of Judgment. For Death may be a Judgment, and a Mercy too to a Good Man. His life may be forfeited for his Miscarriage, but his Salvation is not endanger'd. To conclude, the faithful Servants of God, in what manner and circumstances soever they are taken out of the World, are safe and happy. Though they be never so suddenly hurried hence, though they suffer the most painful and tormenting Deaths, though we suppose them to die Raving and Frantick, though they may go despairing out of this World, yet they are blessed in another. * [We ought not to stand upon the strangeness of any Man's End when we know the goodness of his Life: for we must judge a Man not by his Death, but by his Life.] Therefore those bold Men are to be reprehended who set up a Tribunal of their own, and undertake to judge and arraign, yea and to condemn every one who dies not the common Death of Men. We should not be guilty of such rashness and uncharitableness in our Censures and Decisions, but rest satisfied with this, that no circumstance of Death can be amiss if a holy Life hath gone before.

* *Mr.* Perkins *of the right way of dying well.*

And thus I have gone through the several Heads which I propounded, and have from them amply proved that all *particular Kinds* of *Afflictions*, *Grievances* and *Calamities*, and whatever *Temporal Evils* we are liable to in this World, are made use of by *Providence* for our real good and advantage. There is something in every Occurrence and Event that qualifies the Inconveniences of it, and even makes amends for the harsh things that attend it. Those things which seem to be most hurtful are serviceable to our greatest Benefit. Those Crosses which we are enclined to think are with harm and loss, are most Useful and Profitable. This justifies God's Dealings with us, though they seem never so Severe, and this abundantly demonstrates that the * *Divine Providence* is most signally manifested in the Hardships and Distresses of this Life.

* Ἐναργέστερον ἐν τοῖς κακοπραγίαις ἢ τῷ θεῷ κηδεμονία δηλοῦται. Theodoret.

IX. Thus far the *Providential Care* may be said to be *Universal*. But besides this, it is *Singular*: of which I am now to speak according to what I had before undertaken. There is a *special* Providence, as it hath relation to some *peculiar* Persons and *particular* Ranks of Men. It is to be noted that there are more especial Acts of Providence towards those that are in Publick Stations, and are made use of by God to Rule and Govern. According to the Nature of Things and Persons is God's Providence. He takes not care of all alike, the reason is because all Things and Persons are not alike. The publick Concerns of Kingdoms are of greater importance than those that relate to private Affairs and Interests: and therefore a more than usual Providence is extended towards these. The *Gentiles* had a sense of this, as corrupted as they were in their Notions: which made *Cicero* utter these Words, † *Our Common-wealth*, saith he, *is more beholding to the Divine Help and Assistance than to all the Contrivances and Counsels of Men.* The Communities and Politick Bodies of the World are managed and disposed by the extraordinary Conduct of Heaven, which eminently concerns itself in the Persons who are appointed by God to preside over them. *God is the Judge* (as the Psalmist saith) *he putteth down one and setteth up another.* Psal. 75. 7. That is, he is the only Arbiter and Disposer of the publick Changes that are in the World. No power on Earth can properly be said to *set up* and *pull down* but He. And that I take to be the true meaning of the foregoing Verse, *Promotion cometh neither from the East, nor from the West, nor from the South* (or from the *Desart*, as the *Hebrew* word signifies, which contain'd both *North* and *South*.) The Promotion and Exaltation of Kings and Rulers (for of this the Psalmist here speaks, as is clear from the make of the whole Psalm) is over-ruled by him who is the King of Kings *by whom Kings Reign, and Princes decree Justice*, He absolutely and uncontroulably governs those who govern others. *It is he that changeth the Times and the Seasons, and removeth Kings and setteth up Kings*, Dan. 2. 21. and disposes of Empires and Kingdoms according to his Pleasure.

* *Deorum ope & auxilio multò magis hæc Respublica quam ratione hominum & consilio gubernatur.* Orat. pro Rabirio.

Sometimes he sends good Princes after very bad ones, to amend and regulate those Manners which were corrupted by their Predecessors Vices. Thus *Nero* was succeeded by *Galba*, and *Vitellius* by *Vespasian*, *Nerva* and *Trajan* came after *Domitian*,

an, *Alexander Severus* after *Heliogabalus*, *Pertinax* after *Commodus*, *Gordianus* after *Maximinus*. And in several other instances it might be shew'd that a Reforming Prince comes after a Debaucher of Manners. It is also by the wonderful Providence of Heaven, that after blustring and warlike Princes succeed peaceable ones, as after *David*, *Solomon*, after *Romulus*, *Numa*, after *Julius Cæsar*, *Augustus*, after *Charles the Great*, *Lewis the Pious*. Again, on the other hand, 'tis by the singular disposal of the Almighty that Good and Vertuous Princes are succeeded by very vitious Ones; and Just and Mild Governours are follow'd by Cruel and Tyrannical Ones: thus a *Domitian* is sent after a *Vespasian*, and a *Titus*; a *Commodus* succeeds an *Antoninus*, a debauch'd and profligate Prince one that was the best and wisest of all the *Roman* Emperours. The Divine Conduct is seen in this, for tho' we are backward to believe it, yet 'tis a great Truth, that evil Rulers sometimes are as necessary as good Ones, because they serve the ends of Providence as well as the others. And one end is to chastise and afflict Good Men, and to exercise their Vertues: in order to which it is requisite that the wicked should Prosper and Flourish, and that good Men should be their Vassals. Nor is it uncommon that the worst Rulers are on some accounts beneficial to the Publick. Sometimes they are very serviceable to the places they are set over; our *English* Records will inform us that *Richard* III. *made good Laws, and built Religious Houses*. The worst of Kings are made use of by the Supreme Ruler of the World to good and excellent Purposes, and they are his Ministers and Servants, as we find *Nebuchadnezzar* styled, *Jer.* 25. 9.

And though Rulers sometimes seem to be set up by chance, yet we are to own a singular and special Providence in every such Revolution. For we must know that Crowns and Scepters are not Fortuitous. It is true, we read that *Saul* looking for his Father's Asses found a Kingdom: *David*, whilst he was keeping his Father's Sheep, was sent for to be anointed King. One was chosen and created King of *Persia* by the neighing of his Horse. *Regilianus* was made King for the sake of his *Name*. But in all these Instances Heaven superintended, and so it doth in all the Affairs of Kingdoms. The Duke of *Monmouth* and the *Prince of Orange* landed both of them in the West; one fail'd, the *other* prosper'd: but both of them by the singular and wonderful Regency of the great and universal Monarch of the World, who sets bounds to all Empires, beyond which they cannot pass, and fixes the fate and period of all Nations and Countries. But, whilst they are in Being, they are supported by his infinite Wisdom and Care; otherwise 'tis impossible they should subsist as long as they do. No Politick Bands would be sufficient to tie humane Societies and Communities together, unless the Divine Administration and Government were added to them, and strengthen'd their Union. In short, if lesser matters are under the Eye and Tuition of Providence, we must much more allow the same as a special Guardian in those greater things which appertain to the Revolutions of Kingdoms, and the Changes and Periods of Empires.

Again, Though all are taken care of, yet the *Elect* and *Holy Persons*, more especially share in this Kindness. These are God's *peculiar People*, and therefore there is a peculiar kindness extended to them. 2 Chron. 16. 9. *The Eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole Earth, to shew himself strong in the behalf of them, whose heart is perfect towards him*. This (as some have observ'd) is according to the Etymology of the * Word in the *Greek* whereby God is expressed. On which one of the Ancient Fathers hath this Passage; † *This running*, saith he, *is not meant of a moving from place to place, but of the efficacious Providence of God which reacheth all things*. But though it doth so, yet here we are inform'd that it is more signally concern'd for *those whose heart is perfect toward God*. Which is the same with what the Psalmist saith in *Psalm* 34. 15. *The Eyes of the Lord are on the Righteous*; which is back'd by St. *Peter*, 1 Pet. 3. 12. *We know*, saith another Apostle, *that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are call'd according to his Purpose*, for good to *these* in a signal and peculiar manner. And those words of the same Apostle are very Remarkable, 2 Tim. 2. 19. *The Foundation* (or the *Obligation* or *Bill of Contract*, for θεμέλιος signifies sometimes a Bill or Bond) *of God standeth sure, having this Seal* ('tis under Seal) viz. *God knows them that are his*, that is, he hath a singular Love and Care for

* Θεός, from θέειν to run.

† Τὸ δὲ θέειν ἤτοι τρέχειν μὴ τὴν ἀπὸ τόπου τινὸς εἰς τόπον μεταβασιν, ἀλλὰ τὸ τὴν προνοιαν τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ τὴν ἐνέργειαν ἐπὶ πάντα διήκειν. Athanas. de Definitionib.

for these; for so the word *knowing* signifies in this place. Of the same import are those words of St. *Peter*, 1 Ep. Chap. 5. v. 7. *God careth for you*, you who are believers, and Children of God. You are the more particular and signal Objects of his Care and Love. He loves you not only as an Artificer doth his Work, but as a Father doth his Son. We must take notice then of this *special Providence* towards the Faithful and Righteous. It is peculiarly concern'd for the *Saints*, for the wellfare of the *Elect*. Which is thus express'd by one of the Learned and Pious Writers of the Primitive Church, * *God sees and applys himself to all and every one of his Creatures together, but he doth not provide for all with a principal and peculiar Care.* But I need not insist upon this, because in that Treatise which I lately published concerning *Eternal Election*, &c. I have abundantly shew'd the peculiar and discriminating Favour of God to some: and even in this present Discourse when I spoke of the *signal Deliverances*, which are an Argument of Divine Providence, I had occasion to insert some Instances of God's particular Care of his *Church* and *chosen Servants*.

* Ἀθρόος τε γὰρ πάντα καὶ ἕκαστον ἐν μέρει μὴ προσβολῇ προσβλέπει· ὁ πάντα μὲν τὰ καθ' ἑαυτὸν τὴν προσηκουσαν ἐπίδοσιν. Clem. Alexand. Strom. l. 6.

Before I quit this Head, I will take notice of the great and remarkable instance of divine Providence in *conveying good to the World* by means of these *Good* and *Holy Men*, who are the Favourites of Heaven. These are made signal Instruments of procuring the greatest Benefits to Mankind: sometime to particular Persons; sometimes to Families, and even to whole Cities and Nations. First, We are assured from the Holy Scriptures that Good and Righteous Men derive a Blessing on particular Persons, as *Abraham* upon *Ishmael*, *Gen.* 17. 20. *Jacob* upon *Laban*, as himself confesses, *Gen.* 30. 27. *I have learned by experience that the Lord hath blessed me for thy sake.* King *Ahasuerus* was blessed on *Mordecai*'s Account, and *Artaxerxes* on *Nehemiah*'s and the People of the *Jews*. The *Magicians* and *Southsayers* were spared for *Daniel*'s Sake. Again, A godly Man brings a Blessing not only on single Persons, but whole Families. Thus, for *Noah*'s Sake, his Wife and Children were taken into the Ark, and saved from perishing by Water, because God *had seen him Righteous before him in that Generation*, Gen. 7. 1. 'Tis recorded in *Gen.* 39. 5. that *the Lord blessed the* Egyptian's *House* (that is, *Potiphar*'s Family) *for* Joseph's *Sake: and the blessing of the Lord was upon all that he had in the House and in the Field.* *Rahab*'s houshold and kindred were spared in *Jericho* for her Sake, *Jos.* 6. 17, 25. I must add here that all the Passengers in the Ship wherein St. *Paul* was, were saved on his Account, for 'tis said that *God gave him all them that sailed with him*, Acts 27. 24.

Moreover, for the sake of the Righteous whole Cities and Countries are blessed, as is evident from *Abraham*'s Intercession for *Sodom*, and God's Answer to him, *I will not destroy it for tens Sake*, Gen. 18. 32. God would have spared *Sodom*, that great, but wicked City, if there had been but ten righteous Men there. Yea, he actually spared one of the five Cities for the sake of *Lot*, Gen. 19. 20, 21. All the Land of *Egypt* fared the better for *Joseph*: and *Syria* was blessed for *Naaman*'s Sake. It is observ'd by *Eusebius* that *James* the Brother of our Lord, and the other Holy Apostles, who abode at *Jerusalem*, were † a *firm and impregnable Defence to* that place, and the Inhabitants of it: and the Destruction of the *Jews* was deferr'd 40 Years on their Account. And our Saviour himself acquaints us for whose sake it was that the *Roman* War against the *Jews* lasted not long, not above 3 Years, *for the Elects sake those days shall be shortned*, Mat. 24. 22. Thus I have briefly prov'd that Good Men are Beneficial to the World, and even to the worst of Men in it. The wicked fare the better for them, as in a Garden the Weeds are fenced in and watered for the sake of the useful Herbs and Flowers that grow by them.

† Ἔρυμα ἄστρεπτον ἰσχυρότατον παρέμενον τῇ τότε. Hist. Eccles. lib. 3. cap. 7.

If it be asked *by what means* it comes to pass that Righteous Men are so Advantageous and Beneficial to the World, the Answer is this, 1. This favour is conveyed to the World by the *Prayers* of Good Men. *As for* Ishmael, *I have heard thee*, that is, I have heard thee praying unto me in his behalf, said God unto *Abraham*, *behold, I have blessed him, and will make him Fruitful, and will multiply him exceedingly*, Gen. 17. 20. And so in the other instances before mentioned, it is not to be doubted that punishments were delayed and suspended, and sometimes prevented, and mercies conferr'd by vertue of the ardent Petitions and Supplications put up to Heaven by Holy Men. Particularly 'tis said that *Moses stood before God*

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in the Breach, Psal. 106. 23. that is, by the fervency of his Prayers he diverted those imminent Dangers and Calamities which the Jewish People were involv'd in. Accordingly 'tis said by God himself, *Ezek.* 22. two last Verses, *I sought for a Man among them that should make up the Hedge, and stand in the gap before me for the Land* (the very same with *standing before him in the breach*) *that I should not destroy it; but I found none: therefore I have poured out my indignation upon them, I have consumed them with the fire of my Wrath.* From which words it is evident that the *Prayers* of Good Men shield places from Destruction. Obstinacy in sinning breaks down the *Hedge* of a Nation, and lays it open to all Miseries and Distresses; but they are the Righteous Souls only that can make up this Hedge, or stand in the Gap, and keep out those Evils which are rushing in. The effectual fervent Prayers of a few *Upright Persons* are prevalent for a whole Kingdom. But when these are removed, there are none left to interceed for it: and therefore God makes way for the destroying of a Land by taking away those who are his Elect Servants, and who when surviving were Intercessors for their Country, and thereby became the Saviours of it.

And so they are 2dly, by their *wholsome Advice* and *excellent Counsel.* Whilst *Joseph* lived, he was unspeakably beneficial to the *Egyptians*, and to their Princes in particular, by his prudent Dictates, but when they lost this Wise Man, and were depriv'd of his Sage Counsel, they soon degenerated, and swerv'd from their former Actions, and oppressed the *Israelites*, and brought destruction on themselves and their Rulers. King *Joash* govern'd his People well as long as *Jeboiada* the High Priest lived, and influenced on him by his prudent Advice and safe Maxims. And from instances among the *Gentiles* I might enlarge this Head. Even *Tiberius* was manageable whilst *Germanicus* and *Drusus* lived, but afterward that Emperor broke out into all Villainy. The same might be observ'd of the first five Years of *Nero*'s Reign, which were very Tolerable, during the presidency of *Seneca* and *Burrus* his Governours: and *they* might be said to *Reign* rather than He. Our own Chronicles tell us that *Lanfranck* Archbishop of *Canterbury* kept King *William* commonly call'd *Rufus* in good Order, and render'd him acceptable to the People; but when the Archbishop was dead, the King return'd to his Nature. What is thus observ'd of particular Persons is as true if we speak of the Community, and whole Nations. *The multitude of the Wise*, saith the Author of the Book of *Wisdom*, *is the wellfare of the World.* Chap. 6. v. 24. And a more Authentick Writer celebrates the Memory of that useful Person who *by his Wisdom deliver'd the City*, when it was in the greatest Danger. And so in every Age the wise and holy Men, who by their prudent Suggestions, and pious Admonitions direct the Manners of Mankind, become great Benefactors to the Publick.

They are so 3dly by their *excellent Behaviour* and *Practice.* Which may be the meaning of *delivering the Island by the pureness of their Hands*, Job 22. 30. By their innocent and blameless Carriage, by being Examples of Vertue and Goodness they are instrumental in reforming the Places they inhabit in, and thereby in skreening them from impendent Danger and Mischief. Especially, if they be publick Persons and Rulers, they are on that account more than ordinarily serviceable to their Country: they powerfully check Vice, and encourage Vertue by their exemplary Lives and Manners, and by this means derive a Blessing on the Community. And to speak more generally, all good and holy Men, in whatever Station they are, are Friends to the World, not only by their Prayers and by their Counsels, (as I have before shew'd) but by their Active Presence and Regency, their publick Practice of Religion and Piety. In this sense *Maimonides* interprets those Words, *Prov.* 10 25. *The righteous is an everlasting Foundation*, that is, such Persons uphold and support the World: they are the Stays and Props of Nations, and for their sakes and by their means the World stands.

Lastly, The ground of all that hath been said is this, It is from the peculiar Favour which God bears to Good and Righteous Men that they are in those several Respects before named so great a Blessing to the World. Because he loves them, and sets his heart upon them, thence it is that their *Prayers*, their *Advices*, their *Examples* are so Beneficial, and that by these they shelter the World from Evil, and convey good things to it all the while they are present in it. It must be ultimately resolved into this, namely that these excellent ones are beloved of God, and are in his Favour.

After I have thus prov'd what I undertook, it will not be unacceptable, I suppose, to mention the Natural *Inferences* which arise from what hath been said under

under this last Head. First, We can't but gather hence, that we ought to make much of good Men whilst we have them: we should respect and honour them, and shew our selves very kind and obliging to them. It was a groundless and malicious Cavil of the *Pagans* against the *Primitive Christians*, that they were the Cause of all the Public Calamities and Curses which befel the Empire. It is on the contrary an undoubted Truth, that they and all righteous Men are the greatest Blessings to the Community, and procure Blessings of all sorts to it. Wherefore we have reason to esteem them, and look upon them as our true Friends, and as the Pillars of the World. Secondly, The Death of good Men is to be deplored by us. *David* most passionately cries out, *Help, Lord*, when he sees that *the godly Man ceaseth, and the Faithful fail from among the Children of Men*, Psal. 12. 1. It was justly the Complaint of the Prophet, (*Isai.* 57. 1.) against the careless People of his Days, that *the Righteous perish'd, and no Man laid it to heart*, whereas it was their Duty and Concern to bewail the loss of such Persons, as it was a sign of the prevailing Wickedness of that Age, and as it was a Presage of future Calamities. This was the Sense of the *Hebrew* Doctors, and Wise Men among the *Jews*, * The Righteous, say they, are the Protectors of their Generation, and when they are taken away, it is because of the Iniquity of the Times. Again, they say, † The Death of the Just is as grievous annd lamentable as the breaking of the Tables. And this is the meaning of that other Saying, When the Luminaries are eclips'd, it is an evil Sign to the World, that is, the Death of excellent and useful Persons (who are the Lights of the World) portends evil. This was also the Sense of the best Men among the *Gentiles*, as appears from what was said by one of their great Philosophers, * When Evil and Mischief are to befall a City, God removes good Men out of it, and out of the World. This is that which we ought to bewail and lay to heart. Thirdly, Let us be ambitious to be eminent in Goodness and Holiness, that we may thereby be advantageous to the World, and convey many Privileges and Benefits to the Places we live in. This is a mighty Encouragement, this is a forcible Motive to be Religious and Godly, and to abound in Vertue and Goodness: for thus we not only save our selves, but we become highly Beneficial to others: we are a Skreen between them and God's Judgments, and we actually bring down Blessings upon them from Heaven.

* *Talmud, Bereſh Rab.*

† *Talm. Kad. kakkemah.*

* Ὅταν μέλλῃ κακῶς ποιεῖν πόλις, ἐξαίρει τοὺς ἀνδρας ἀγαθοὺς ἐκ ταύτης τῆς πόλεως ὁ θεός. Plato.

Thus I have spoken of *Providence* both in the *General* and *Particular*, and I hope I have said enough to satisfy any sober Person concerning the Truth of the Doctrine which I have been treating of. There is only one thing more that I can think of, to consummate this Subject. The Providence of God is eminently seen even in the *Permission of Sin in the World*. It is certain that he could have prevented the Commission of it, if he had pleas'd, but he chose rather to suffer it, that his infinite Wisdom might be display'd in the *Disposing* and *Over-ruling of* it, and that he might advance the Glory not only of his Wisdom, but of his Power, Justice and Mercy; all which could not otherwise be so illustriously discover'd to the World. His *Mercy* and *Goodness* especially were here concern'd, as is evident from the Apostle's Words in *Rom.* 11. 32. *God hath concluded them all in Unbelief, that he might have Mercy on all.* The Apostle was speaking of the Unbelief of the *Jews*, and their Rejection for it; and of the Believing of the *Gentiles*, and their being receiv'd into the Christian Church; together with the Conversion of the *Jews* at last, when they shall take notice of the Conversion of the *Gentiles*, and be provoked by it. For *God*, saith he, *hath concluded them all in Unbelief, that he might have Mercy on all*: that is, God hath thought fit to suffer both *Jews* and *Gentiles* to continue some time in Infidelity and the Rejection of the Gospel, that so he might in his own time have an Occasion of extending his Kindness and Mercy to them both; which he could not have done if he had not shut them up in Unbelief and Disobedience. There was a Design of Wisdom and Goodness in this dealing with the *Jews* and *Gentiles*, permitting the latter to continue so long in their Heathenish Ignorance and Unbelief, and in suffering the former to reject Christ and the Gospel, that the Free Grace of God might be shew'd in taking the *Gentiles* into the Church, and in giving occasion to the *Jews* at last be be *provok'd to Jealousy*, ver. 11. to breed an Emulation in them to receive the Gospel. Thus tho' *Sin* be Evil, yet the *Permission* of it is Good, because it is in order

order to some good Ends, even the greatest End of all, God's Glory. St *Augustine* said rightly, * Unless it were good that there should be Evil, it would by no means be permitted by the Almighty God, who is able to hinder the Commission of that Evil, if he would. But I have largely insisted on this in another † place, shewing there the true Reasons and solid Grounds of this Doctrine, and therefore I remit the Reader thither. I will only say this, If the *Permission of all Sin and Vice* in the World be an Argument of a *wise Providence* (as most certain it is) then we need not doubt of the Validity of all the other Arguments before mention'd.

* *Nisi esset hoc bonum ut essent & Mala, nullo modo sinerentur ab Omnipotente Deo.* Enchirid. cap. 95.

† *Answer to Dr.* Whitby's 4 *Discourses.*

And now I have finish'd my Work, I have prov'd, that *a wise Management* of the World may be clearly discern'd by all that open their Eyes, and look abroad. This perpetually influences on Men in private Capacities, and on those in a publick Station; on Nations, Churches, and Kingdoms, as well as lesser Societies of Men, and is the Cause of all the Changes in the World. This World is God's House and Family, where he like a prudent House-keeper, and Master of a Family, suffers nothing to be done without his leave. At his Command and Disposal are all Angels, good and bad, all Men and Women of what Degree soever, all Ranks and Classes of Creatures, whether Rational, Sensitive or Vegetative; in a Word, all Persons, Things and Events. Nothing exists, nothing lives or moves, nothing is done, nothing comes to pass without his Permission, Will, and Disposal. Go through all things, and you will see all is done with Reason, Choice, Wisdom, and Prudence. So that we are not to wonder why God is peculiarly styl'd by *Theodoret* in his Writings, ὁ τῶν ὅλων Θεός, *the God of the Universe.* This All-wise, Divine Manager is discern'd in the least and meanest things as well as the greatest, and therefore I justly conclude, that there is a *Providence* that governs the World, and that it extends to all things whatsoever, and *orders all things in measure, number, and weight,* Wisd. 11. 20.

But tho' the Doctrine of Providence be one of the most rational, firm and steady Points in all Divinity, yet so it is, that there are *Objections* made against it, and press'd with great Vigour and Concernedness by Scepticks and others of Atheistical Principles. One was rais'd first by *Epicurus* and his Followers: it is scarcely worth the mentioning, but because it was embrac'd afterwards by some considerable Philosophers, and perhaps may possess the Minds of some foolish Persons in this lewd Age, I will take notice of it. It was this, That it is below the Divine Being to inspect the World, and concern himself in the Management of it. This is confess'd even by * *Gassendus*, who undertakes the Patronage of *Epicurus*. And his Followers who took their Name from him openly profess'd, that the Affairs of the World were not order'd by God, or very carelessly. Therefore † *Luther* represents the Opinion of the *Epicureans* thus, That God manag'd the World as *a sleepy Maid rocks a Child.* And the Reason which they offer'd was this, If he should take care of the World, he would be disturb'd, and rendred unhappy. Therefore he must not take notice of *mundane* Affairs, but sit still and unconcern'd. This was their Maxim, * *A happy and immortal Being hath no Employ of its own, and creates no Business to others.* Therefore God would be deprived of his Happiness, if he should mind things here below, and take notice of the particular Carriages of Men. Business would distract him, especially *so much* Business as the Inspection and Government of the whole World affords. *Tully* thus represents the Sense of the *Epicureans*, " † If, saith he, there be such a God in " the World as Rules and Governs it, and takes care about the " Conservation of the Course of the Luminaries of Heaven, and " of the Succession of the Times and Seasons of the Year, and " the several Vicissitudes and Orders of things here below; if he " contemplates the vast Tracts of Lands, and the wide Seas, and " provides for the Life and Wellfare of Mankind, then truly he " is hamper'd with a great deal of troublesom Work and Busi- " ness, and hath more to do than he can well turn to.

* *Syntag. Philos.* Epicur. *Animadvers.* 3.

† *Colloq. Mensal.*

* Τὸ μακάριον καὶ ἄφθαρτον οὔτε αὐτὸ πράγματα ἔχει, οὔτε ἄλλῳ παρέχει.

† *Si in ipso mundo Deus inest aliquis qui regat, qui gubernet, qui cursus astrorum, mutationes temporum, rerum vicissitudines ordinesq; conservet, terras & maria contemp ans, hominum commoda vitasque tueatur, ne ille est implicatus molestis negotiis & operosis.* De Nat. Deor. l. 1.

These *Epicureans*, and some others of no mean Rank, who inclin'd to them, would needs Compliment God out of his Providence, and wholly excuse him from it, because they would not give him the trouble (as they esteem'd it)

it) of acting here below. But *Pliny* was not so Court-like, but after this bold and rough manner expresses himself, * *That the Sovereign Power or Deity (whatsoever it is) should have regard of Mankind is a Vanity worthy to be laugh'd at, for the Godhead must needs be polluted with so base and manifold a Ministry.* And the *Gentile*, in *Minutius Felix*, is yet more sawcy and irreverent, when he † speaks concerning the Christians God. In short, Some of the best of the Heathens held that God was happy in the Contemplation of Himself and his Perfections, and particularly his Wisdom in framing the World, and had no leisure to mind things of an inferiour Nature. Others of them, who were of grosser Conceptions, denied Providence, because the Gods were shut up in Heaven, and there were confined, and could not see so far as the Earth. They held therefore, That the Deity sat idle above, and had nothing to do. Yea, and those People you read of in *Zeph.* 1. 12. represented the true God after the same manner, *They say in their Heart, The Lord will not do good, neither will he do evil*, i. e. he will not concern himself in things of any Nature whatsoever.

* *Hist. Nat.* l. 1. c. 7.

† *Discurrentem se ac ubique præsentem, molestum illum volunt, inquietum, impudentem, etiam curiosum.*

But all this is very vain and idle, and hath no shew of Reason to support it; for to say or think that it is troublesom to God to take notice of things done in the World, is to suppose him to be subject to like Passions and Infirmities with our selves, which is the same with nulling his Deity; for Weakness and Imperfection are inconsistent with the Godhead. Tho' a great deal of Business be grievous to us, and we are not able to grapple with it if it be excessive, because our Faculties and Powers are feeble, and we are not able to attend to many things at once: yet it is otherwise with the infinite and perfect Being, to whom nothing is hard, nothing impossible. If we think otherwise we have poor narrow Conceptions concerning the Deity. This in general.

But more particularly and distinctly we are to consider, that God is Omniscient; and therefore he is not disturb'd with the Multiplicity of things that are before him: but his Universal Knowledge and Insight render him capable of the Universal Monarchy and Government of the World. Again, He is of infinite and insuperable Power, and on that account nothing can be too difficult for him. He can provide for all the World as easily as one single Man: He can provide for one as if he provided for none else, and had no other to look after. Besides, he is of infinite and unlimited Goodness, and therefore extends his Providence to the whole Universe. As he made the World, and all Things, and Persons in it; so his Beneficence and Kindness ingage him to take care of them all. And particularly his Love to Mankind obliges him to be mindful of every individual Creature of that Rank. And sometimes 'tis requisite to shew his Justice, in avenging the Cause of his faithful Servants, and severely animadverting on Offenders. We see then what are the *Absurdities* which inevitably follow upon the denying of Providence. This proves derogatory to the chiefest *Attributes* of God, his Knowledge and Wisdom, his Power, his Goodness and his Justice. And, in a Word, If, what *Epicurus* saith, be true, to wit, That God interests not himself in the things done below, then the greatest Basis of all *Vertue* is removed; and if he cannot or will not take notice of us, there is no ground to think that he requires we should have any regard to him. This is the necessary Result of our disbelieving the Divine Inspection and Conduct in the World. If we exempt God from these, we may exempt our selves from our Duty, or rather we may assert, that there is no Duty owing from us to God. It appears then how destructive to Religion that false Notion of *Epicurus* concerning the Deity is.

And as *Reason* baffles the *Epicurean* Doctrine, so *Scripture* expresly condemns it, *Deut.* 4. 39. *The Lord he is God in Heaven above, and in Earth beneath.* Which expresly confutes the *Epicurean* Tenent, that the Deity sits unconcern'd in Heaven, and minds nothing in this terrestrial World. *Though the Lord's Throne be in Heaven, yet*, saith the Psalmist, *his Eyes behold, his Eye-lids try the Children of Men*, Psal. 11. 4. God is in a peculiar and special manner in the highest Heavens, there the Throne of this King is fix'd; but, notwithstanding this, his Eyes *behold* the Affairs here upon Earth, that is, he hath a perfect Knowledge of them, and is concern'd in them, for so the Word *to behold* signifies frequently in the sacred Style of Scripture. And 'tis emphatically added, That he not only *sees*, but *tries with his Eye-lids*, as those who attentively look upon, and observe any thing, use to shut their Eyes a little,

and with a Compression of the Eye-lids to look on it, as if they used their Eye-lids rather than their Eyes. This manner of Expression, sets forth to us that accurate Inspection which is made by God into the things that are done here in this lower World. The same Psalmist, who is a hearty and great Asserter of Providence, expresses this again in *Psalm* 33. 13, 14. *The Lord looketh from Heaven, he beholdeth all the Sons of Men. From the Place of his Habitation he looketh upon all the Inhabitants of the Earth.* That is, Nothing happens below without his Knowledge and Care, without his Disposal and Government, for that is the import of *looking*, *beholding*, and *looking upon*. In another place this inspired Pen-man assures us, that *the Lord dwelleth on high, but humbleth himself to behold the things that are in Heaven and Earth*, Psal. 113. 5, 6. i. e. in the upper and lower Regions of this World. Which is directly opposite to the rash Assertion of those prophane Philosophers before nam'd, who confin'd God to his Seat above. The holy and religious King often repeats and inculcates the contrary Doctrine, (as we have heard) and lets us know, that, tho' God's Throne be in Heaven, yet he rules on Earth: he acquaints us, that 'tis not below the Divine Majesty to take care of the World, and with Wisdom to govern it. All inferior and sublunary Agents are but the Pensioners of Heaven. They owe all their Subsistence unto, and they must acknowledge all their Success from God alone. God in all the Affairs and Transactions of the World doth what pleaseth him. In all its Events and Occurrences he brings to pass what is most agreeable to his good Will.

Another thing that may be objected against Providence is *the Vanity of the Creature*. *Solomon* mentions this often, and through his whole Book of *Ecclesiastes* undertakes to prove, from the Consideration of all humane Affairs, Conditions, Enjoyments and Transactions, that *all is Vanity*: whence some may be induced to inferr, that this is a Flaw and Blemish in the Divine Administration and Disposal of all things in the World. For that this *Vanity* is fixed and entail'd on all sublunary things by God's appointment, is evident from the Apostle's Words, *Rom.* 8. 20. *The Creature is made subject to Vanity, not willingly*, (that is not of it self, and by its own natural Inclination and Propension, not according to the Primitive Use for which it was made) *but by reason of him who hath subjected it*, that is, by God's Will and Order it was done. To this I answer, This *Subjection* is the Punitive Act of the Almighty. This Vanity which we discern in the World is from the just Judgment of God, who for Man's sake cursed all other inferiour Creatures which were made for his Use. At first they were all *very good*, Gen. 1. 31. in their several Kinds, but upon Man's Apostacy, this Evil was inflicted as the due Punishment of that Crime. Now, if it was a due Punishment, it was just in God to inflict it: and if it was an Act of Justice, then we are certain that it cannot be any Impeachment of the *Providence* of God. And tho' the Vanity of the Creature be by Divine Sanction, yet it is originally Man's Fault, and that these two ways.

1. As he brought the Curse upon himself and all things else by his voluntary transgressing the Divine Law. Sin first introduced this Disorder. By it Vanity enter'd into the World. This Change which is made in the Creature had its first Rise from *Adam*'s Fall, for thereby the Nature of things was corrupted and vitiated, and so those things which were good before, became evil and hurtful.

2. This proceeds (and that chiefly) from the perverse Use which Man daily makes of them. The false Apprehensions which we entertain concerning them are one way of abusing them, and are the main Source and Spring of their Vanity. That is an excellent Maxim, and fraught with sound Morality, which *Epictetus* hath left us, The things themselves (saith he) which we converse with in the World do not trouble and disorder us, but only our Opinions concerning these things. They are not in themselves and in their own abstract Nature afflictive, but by reason of the folly of Men they prove to be so; namely, because we have wrong Conceptions about them, we reckon some of them as our chief Good, and others as the only Evil in the World, which cannot but discompose and hurt our Minds. For these false Notions and Apprehensions which we have of these things, create in us undue Inclinations and Passions. We are immoderately concern'd in acquiring them, we are foolish and extravagant in the enjoying them, we disturb our selves with the fear of losing them, and are much more troubled and distracted if we are actually deprived of them. Thus from the very beginning to the end, one false Impression or other which is made upon our Thoughts by our dealing with these things ruffles our Souls; and every Day disorderly Appetites and Affections are rais'd, which

which fill our Minds with Vanity and Misery. Hope vainly tickles us; Care, Covetousness and Ambition distract us; Love fools us; Joy dis-spirits us, Pleasure melts us, Grief drowns us, Fear disheartneth us, Anger inflames us, Discontent sowres us, Hatred exasperates us, Envy gnaws us, Despair plunges us. Thus Man's Nature, which sets him above all *other* Creatures (for *they* cannot think and reflect and make Observations on things as he doth) pulls him down, and thrusts him below them all. Thus the best Creature God made in this inferior World is the worst. Which appears yet further when we consider that these false Opinions and unruly Passions put him upon ill Designs and Projects, and engages him in a way of vitious Practices. He makes his Ease and Plenty administer to Intemperance and Lewdness, Luxury and Debauchery; he makes his Honours and Preferments serviceable to Pride, Oppression, Cruelty, and a disdain of all that are below him; and he makes his Wealth instrumental to all these. To Summ up all, these earthly acquirements are *abused* by wicked and vain Men, and thence proceeds their *Vanity*, and from it *vexation of Spirit*. Thus we see what is the true source of this Disorder in the Creatures: and having found it to be by Man's Fault, we have no reason to charge it upon *God* and his *Providence*.

I will proceed to give a Reply to two other *Objections*, which are thought by some to be of great Moment. However, they have always made a great noise in the World, and therefore it is necessary that I return a full answer to them. The first is that God *delays to inflict Punishment* on the most profligate Sinners. The second is that great Offenders do not only sin with Impunity, but they *prosper in the World*, and have what their hearts can wish: and on the contrary, righteous and godly Men are *persecuted and oppressed*, and are great Sufferers. Where then is the *Providence* of God? Where is his Care of the World, and particularly of Good Men? I begin with the former, That there are great numbers of Sinners every day, and yet we see that many of them are not Punished: they persist in their Enormities, and meet with no Correction. How is this reconcilable with the Divine *Justice*, which is a main Ingredient in God's *Providence*? If he be Just, he must always be so. How then doth this *deferring of Punishment* consist with divine Justice and Providence? Thus of old we find it was suggested that * God's slowness in punishing derogates from the belief of his Providence, and takes away the dread which should accompany all evil Actions. But it will appear from the following Considerations that this is a groundless Notion, and hath no real Foundation to support it.

* Τὴν γὰρ βραδύτητα ἀφαιρεῖ τῆς Προνοίας ποιεῖ τὴν δίκην ἀσάφειαν, καὶ τὸν φόβον ἐξίπνον τῆς κακίας. Plut. de serâ Num. vindic.

1. It is unreasonable to impeach God's Providence for his suffering the most profligate Sinners to go unpunish'd for a time, because this very thing is as severe a Judgment sometimes to them as he can inflict upon them. Startle not at the Paradox, The greatest Calamity on some Persons is none at all. Our Law hath determin'd that a man of a distracted and unsound Mind shall not die for committing Felony, and the reason which is given is because † he is punished by his own Madness. In a resembling sort, those that are grown Profligate in Vice, and furiously run into the Commission of it, are abundantly plagued by their own vile Temper and cursed Behaviour. Which is a Sentiment as Ancient as *Plato*, who hath these Words, * It is the greatest penalty of Wickedness to be like wicked Men: for thereby they come to feel the dire Effects of being such. Wherefore when God thinks fit to punish them in an extraordinary manner, he cannot do it more effectually than by giving them up to these their Lusts and wild Desires, and by not reproving and checking them for their extravagant Practices. It was rightly said by one of the Fathers, † God is most angry with Sinners when he discovers not his Anger. The greatest sign of his Wrath may be his seeming to be Pacified. That he may sorely punish Offenders by not punishing them for a time, is clear from what we read in *Hos.* 4. 17. *Ephraim is joyn'd to Idols: let him alone.* There could not be a severer denouncing of Judgment. A parallel place is that in the Evangelical Prophet, *Isaiah* 1. 5. *Why should you be smitten any more?* Saith God to *Judah* and *Jerusalem*. And if we consult that Parable in *Ezek.* 24. we shall find that it is a plain proof of this Assertion. When a People will not be purged and amended by God's Judgments, he pronounces that *they shall not be purged from their filthiness any more*,

† *Furiosus furore suo punitur.*

* Ἔστι δ' ἡ μεγίστη τῆς κακίας δίκη, τὸ ὁμοιοῦσθαι τοῖς κακοῖς ἀνδρᾶσι. De Legib.

† *Magna est ira quando peccatoribus non irascitur Deus.* Hieronym.

more, v. 13. God gives them over, and abandons them to themselves: as Physicians permit their Patients any thing when they see they are past Recovery.

2. Though we do not presently see great Offenders visibly punished, yet their inward and unseen Torment may be of the highest Nature, and in the most extream Degree. If we could look into the sinners Breast, there we might espie the intolerable Racks and Tortures which he feels. The Moralist hath observ'd that * wickedness begets at the same time with it Trouble and Pain, so that not only afterwards but in the very act of Wickedness the Sinner hath the just Recompence of his unjust Actions. And in the same place he hath these excellent Words, † If I may speak it, saith he, I do verily think that wicked Men stand not in need either of God or Man to punish them, but their own Lives, which are wholly corrupted and disorder'd by Sin, are sufficient for this Purpose. Complain not then that Sinners are not immediately punish'd, for though there be no outward sign of it, yet they may be presently seiz'd upon by invisible Fears and Disquiets, by the anguish and Terrors of an evil Conscience, which far exceed all bodily Pains and Dolours. For this reason we ought not to impeach the Divine Providence. But then,

* Ἡ δὲ πονηρία συγκεκαυμένον τὸ λυπῶν, ἑαυτῇ, καὶ κολάζον οὐχ ὕστερον ἀλλ' ἐν αὐτῇ τῇ ὕβρει τὴν δίκην τῶν ἀδικεῖν διδοῦσα. Plut. de ferâ Numinis vindictâ.

† Ἐγὼ μὲν, εἰ θέμις ἐστὶν εἰπεῖν, οὔτε πρὸς θεῶν, &c.

3. As to bodily and external Punishment, God is *just* though he doth not always actually exert his Severity. As it must be acknowledged that God is *Omnipotent*, though he doth not every Moment exert his Power to the utmost. Yea, he was Omnipotent from Eternity, before he put forth any external Acts of it. Why then may we not assert that God in the dispensations of his Providence is Just, notwithstanding the instances of his Punitive Justice are not always display'd? And yet again, I must add that if we respect the variety of Places and Persons in the World, we may confidently averr that in some or other of them the Divine Providence as to the punishing part of it, is certainly exerted. Consider the whole Mass of Mankind in the different Regions of the Earth (not to speak of the infernal Territories) and then you will be satisfied about this matter: take in the universal Race of Sinners that are now in Being, and you will not be backward to acknowledge that there are daily and hourly Examples of God's animadverting on Offenders in one way or other, and that speedily after the Commission of Sin. But,

4. Granting that every individual Offender is not presently attack'd by the Divine Severity, yet this *delay* is not so considerable a thing as Men usually imagine. To us finite and short-lived Creatures it seems indeed to be something, but to him to whom *a thousand Years are but as one day*, it is as it were nothing. Therefore we may easily correct our mistaken apprehensions concerning this matter, if we revolve the *Eternity* of God in our Minds. Though the time of his permitting some to go unpunished may seem long to us, yet it is otherwise with him, whose being and duration are not measured by time. But,

5. That God oftentimes doth not immediately execute vengeance on Sinners, is very reasonable and accountable, because hereby he deals with Men as Rational and Free Beings, who are to be led chiefly by Arguments, and not by force. If the Almighty should *always* and *immediately* after their sinning be avenged on them, and by that means constantly push them on to their Duty, it would look like Compulsion. Sudden and present Punishment for Sin would spoil Humane Vertue, for then Men would do just things out of fear only, which impairs the Moral Goodness of Actions, and marrs our Sincerity.

6. We may reasonable be perswaded to believe that one end of God's *delaying* to punish Criminals, is to teach them and us Patience and Forbearance, and to inspire us with charitable Thoughts and Demeanor even toward those that deserve the contrary from us. This is imply'd in our Blessed Masters Exhortation to *love our Enemies, and pray for them that despitefully use us and persecute us*, on this Consideration *that we may be the Children of our Father which is in Heaven, who maketh his Sun to rise on the Evil and on the Good, and sendeth Rain on the just and on the unjust*. Mat. 5. 45. We resemble God our Father by our forbearance and long-suffering towards those that offend us, and much more by our shewing kindness to them. It is evident then that this merciful dealing of the Almighty is intended for our Imitation. He bears with Sinners, to teach us to do so too. Ought we not to be patient and long-suffering toward our Brethren, since God hath been infinitely more

more so to us? This Consideration should prevail with us to shew Pity and Mercy to all that have offended us, and to forgive them for his sake from whom we have received so many Tokens of Grace and Favour. Here then is no ground at all for impleading the *Providence* of God; yea, this very thing that is alledged against it is a clear Proof of it, yea of the very Being of God: for 'tis a great Argument of a Deity that there is so little punishment of Sinners in the World, if we consider that *we* are fired with Anger and Revenge when we are offended and injured; *we* meditate a Retaliation presently, and can't brook Delays: yea, sometimes when we are but slightly affronted, we are filled with Indignation, and are uneasie and restless till we reak our Resentments. But it is like the *Deity*, and worthy of that Infinite and All-perfect Being to deferr the marks of his Displeasure, and to be enclined to forbearance and long-suffering. All the World offend him, he is highly provoked every day, every moment, yet he avenges not himself. Hence let us admire the matchless Goodness and Clemency of the Deity, and know that it was designed for our Imitation; that we might learn to be Patient, and to moderate our Anger, and to use long-suffering and forbearance towards our Brethren. The Great God of Heaven is in this, as in other Perfections of his, an Example to Mankind. Such Considerations as these render his *slowness to punish wicked Men*, a very accountable thing.

7. There is another good reason why God delays to punish Offenders, *viz.* that by a longer space and opportunity they may be invited to take notice of the kindness of Heaven to them, and to abandon their Sins, and turn unto God. This the Apostle particularly mentions in *Rom.* 2. 4. *Despisest thou the riches of his Goodness and Forbearance and Long-suffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to Repentance?* And to the same purpose is that of another Apostle, *The Lord is long-suffering to us ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to Repentance*, by means of this Long-suffering, 2 *Pet.* 3. 9. For hereby he gives us time to Repent, and wholly to avert the impendent Judgments. So that the *Providence* of God is not only asserted and established, but made the more illustrious. It appears that his backwardness to punish proceeds from his Compassion and Kindness, and from his desire of Man's Salvation. Wherefore saith the foresaid Apostle, *Account that the Long-suffering of our Lord is Salvation*, 2 Pet. 3. 15. that is, it is designed to be a means in order to it. And as for those who make no use of it, the Providence of God will be thus far cleared that they shall have nothing to reply against him. Though they hate and abhorr all his ways, yet they shall be compelled to acknowledge that he is just in all his doings.

8. It is not unreasonable that God should suffer wicked Men to escape Punishment for a time, for this oftentimes is done because their Sins and Provocations are not yet come to the full heighth. We shall be throughly convinced of this if we read *Gen.* 15. 13. *God said unto* Abraham, *know of a surety that thy Seed shall be a stranger in a Land that is not theirs, and shall serve them, and they shall afflict them four hundred Years. And also that Nation whom they shall serve will I judge: and afterwards they shall come out with great substance. And in the fourth Generation they shall come hither again* (i. e. into the Land of *Canaan*,) *for the iniquity of the* Amorite *is not yet full.* Mark it, *Abraham's* Seed must wander in a strange Land, and be inslayed and persecuted, and the Idolatrous cursed *Amorites* must be spared four hundred Years, and the reason is, that the Sins of these vile Wretches may be *Full*, that they may arrive to the utmost Pitch, and such as will fit them for actual Punishment. Hence the *Jews* had this proverbial Saying, *God is avenged on no Nation untill their measure is filled up.* Our Saviour seems to give a hint of this in *Matt.* 23. 32. Having in the foregoing words upbraided the *Scribes* and *Pharisees* for their Hyprocrisie and all manner of Wickedness, he saith at last, *Fill ye up the measure of your Fathers.* This *measure* was their utmost heighth of sinning, *viz.* their *killing their Prophets* (as he tells them in the foregoing verse) and committing all manner of Outrage. And when they had once climbed up to this highest Step, their destruction was near at hand. *How can ye* then *escape the damnation of Hell?* As it follows in the next verse: how can ye expect to be freed from the everlasting Tokens of God's Wrath? There is a *measure of Sin*: the sinner should go on unpunish'd till that be *filled up*, and then ruin is the unavoidable Consequent.

There is a time for sin to Ripen, and untill then God will not inflict Judgment:

but

but as soon as that time is come, expect to hear that Voice in *Rev.* 14. 15. *Thrust in thy sickle, and reap: for the time is come for thee to reap: for the harvest of the Earth is Ripe.* The harvest is the Sins of the People: the *Ripeness* of it is when those Sins are grown to their Heighth; and the *Sickle* is God's Judgments and Plagues which he sends upon Sinners. This fatal *Sickle* shall be *thrust in* as soon as the Corn is Ripe, as soon as Men's Sins are come to the Full, but not before. The Venom of Sin proves not fatal immediately, but its Malignant Humours being once received, it will by degrees invade the Sinners Vitals, and bereave him, tho' slowly, bereave him of his Life. When the sinfulness of a Land or Person is *finished*, and arrived to *Maturity*, then expect the vials of Destruction to be poured forth upon them, without any farther Delay.

9. And Lastly, Though God doth oftentimes forbear Sinners, yet he tieth not himself to this course. He cuts some of them off in the very Commission of their Sins, some are not suffer'd to live many Minutes without receiving their deserved Recompence. God can punish forthwith, and sometimes he doth so: as *Corah*, *Dathan* and *Abiram*, *Nadab* and *Abihu*, and other Offenders are notable Instances: thus Judgment surprizeth Sinners when they are not aware of it. They fondly imagine that because *God keepeth Silence*, therefore (as the Psalmist represents them speaking) *he is such a one as themselves*, he is so far from punishing them that he approves of their doings: * *Because sentence against* their *evil works is not executed speedily, therefore their hearts are fully set in them to do evil*, and it will not enter into their thoughts that Judgement will overtake them. But there is no reason why they should imagine or act thus, for God hath suddenly inflicted Plagues on obstinate and refractary Offenders, and he will do the same again. You will find this very frequently pressed in Holy Scripture. There shall come a time when it shall be said, *The day of their Calamity is at hand, and the things that shall come upon them make haste*, Deut. 32. 35. When *Babylon* was given to pleasures and dwelling carelessly, when she said † *she should not sit as a Widow, neither know the loss of Children*, then it is threatned that *those two things should come upon her in one day, loss of Children and Widowhood.* This should happen *in one day*, i. e. very suddenly, unawares, and when they thought not of it. When the *Jews* perswaded themselves that Punishment was *afar off*, and could not overtake them in a *long time*, ‖ *Ezekiel* plainly tells them that this was a gross mistake of theirs, and that *his words* concerning their Destruction *should not be prolonged any more*, i. e. they should speedily come to pass. The holy Man speaking of the Wicked, assures us that *God shall shoot at them, with an Arrow suddenly shall they be wounded*, Psal. 69. 7.

* 2 Pet. 3. 19.

† Isa. 47. 8, 9.

‖ Chap. 12. v. 28.

The quick and unexpected fate of the ungodly is thus again expressed by him, Psal. 58. 9. *Before your Pots can feel the Thorns* (before they are heated by a Thorn-fire under them, which is very quick as well as scorching) *he shall take them away as with a whirlwind* (instantly and suddenly) *both living and in his Wrath*, that is, the divine Wrath shall be visibly seen in punishing them whilst they are alive, whilst they are in this World, and that without Delay. Or, as the words may be rendred, *they shall be taken away raw*, for the *Hebrew* word signifies *raw* as well as *living*: and so there is an Allusion to the *Pots* spoken of before: they shall be snatched as *raw Flesh* out of a Pot, before it be Sod. So that we see *both the Translations* of those words express to us the sudden, as well as the certain ruin of prosperous Sinners. So that we shall have occasion to cry out with Admiration, as this Psalmist doth, *How are they brought into desolation as in a Moment!* Psal. 73. 19. It is *Solomon*'s observation likewise concerning the wicked Man, *His Calamity shall come suddenly: suddenly shall he be broken without Remedy*, Prov. 6. 15. And the *New Testament* concurrs with the *Old*, for concerning the Sinners of these last days the Apostle peremptorily pronounces that *when they shall say, Peace and Safety, then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a Woman with Child, and they shall not escape*, 1 Thess. 5. 2, 3. Thus I have answered that *First Objection*, namely, how the Providence of God is consistent with his forbearing of wicked Men, and delaying to hurry them before the Tribunal, to receive the doom which their Enormities deserve. The considerations which I have offerr'd may convince us that God's Ways are equal, and most agreeable to the best and worthiest Designs.

The second Cavil is this, and it runs higher than the other, how can there be such a thing as *Providence*, when the greatest Offenders not only go *unpunish'd* for a time, but *prosper* and *flourish*, and when good and holy Men *suffer all sorts of Indignities*,

dignities, and are injur'd and persecuted by those Miscreants? This is an *Objection* that hath startled many, and posed the best Heads. They observe that Favours are conferr'd by Heaven, even on * the Ungrateful and Unworthy: the † Light and Warmth of the Sun are common to all: the Seas are as often calm to Pirates as others. Yea, the most religious Persons have taken notice of it with much regret, and have (through Infirmity) mention'd it with Murmuring and Discontent. That pious Sufferer, *Job*, complains of this in the beginning of the 21st Chapter of that Book: *Wherefore do the Wicked live, become old, yea, are mighty in Power?* ver. 7. and then he proceeds to describe the Prosperity of the Wicked in a very sensible manner. *David* afterwards gives a very lively Pourtraiture of the prosperous State of these Men, at the beginning of *Psalm* 73. and is much dejected at it, *My Feet were almost gone, my Steps were well-nigh slipp'd: for I was envious at the Foolish, when I saw the Prosperity of the Wicked*, ver. 2, 3. And in the 10th ver. he owns, that *his* (that is, God's) *People return hither*, even godly Men return to this Consideration, namely, the flourishing State of the Wicked. Though they labour to put off the Thoughts of it, and do so for a time, yet these Thoughts come again, and haunt them, and give them no small Disturbance. Therefore he is at this again, ver. 12. *Behold, these are the Ungodly that prosper in the World: they increase in Riches.* Thus it fares with wicked and worthless Persons, but as for himself, he complains that he had not seen a good Day for a long time: *All the Day long have I been plagued, and chastned every Morning*, ver. 14. And therefore in the 16th ver. he professes plainly that he is quite baffled, and doth not know for the present what to make of the business; *when I thought to know this, it was too painful for me.* But the good Man doth not continue long in this Temper; you will hear him of another Mind in the following Verse, and in the rest of the Psalm, which I shall have occasion to mention afterwards.

* *Dii quoq; multa ingratis tribuunt.* Sen. de benef. l. 4.
† *Et sceleratis sol oritur, & piratis maria patent.* Ibid.

Jeremiah, though a very holy Man, was startled at this Problem, and thus passionately and rashly expostulates with God, *Wherefore* doth the way of the Wicked prosper? *Wherefore are all they happy that deal very treacherously? Thou hast planted them, yea they have taken root, they grow, yea they bring forth Fruit.* The Prophet *Habakkuk* begins his Prophecy with the like Complaint, *Why dost thou shew me Iniquity, and cause me to behold Grievance? Spoiling and Violence are before me: the Wicked doth compass about the Righteous*, ver. 3, 4. And afterwards, ver. 13. *The Wicked devoureth the Man that is more Righteous than he:* that is, God suffers the *Chaldeans* and *Assyrians* to harass and persecute his own People the *Jews*. Which made this discontented People break out into such Language as this at another time, *Mal.* 3. 13, &c. *It is in vain to serve God, and what profit is it that we have kept his Ordinances, or that we have walked mournfully before the Lord of Hosts. And now we call the Proud happy: yea, they that work Wickedness are set up; yea, they that tempt God are deliver'd.* And so it hath been in succeeding Ages, the Riches, and Power, and Success of bad Men, have occasion'd ill Apprehensions to arise in the Minds of Men, that are otherwise well dispos'd. They see *Lazarus* begging, and *Dives* banqueting; they see *Caiphas* in the Chair, and *Christ* at the Bar; they see Vertue afflicted, and Villany successful, and thence are apt to question the *Providence* of God. But they have no reason to do so, and they confess as much themselves at last when their Temptation and Passion are over: they acknowledge, that a satisfactory Answer may be given concerning this prosperous Condition of the Wicked, and that it may clearly be proved, that this doth not in the least impair or prejudice the *Divine Conduct*. For,

* 1. If we consider the Nature of the thing it self, it can't be expected, but that the worst Men should for the most part gain a great Sway and Dominion in the World, and that they should abound in Wealth and Riches. For these are the Men whose Affections are wholly placed on the World, they pursue it with eagerness, they embrace it with gladness, and they make it their business to grow Great, and therefore they boggle at no vitious Act which may be gainful to them. The Day set a-part for the Service and Worship of God they can make common: an Oath or a Lye shall be dispens'd with for their secular Advantage. They will cheat and defraud, they will gripe and oppress, because they find that these are serviceable to their Worldly Ends. Which is taken notice of in *Jer.* 5. 27. *Their Houses are full of Deceit, therefore they are become great, and waxen rich.* Also by Ambition, and all the

the evil Acts attending on it, they climb up to places of Honour and Dignity, and become terrible to those that are under them. Thus the Children of the World are wiser in their Generation than the Children of Light, they take any Course, they lay hold of any Advantages to purchase this World's Profits, and are resolv'd to compass this Design by all the Artifices they can. Now, as the Case thus stands, 'tis no wonder that they ingross a great deal of the World, it is no wonder that they make such a Figure in it, and arrive to such Power and Greatness, and spread their Dominion over vast and spatious Territories. On the other side, good and vertuous Men are most sollicitous about things of another Nature, they mind Heaven chiefly, and therefore their principal Desire and Wish is, That God would *lift up the Light of his Countenance upon them*, whilst the others Language is, *Who will shew us any Good?* i. e. any temporal and bodily Good? Who will help us to the Acquisition of the fair Possessions and Enjoyments of this World? It being thus, no Man can think it strange, that good Men are low and mean in the World, and that the worst of Mortals are advanced to a great heighth.

And under this Head I may add, that as the Wicked make it their main Business and Study to thrive in the World, so God wisely permits them to do it, because he intends they shall have no share in a better Life. For this reason they are styled by the Psalmist, *Men of the World, which have their Portion in this Life*, Psal. 17. 14. God hath appointed them their Lot and Inheritance here, and here only. Therefore he is not unjust in letting them have their fill of this Worlds Goods. Now is their time: with *Dives* they have their *good things* here. This is all the Heaven and Happiness they are to have: why therefore should we grudge it them?

2. The prosperous State of bad Men is sometimes necessary, in order to God's inflicting of Punishment on his own People. They must thrive, that these may be brought low for their Miscarriages. As God can make use of what Instruments he pleases to scourge and plague his People for their crying Sins, so he knows that these more especially are the fittest for that purpose, for from that implacable Hatred which they bear towards them, they will do the Work effectually. Thus *Babylon* prosper'd because that Nation was to be a Scourge to *Israel*. Accordingly, *Assur* was call'd *the Rod of God's Anger*, and *the Staff of his Indignation*, whereby he chastised his own People. The Wicked are not only God's *Rod* and *Staff*, but his *Hand* and his *Sword*, Psal. 17. 13. with which he is pleas'd to strike and wound his own Servants. Thriving Sinners are useful for the humbling and correcting of good Men, for the trial of their Graces, and for the exercising of them. Faith and Trusting in God, Hope and Patience and Self-denial, are great Acts of Vertue, and discover a good Man as much, or more, than any thing whatsoever: now these are the heroick Graces and Endowments which are exerted and brought into act by God's permitting unrighteous Men to grow Great, and to bear Sway in the World, and to have Power to afflict and persecute those that are righteous. *Some of Understanding shall fall by the Sword, and by Flame, by Captivity and by Spoil many Days, to try them, and to purge them, and to make them white*, Dan. 11. 33, 35. Thus we see that God's Providence is clear'd, and he is so far from being *unjust* in suffering the Ungodly to prosper, that he shews his Mercy and Goodness.

3. Yea, As to the *temporal Wellfare* of good Men this likewise is requisite. To which purpose is remarkable what we read in *Isai.* 45. the 3 first Verses, where we have a Description of the Grandeur, Power, Success and Prosperity of that Heathen Monarch *Cyrus*, the King of *Persia*: and in the next Verse we are acquainted with the true Ground and Reason of it, *For* Jacob *my Servant's sake, and* Israel *mine Elect, I have even called thee by thy Name*, &c. God calls and prospers *Cyrus* for his Church's sake. An Idolatrous Prince is set up and flourishes, for the Safety of God's Chosen.

4. Again, This is necessary sometimes to make God's People more observant of Him and his Actions. *Slay them not, lest my People forget*, Psal. 59. 11. Bloody Persecutors and Tyrants must not presently be removed, lest God's Judgments on them should not be sufficiently taken notice of, lest they should too soon be forgot. Thus in respect of the Servants of God we see how reasonable this Dispensation is.

5. And it is so likewise in respect of the *Wicked*, for God makes use of these to punish and torment those of the same kind. Tyrants and Oppressors are suffer'd to prosper, because they are serviceable to afflict others who are as Wicked, tho' not so Powerful. The short is this, In this State wherein we now are, since the Fall, Devils and wicked Men are as requisite toward the accomplishing some Designs of *Provi-*

Providence in the World as any other Persons or things that I have named. It must be granted, that for the Punishment of others that are *Wicked*, they are the fittest Executioners: and for correcting the *Good*, they are the most proper Instruments. This may give us an account of some strange Passages in the World: and I doubt not but those who are Observing and Judicious are able to make Application of what I have said to several Acts of God's Providence in their own times.

6. From the Prosperity and Success of the worst Men, from their abounding in Riches and Wealth, God designs that we should make a *true Estimate* of the things of the World, that we should inferr thence, that these are but common Mercies, and Blessings of the Left-hand. The good things of this World are a sort of Pearls that are cast even to Swine: the filthiest Race of Men most commonly enjoy them. This Reflection we should make on wicked Men's prospering in the World, that Prosperity is no Argument of Holiness, no Mark of Saintship, that we ought not to conclude that any are in God's Favour because they thrive in the World. And as for the Incomes and Possessions of this World, there can be no greater Demonstration of their Meanness and Vanity than this, that the great Governour of the World bestows these things very plentifully on the vilest of Men. Whence a little Logick will serve us to inferr, that these things are not simply and absolutely good in themselves, nor for themselves desirable, for then vitious Persons should have the smallest Share in them, and good Men should have as it were a Monopoly of this World's Goods, they should hoard up all the Money, and ingross all the Wealth, and command the best Preferments, and be promoted to the greatest Dignities and the highest Honours. But it is not so, and the reason is, because these things are of a mean and low Value, and God would let good Men see that he hath better things in store for them: and because likewise he would convince Men of this, that Distress and Calamity are not evil in themselves: for if they were, God would not suffer them to be the Lot of the best Men. It is a sign therefore, that he would bring us to this Apprehension that outward Prosperity is not the thing that must difference us from bad Men. The Discrimination is not placed here, and it was never intended that it should at any time. Thus we see what Providence aims at in the thriving Condition of the Wicked; namely, to give us a true Notion of the things of this World.

7. If what hath been suggested already doth not satisfy our Scruples about this seemingly harsh Problem of the prosperous State of the Ungodly, then let me add this, which is an experienced Truth, that their Prosperity seldom continues long, and even in this Life the Divine Severity seizes on them. Their Case is thus briefly, but fully expressed in *Deut.* 32. 35. *Their Foot shall slide in due time.* Tho' they seem to stand fast, yet they have no more Fixedness than if their Footing were upon Ice, and so their Heels may be soon tript up: which is an Event that we may daily see if we will open our Eyes. This was an ancient Experiment of that great Observer of Affairs in the World, *Psal.* 37. 35. *I have seen*, saith he, *the Wicked in great Power, and spreading himself like a green Bay-tree.* He not only took Root, but spread forth his Branches, his extensive Arms whereby he prevail'd and conquer'd, in so much that he was presented with Crowns of Lawrel and Bays, the Ensigns of Victory. But lo, this careful Observator of Providence, who took notice of the Verdure of the Wicked, remarks likewise, how suddenly they wither and decay. *He passed away, and lo, he was not: yea, I sought him, but he could not be found*, ver. 36. And this is but what he had observ'd before, ver. 10. *Yet a little while, and the Wicked shall not be; yea, thou shalt diligently consider his place, and it shall not be.* And in another place he backs this Observation, *Surely thou didst set them in slippery Places*, ('tis no wonder then that *their Feet slide*, as we heard before) *thou castest them down to Destruction: how are they brought into Desolation as in a moment: they are utterly consum'd with Terrors*, Psal. 73. 18, 19.

This at length he confesses and concludes to be the fatal end of wicked Men, though at first he *envied* (as he tells us, ver. 3.) their Prosperity. Though at first he was puzled with this Problem, and *his Feet were almost gone, and his Steps had well-nigh slipp'd*, ver. 2. yet now he is convinc'd *whose Feet* they are that *are set in slippery places.* But he could no ways solve this Problem and understand this Mystery of Providence, till *he went into the Sanctuary of God: then understood he their end.* And now he acknowledges his Folly in all that he said and thought before: *so foolish was I and ignorant*, saith he, yea, *I was as a Beast before thee*, ver. 22. How absurd

surd and irrational, and void of all Sense was I when I disputed against Providence, when I argued against my Maker, when I found fault with his Government of the World? Folly and Blindness besotted me when I undertook to make my shallow Conceptions the measure of the Almighty's Dealings. Since I have seriously reflected on things, and weigh'd them in the Balance of the Sanctuary, and consulted the Oracles of Divine Truth, (the Word of God which cannot deceive me) I see and lament my former Ignorance and Brutishness, and my rash judging concerning things of this Nature. I now am convinc'd that the final Close of wicked Men even in this World is oftentimes fatal, and consequently there is no reason why I should question and doubt of the *Providence* of God because of the Prosperity of the Wicked.

The Destruction of these Men is taken notice of not only by the Psalmist, but by the Prophet *Jeremiah* in that forenam'd Chapter where he complain'd of their flourishing State. By Faith he foresees that *they shall be pull'd out like Sheep for the Slaughter*, and that *they are prepared for the Day of Slaughter*, ver. 3. So the Prophet *Habakkuk*, who wonder'd that the *Assyrians* overcame and subdu'd the *Hebrews*, that is, that the Wicked prevail'd against the Just, afterwards foretold their Desolation, chap. 2. And from abundant Instances in the Records of the *Old* and *New Testament* which may be produced, it is undeniable, that notorious Offenders have been exemplarily punish'd by God before they left this World. Though they have been for a time prosperous and successful, yet at last they have been made the remarkable Monuments of Divine Vengeance.

Say then that thou seest bold Sinners go unpunish'd a considerable time; say, that no Judgment overtakes them, but that they thrive and flourish: yet thou hast no reason to call in question the Divine Providence, for thou knowest not what a Day may bring forth. Their great Power and Success may be tending to a Period: their fatal time may be approaching. The present freedom from Punishment, and the thriving State they are in, are so far from being a sign of Happiness, that they certainly portend their Ruin. And let this be remembred, that tho' God is pleas'd sometimes to *keep silence*, (as the Psalmist expresses it) to wink at their grossest Faults, and not to punish them for their most heinous Miscarriages, yet this is a certain and undeniable sign, that when he doth punish, he will do it to purpose: *When he begins, he will also make an end*, as the Lord told *Samuel* concerning the Destruction of *Eli*'s House. As it fares with those that have never been sick, when a Disease assaults them, they are commonly in greater Danger than others; and if they recover, it is with much Difficulty: Such is the Case of those Transgressors who have gone *unpunish'd* a long time; when the Almighty lays his Hand on them, they shall not be able to escape. Let me compare God's Justice and Vengeance to some great and massy Bell, which is a long time a raising, but when it is once up, it makes a dreadful Sound, and alarms all the Vicinage, and strikes Astonishment and Wonder into all that hear it. Such is God's Anger, when once rais'd to its heighth, it carries Dread and Horror along with it, and proves the fatal Knell to those who provok'd it. Of this they have oftentimes the Experience in this World, but always in the other. Which leads me to the

8. And last Answer to the Objection, and that is this, Tho' sometimes we see that profligate Sinners go on and thrive all their time, yet there is a *Future State*, in which they shall inevitably meet with a Recompence for their flagitious Crimes. So that what some object against the *Providence* of God, is an Argument for it: for the present Impunity of the Wicked, which is so taken notice of by them, is a plain Proof of God's designing to punish them in another World. This mild Dispensation at present evinces the Truth of a severer one afterwards. To which purpose is that of the pious Father, "If it happens sometimes (saith he) that there be in "this World a Retribution for Wickedness or Vertue, yet it is not according to the "quality and desert of either, but it is only a Taste of the Judgment to come, that "they who believe not the Resurrection, may be taught it by this. Then all things will be set right, and be in order. Then *Lazarus*'s Crumbs will be chang'd for Delicacies, and *Dives* who fared deliciously shall stand in need of a Drop of Water. It is an ancient and establish'd Truth, as appears from *Job* 21. 30. that *the Wicked is reserved to the Day of Destruction: they shall be brought forth to the Day of Wrath.* And from *Psal.* 92. 7, 8. *When the Wicked spring as the Grass, and when all the Workers of Iniquity do flourish, it is that they shall be destroyed for ever.* Though *a foolish Man knows*

not

not this, (as the Psalmist there saith) that is, Men who are devoid of God's Spirit and Divine Knowledge, and see no further than terrene and perishing things, do not perceive this, yet it is no less a Truth, and they shall at last own it to be so: they shall most readily proclaim it to the World that, notwithstanding the short flourishing of the ungodly, they shall be *destroyed*, and *that for ever*. For as the foresaid Religious Writer hath long since observed, * their perishing is not of the same manner that their flourishing was of: for they flourish for a time, but they perish Eternally: they flourish with false Goods, but they perish with true Torments.

* S. Augustin. in Psal. 53.

Let it be granted then that some resolved Sinners have escaped the exemplary Justice of God in this Life, and by the exorbitancy of their Power have broke thro' the barrs of divine and humane Laws: and say that they baffled their own Consciences, and have lived without Remorse and Regret, and at last have died in the same Obduracy: yet it can't be imagined that they will bear up so boldly in the other World, that their Confidence and high Spirit will hold out at the last day. For the Sword of Justice will not then be rebated: her Scales will then hang exactly even. And if she hath seemed to be blind, now she will recover her sight perfectly, and strike none but the Guilty. Tho' revenge seemed here sometimes to lag behind, yet now it comes on with a full Career. The grand Assizes are approaching, and then you shall see the Malefactors Condemned and Executed: and then you will be throughly convinced that the Prosperity of the wicked in this Life is not derogatory to *Divine Providence*.

Thus I have dispatched the most considerable *Objections* against the doctrine that I have been treating of. There is only a remarkable *Text* of Scripture which remains to be cleared and set in a true Light, for at the first view it seems to destroy the doctrine of Providence, and all that I have said upon it. The words are these, *All things come alike to all: there is one event to the Righteous and to the Wicked; to the good and to the clean, and to the unclean; to him that sacrificeth, and to him that sacrificeth not; as is the good, so is the Sinner, and he that sweareth as he that feareth an Oath.* Eccl. 9. 2. Is it not very odd and strange that there should be no difference between the Good and the Bad, the Religious and the Prophane, the common swearer and him that trembleth at an Oath? Is it not very unaccountable that the vilest Criminals and the most religious Votaries should fare alike? Are these things to be reconciled with *Divine Providence?* Doth not this strange dispensation savour too rankly of Disorder and Confusion? And is it not for want of Government and a right disposal of the World that things are at this pass? How then must we interpret these words of *Solomon*, that they may not clash with the Doctrine that I have been asserting and vindicating?

For the better understanding them, and clearing them from all mistaken glosses, I premise this to be taken notice of, that this ninth Chapter and the two last verses of the foregoing one are not only one entire Discourse in themselves, but in some Copies are apparently made so by being conjoyn'd. And indeed the sense seems to make it clear, for after *Solomon* had inform'd us, (v. 16. of the 8th Chapter) how inquisitive he was in his searches after true Wisdom, and his diving into the Depths of Providence, we do not read that he returns with a lucky εὕρηκα, as that Mathematician of old after his serious enquiries, but we may hear him speak in this more unhappy and despairing Language, v. 17. *Then I beheld all the work of God, that a man cannot find out the work that is done under the Sun: because though a man labour to seek it out, yet he shall not find it: yea, further though a wise man seek to know it, yet shall he not be able to find it.* But notwithstanding this Difficulty, nay impossibility of finding out the works of God, he intends not that this should by any means redound to the dishonour of the most High, or patronize a prophane and atheistical Temper: for saith he, *all this I consider'd in my Heart* (and because he had given himself the name of *Preacher*, it follows very suitably) *even to declare all this, that the righteous and the wise, and their works are in the hand of God.* Where he doth fully assert and vindicate the Providence of God, ascribing all the events of Persons, and things and endeavours unto the management of a Divine Power and All-seeing Wisdom. Neither doth that apparent Indiscrimination and Promiscuousness of Events in the World (which is the subject of the next words, *viz.* these which I am now to consider) make any thing at all to the contrary.

So that from the *Relation* which the words have to the Context I might inferr first, that God's Administration of things in the World exceeds our shallow knowledge and frail Conceptions. The Dealings of Heaven are often dark and obscure, and his works are in so dim a print that they are unlegible to mortal Eyes: the more we venture to gaze upon them, the further are they removed out of the Ken of our common Apprehensions. The Supreme Being is pleased in many things to use a Method wholly Cryptical, and such as may puzzle the greatest Pretenders to Knowledge and Sagacity. Secondly, I might easily observe this from *Solomon's* way of Reasoning, that although God's Administrations and Actions far surmount our Understandings in many things, yet that is no Argument why any should question, much less deny the Divine Providence. This it was that *Solomon* had *consider'd* of, and thought good to *declare* to the World, that though things seem to us to go never so strangely, yet the Actions and Counsels of Men, and the Persons themselves are *in the hand of God.* Thirdly, This observable also is suggested here to all sober and intelligent Minds, that it doth not destroy the Doctrine of Providence, that good and bad Men are promiscuously used in the World, that *all things come alike to all.*

And Lastly, Though it be thus, yet such is the depravity of base Minds that this Parity of Events to both good and bad is an occasion of many Men's turning Apostates and Atheists, and indulging themselves in all manner of Vice. *There is one event unto all; yea also the Heart of the Sons of Men is full of evil, and madness is in their Heart whilst they live, and after that they go to the Dead,* v. 3. As if he had said, who sees not that the depraved and corrupted reasonings of Men, stretching this equality of Events too far, make it serve as a doctrine of Licentiousness, and build on this bottom an irreverence towards God, or a flat denial of him? Because they cannot fathom this Abysse, and solve even all the Phænomena of Providence, they look upon that itself as a fond Hypothesis. Because in this great and long Chain they cannot see the Connection and Dependance of every smaller Link, they presently break the whole Chain in Pieces; and then there is a way made for that blind Goddess, that changling Deity, Chance or Fortune to usurp in the World.

It will then concern us not a little to discuss the wise Man's Aphorism, *All things come alike to all*, and to shew *in what respect* it is true that there is no difference between good and bad Men, but that as to the things of this Life they are alike. And then in the next place I will demonstrate how *reasonable* and *accountable* this is, and how consistent it is with Divine *Providence.* And after this, to establish the true sense of the Text, and to prevent all mistakes, I will assign the *Restrictions* and *Limitations* which this Doctrine will admit of.

I am first to shew *in what respect* it is true that there is no *difference* between good and bad Men. As to all *Natural* Actions, it is evident that these are common to both sorts of Persons, for these being common to Men and Brutes, it is no wonder that they are so to good and evil Men. Though likeness is also promiscuous as to all *Humane* Actions, whether Civil and Politick, or externally Moral and Religious. They study Arts and Sciences, they rule and govern, they buy and sell and traffick alike. They are equally capable of praying, hearing, confessing their Sins, and the like outward performances of Religion. *Balaam* in a fit of Devotion wish'd he might die the death of the Righteous. *Cain* and *Saul* sacrificed. The latter prophesied, and both he and *Pharaoh* acknowledged their Sins very submissively. *Esau* and *Saul* wept very passionately. *Ahab* humbled himself. *Jehu* shew'd a great zeal for God and against Idolatry, and made a great reformation among the People. The *Pharisees* fasted and prayed very solemnly, *Judas* preached and prayed and cast forth Devils, as the other Apostles did, and *some* think he was a Communicant at the Lord's Supper: it is certain he made Restitution, and repented. *Herod* heard *John Baptist* gladly. *Felix* trembled at St. *Paul's* preaching. *Simon* the Sorcerer was baptized and believed. Both he and *Apollonius Tyanæus* wrought a kind of Miracles.

I might prove yet further that the good and bad are in some measure liable to the same Mistakes, Errors and Misprisions: and they are both incident to the Suggestions and Temptations of *Satan*: and are too like one another sometimes as to the Obliquities and Miscarriages which are observable in their Lives, of which there are some examples both in the *Old* and *New Testament.*

But

But leaving this method of proceeding, which may not be thought to be so close to the wise Man's Words, I shall shew that all things come alike to all as to the common course of Life, and the Conditions and Events that belong to it. He is a stranger to the World, and the Sacred Records who knows not that vertuous Men have been poor and persecuted, and Christ himself and his whole College of Apostles fared hardly, and were a sort of *Mendicants* and *Pilgrims*. We shall find that some of the bravest Men have been the most unworthily treated, that the bloudiest Persecutors, the most execrable Tyrants and Oppressors have prospered, of which I have spoken before. And so *vice versâ*, that good Men have had their share of outward Prosperity, of Wealth, Honour and Power in the World: that, I think, the Examples in Holy Writ, and the frequent changes that have been made in the World will sufficiently convince us of.

Also as to the Events of *Sickness*, as well as to the other ordinary Conditions of Life, the good and bad meet with the like allotment. The Physician (who is the best judge here) can put this out of doubt by informing us from his Converse and Experience that Diseases do indifferently and promiscuously attack both ranks of Persons. After all our curious searches and enquiries, I believe we shall not find any distemper which the worst Men have laboured under, that even the best and holiest Persons are not some way or other Obnoxious to. And as to the carriage and deportment of the Sick, those who in the discharge of their Sacred Office attend on such Persons, can tell you of the forlorn postures and desponding Speeches even of some holy Men, and the unbecoming Jollities and Presumptions of very bad ones.

Sickness is a passage to Death, and so I come in the next place to speak of the occurrences and accidents of Death. And even there too all things come alike to all. Some of the vilest wretches have sent forth their last breath with Ease and Quietness: and as for some good Men, their pangs of Death have been very terrible, their passage out of the World hath been difficult and painful. Did never any of them end their days in Impatience and Raving, in fearful distractions and despairing Language? Have not these been the result of dirty Melancholy, of a furious Calenture, or an Amazing Frenzy? Or, should I instance in other kinds of Death, even there the good Men can plead no Exemption. It needed not at all have vexed *Aristides* (that great Patriot of his Country and a wise Man) that he died of the bite of a *Weezel*, a contemptible Creature. As no man can dispose of the Time, so neither should he trouble his head about the manner or kind of his Death. Some of the best Men die in the time of great and publick Mortality, and perish by Epidemical Contagions. Others are snatched away by sudden and violent Deaths. Sometimes it seems good to Heaven to execute vengeance on *whole Nations*, where are *innocent* Persons as well as Offenders. The Righteous are involved in the same general Calamity with the Wicked: the vertuous and vitious equally share in the common Distress. Thus we see *in what respect* these words of *Solomon* are to be understood that *all things come alike to all.*

Secondly, I proceed to give you an *Account* of this, and shew how *Reasonable* it is that good and bad, whilst they live here together, should not be differenced as to their Conditions and States of Life, nor as to the manner of Sickness, nor the kind of their departure hence, nor as to any other external Circumstance of the like Nature. And this will appear reasonable and consequently adjusted to the laws of Divine Wisdom and Providence to him who considers, 1. The true nature and quality of *the things* of this World. 2. The quality and temper of *Men*, which as to the main admit not of great differences as to these things. 3. The wise design of *God* in the management of this matter.

In the first place, It needs not be wondered at that Persons are thus promiscuously used, for these outward things and the events of them are not absolutely good or evil, but are in themselves indifferent. As for sensual pleasures, they are but common to us with Beasts, and therefore they can't be the happiness of Men, *i. e.* of rational Creatures. Wealth and Honour and a great affluence of the things of this World are wholly external, accidental and accessory, and therefore our Felicity and Satisfaction (which are the principal things) are not placed in them, and consequently the chief good doth not lie at Stake. That is *good* which makes us much more so: but the things I have mentioned do frequently make Men worse, and administer to Vice. It was a sober truth among the *Stoicks* that there is no evil

evil but in what is Sinful and Immoral: and on that score it can't be that bodily Diseases and Distempers, the Penury and Scarcity, that disgrace and obloquies, that Imprisonment or Banishment, or death itself should be really evil in their own Natures. And the supposed *good* things, viz. Pleasure, Fame, and Riches, are upon the same account to be reckoned among such as are not truly and really good, that is, good to us as we are Men, as we are indued with Rational Faculties. And consequently neither of these ranks and classes of things are the proper objects of our Love or Hatred, of over Appetition or Aversation. Whence it follows, as very rational and accountable, that, as to these things, the good and bad should fare alike in the World.

The second reason is taken from the nature and quality of *Men* in the World. And this hath a twofold Aspect, *viz.* as it respects the natural frame of Men's Bodies, which renders them obnoxious to the inconveniencies before mentioned; and also as it hath relation to the Passions and Distempers of Men's Minds. First, Seeing both sorts of Persons have bodies compounded of the same Elements and Ingredients constituted of the same Parts and Vessels, performing the same Offices, and depending on the same Operations and Mechanisms, why should it be wondered at that they are both obnoxious to the like Infirmities and Diseases? It can't create admiration in intelligent Persons that the harmony of the body should sometimes be spoiled, and even the best Tempers and soundest Constitutions yield to the fiercer Batteries of an acute, or the longer and more tedious Assaults of a Chronical Disease. And then, how numerous are the *Accidents* and cross Occurrences that we are hourly liable to, and whereby our lives are continually in *Jeopardy*? The badness of the Air, or the indigestion of our Meat, the prick of a Pin, a slip of the Foot, or things far less may rob us of our Breath. The smallest pore and passage in the Body is a door wide enough for Death to enter in at. There are a thousand Inlets to Mortality, there being as many Casualties and Instruments to effect it.

Again, If we fix our eyes on the *Passions* and *Distempers* of Men's *Minds*, which create so great a disorder in the World, we shall find that all are equally capable and receptive of those hurtful impressions we are speaking of. Good Men *themselves* are sometimes mutually Offensive, and these Diamonds cut one another. But for the most part their hurt arises from those of a contrary Denomination, for malice pursues the best Actions, and the greatest worth creates Ill-will and Envy. Hence it is dangerous to be vertuous, and severe Piety is the way to ruin. Especially great and eminent Persons, if they be so likewise as to their religious Accomplishments, are more signally hated.

Thus far we have argued from the Consideration of the obnoxiousness of good Men to all sorts of Calamities by reason of their inbred Constitution, and the unavoidable accidents they lie open to, and likewise by reason of the Passions and Disorders both of their own and other Men's Minds. Whence we must necessarily conclude that they have no Dispensation or Exemption from the Evils that befall the rest of the World.

In the next place let it be remembred that the All-wise disposer of all things who hath the management of this matter, contrives it to most excellent Ends and Purposes. And so 'tis no wonder that the lot of Men is not differenced at all in respect of outward and worldly things. It were enough to say here that by this means is afforded a very fair Tryal and Experiment of the sincerity of those that are really good, *viz.* whether they will adhere to the principles and practice of Holiness, though all worldly allurements are substracted. As in *Psalm* 44. where the pious King had briefly related the sad and affrighting Story of his and the Churches Calamities, he vindicates their faithfulness and integrity in these Words, v. 17, 18. *All this is come upon us, yet have we not forgotten thee, neither have we dealt falsly in thy covenant. Our heart is not turned back, neither have our steps declined from thy way, though thou hast sore broken us in the place of Dragons, and cover'd us with the shadow of Death.* Surely it is no small satisfaction to righteous Persons that they can evidence to the World, and have the Testimony of their Consciences to vouch them, that they don't serve God and act in Religion for outward Advantages and carnal Respects, that they follow not after Christ for the Loaves, that they don't fight under his Banner merely for Pay, and serve under him as Soldiers of Fortune; that they embrace Religion because it is Divine and Heavenly, and not because it is profitable, and brings them in worldly Revenues. But

But to pass by this Consideration, say that good and holy Men are reduced to Streights and Necessities, that they are often reviled, abused and persecuted, that they labour under all sorts of Evils and Calamities; yet Providence hath so order'd the business that these very Occurrences shall be of infinite Advantage to them: they shall give them true Notions and Apprehensions of things, they shall acquaint them with the true Nature of this World's Acquisitions, they shall enable them to place the difference of Good and Evil aright, they shall produce in them good Thoughts and a sober Life, shall cause them to * remember God, to repair to him, trust in him and depend upon him: they shall happily remind them of their fickle State, and make them provide for another World: they shall correct their trifling and vain Pursuits, and render them Manly, and careful of the main Concern, which is that of a Future State. And then again, say that the vilest Persons thrive and prosper, the Wisdom of Heaven is engaged to render this accountable: and right Reason can venture so far as to make it not unworthy of a Deity: for let us remember that prosperous Sinners are *fatted against the Day of Slaughter*, as tis in the holy Style, their Blessings are attended with a Curse, and Judgment and Vengeance wait on all their outward Fruitions. But to wave all other Arguments at present, if we believe the Christian Religion, and rely on its Articles, we may satisfy our selves that there is a Place of Misery destined for these Wretches, where they shall smart for all, and their Punishment will be mightily inhans'd, and become most exquisite by reason of their foregoing Ease and Pleasure. And so much for the *Reasons*, why in this World *all things come alike to all*, the chief of which I have largely insisted on in the foregoing Discourse, and therefore they were but briefly to be mention'd here, for the explaining of the Text before us.

* Κατὰ τὰς εὐτυχίας πάντες ἄνθρωποι μᾶλλον εἰώθασι τοῦ Θεοῦ μνημονεύειν καὶ πολλάκις. Diodor. Sic. Eclog. *Diligentius Dii coluntur irati.* Sen. Controv. 1. 8.

The third thing I undertook was to obviate all Mistakes and Objections, by adding the just *Limitations* and *Boundaries* of the wise Man's Words. The first whereof is this, That although in the *usual* and *ordinary* Course of Providence outward Events, whether National or Personal, are alike to both Good and Bad, yet the Divine Administrations toward some Persons, and at some special times are to be more narrowly ey'd and observ'd, there being undoubtedly *a more than ordinary* Hand of Providence in some remarkable Occurrences: which are so palpable, that in them we must needs acknowledge a certain *Inequality* and *Variety* of Events. And this Observation and Judgment concerning God's Acts of Providence is to be made by us, first, when the Persons on whom the Calamities light are extremely wicked, notoriously prophane and profligate. Such were *Pharaoh* and *Achitophel*, *Corah* and his Comrades, *Herod* and *Pilate*, *Judas*, *Antiochus*, *Maximinus*, *Diocleſian*, and that Triumvirate of prophane Wits, *Julian*, *Porphyry* and *Lucian*. I might add some of the bloody Persecutors in the *Marian* Days, who (if there may be credit given to our Martyrology) ran Mad and Phrentick, others dispos'd of themselves in a violent manner, some were struck with strange Diseases, and so miserably expired. Thus some great and infamous Sinners have as it were been hung up in Chains, for all the World to look on them, and learn to be better. And in this Case the wise Man's Aphorism in my Text *must admit of its due Limitation*, for here all things do *not* come alike to all.

So it must secondly, When we see Offenders over-taken by a Judgment, and smitten by the Hand of God in the very Act and Commission of Sin. Thus *Nadab* and *Abihu* were kill'd by the immediate Stroke of Heaven, whilst they were offering strange Fire. *Zimri* and *Cosbi* were seized in the very Fact. *Uzzah* was struck dead at the very touching of the Ark. *Sennacherib* was slain whilst he was worshipping in the Temple of *Nisroch*. *Nebuchadnezzar* at the very Instant of his boasting concerning his great *Babylon* was surprized. *Sardanapalus*, that effeminate Monarch, was dispatch'd in the midst of his Concubines, *Belshazar* in his prophane Cups, *Herod* as soon as he had ended his impious Harangue, *Ananias* and *Sapphira* whilst they were persisting in their Sacrilegious Dissimulation. These Examples are Evidences of God's *extraordinary* Dealings with some Criminals, and shew that in such Cases we ought to *limit* and *restrain* the wise Man's Words.

And we must do so likewise when we meet with those Instances wherein we find that the Punishment manifestly points at the very Sin, and doth as it were tell us that it was sent on purpose to revenge it. Of which I have given several Examples before,

before, when discoursing of the *Attributes* I treated of the *Justice of God*; therefore now I need not repeat them. From sundry remarkable Instances it appears, that Sinners meet with a Retribution in the same kind. The Offence and the Punishment are proportion'd, and exactly answer to one another. The Crime may be read in the Penalty, the Fault is apparently signified by the Judgment. Here may be applied that of *Wisdom*, chap. 11. ver. 16. *Wherewith a Man sinneth, by the same also shall he be punish'd.* Which is also become a Maxim in our Common Law.

Thirdly, We may judge of the Event, and freely comment upon it without the breach of Charity, when in the Punishment of Sinners we observe, that such a Judgment doth always, or for the most part pursue and haunt such a Vice, and attend on it by way of natural Consequence, or judicial Curse. As it is plain in some enormous and flagitious Courses, which generally drag along with them particular Diseases, Pains and Languishments of Body. Thus the fire of Lust hath consum'd some Bodies to Ashes: some Men's lascivious and lewd Imbraces have made way for their Winding-sheets. Some debauch'd Persons have drown'd themselves in Drink, and made their Cups their Sepulchral Urns. Idleness, Luxury and Riot have carried their Punishment with them; namely, Extreme Want and Penury. Pride is always attended with Contempt: it is as 'twere resolv'd by the general Vote of the World, that they will not respect and honour a proud and haughty Person; they all agree to vilify him because he over-rates himself. And I leave it to the Observation of wise and experienc'd Men, whether disobeying of natural Parents, and Rebellion against the Civil ones, as also Sacrilege and open Oppression have not always some visible Judgments in the Rear of them.

Fourthly, The next thing that I must adjoin as a *due Boundary* to the wise Man's Proposition is, that as God's particular Vengeance on notorious Offenders, so his discriminating Blessings and Favours vouchsafed to the Good and Vertuous are to be observ'd and taken notice of. For by this means he is pleas'd to make an apparent *Distinction* between the one and the other. Thus we before observ'd, that *Noah* and his Family were taken into the Ark, and were there safe and secure when the rest of the World perish'd in the Deluge. *Lot* escaped the Flames of *Sodom*, when the Inhabitants of that place were consumed. The *Israelites* were safe in *Egypt*, when the *Egyptians* were plagued. And afterwards they escaped the Waves of the Red-Sea, in which the others were overwhelm'd. The like Discrimination was partly observable in the last Overthrow of *Jerusalem*. For without doubt there is a special Providence extended to some: they are in an unusual and extraordinary way guarded and protected, rescued and delivered. That the Good and Bad are distinguish'd even in this Life, is evident from *Mal.* 3. 17, 18. *They shall be mine, saith the Lord of Hosts, in that Day when I make up my Jewels, and I will spare them as a Man spareth his own Son that serveth him. Then shall ye return and discern between the Righteous and the Wicked, between him that serveth God and him that serveth him not.* There is oftentimes *a Day* in this World which puts a Difference between *Jewels* and *Rubbish*, between Gold and Dross. This Day is further express'd in the two first Verses of the next Chapter, *Behold the Day cometh that shall burn as an Oven, and the Wicked shall be burnt up as Stubble: but unto them that fear my Name shall the Sun of Righteousness arise with healing in his Wings.* This gives us ground to distinguish between the *Ordinary* Course of Providence, and that which is *Extraordinary*, to determine that tho' according to the former all Men fare *alike*, yet not according to the latter. And thus I have largely insisted on *Solomon*'s Words, on which the *Objection* against *Providence* was founded, and I have made it evident, that there is nothing in them which favours the Objection against that Doctrine.

After all that hath been said, if any Doubts remain in our Minds concerning *Providence*, let us allay them by considering, they are to be ascrib'd to our own voluntary Fault: and that upon several Accounts; First, Because we are apt to construe Events according to our own fond Fancies and Opinions, and the Prejudices that we labour under, and then 'tis no wonder if we find fault with the Divine Administration; for things are not so contriv'd, and the World so made, that all captious and wrangling Men can be satisfied. If we will not throw off the Prepossessions with which our Minds are clogg'd, and renounce our innate Self-conceit and Pride, we shall always be quarreling with what God doth in the World, and we shall be doubting concerning several things whether he doth them or no, and we shall be inclin'd to imbrace the Notion of Chance and Fortune in the World.

Again,

Again, We are wont to take things apart, and not to lay them together; and thence commences our disputing against the divine Management of things in the World. Some Transactions, which without doubt are owing to Divine Wisdom, look very odly if we consider them abstractly and separately, and we shall be tempted to think that they carry no marks of extraordinary contrivance with them, but that rather they savour of careless Chance and Negligence. Wherefore what the wise Man tells us concerning God, *that he hath set one thing over-against the other*, Eccl. 7. 1. 4. We must do likewise; we ought to compare one thing with another, and to joyn them together, and then we shall discern the harmony and connection among them. By this means we shall be convinc'd of that Wisdom which made the happy correspondence between them, and we shall no longer complain of Disorder and Confusion in the government of the World.

Moreover, most Men are careless and superficial, and do not sufficiently attend to God's Works, and thence arises their prejudice against them. It is for want of imploying a considerable part of our time in examining the various passages of God's Providence that makes us averse to own the Wisdom of it. Because we do not throughly consider God's Ways, and with great Industry and Application study them, we are prompted to have an ill Opinion of them, for nothing doth Men more harm than a slight and neglectful view of God's Works. These are the great springs and sources whence the denial of Providence Flows, and our care should be to damn them up. We must correct our exorbitant Fancies, and root out our Prejudices; we must take a survey of God's Works together, and as they are in conjunction: and we must be very diligent and studious in examining of them.

But there is another voluntary source of our questioning of Providence which hath not been yet mentioned, and now I will insist upon it more largely than on the rest. We are apt to doubt of the Divine Conduct in the World, because many things in it are *above our reach and apprehension*. We perhaps are not defective in examining and searching into them, but when we have done so, we find that they exceed our Capacities, and we meet with such difficulties that we can't possibly give an account of, and thence we question the Wisdom of God, and doubt of his care of humane Concerns. Because God's proceedings are sometimes above our Reasons, therefore we presume to reason against them. Now, to cure this evil disposition of Mind, we must remember that though there may be good and substantial Reasons assign'd of most things wherein Providence is concern'd, (and I have (I hope) given some satisfaction as to that in what I have above deliver'd) yet there are some things and events which will not be level with our Humane Reasons, and we can't in reason expect that they should. *For God doth things unsearchable* Job 5. 9. and again Chap. 9. 10. *he doth great things past finding out.* And the same inspired person acknowledges that though God hath given Man Wisdom to find out many things in Nature, as the Treasures of the subterraneous World, *&c.* Job 28. 1. yet he can never find out the Reasons of all God's various Dispensations towards the Sons of Men, v. 12. 20, 21. God hath reserv'd the knowledge of these things to himself, v. 23. 27. We have it from his own Mouth that *his ways are not as Man's Ways, nor his Thoughts as our Thoughts*, and therefore his designs and methods of Providence must needs surpass our short Apprehensions, and are far above our critical Censures. We learn from the Apostle *Rom.* 11. 33. that there is a *depth of the riches both of the Wisdom and Knowledge of God*, i. e. there is an unconceivable *Wisdom* and *Knowledge* in decreeing all Events, and in governing and disposing all things according to that Decree. Wherefore it immediately follows, *how unsearchable are his judgments and his ways past finding out?* That is, the reason of his Purposes and Counsels concerning Men, and the Methods of his Providence in his dealing with them are not to be found out. *For*, as he adds, *who hath known the Mind of the Lord, or who hath been his Counsellor?* Who can tell what he intends in many of his Dispensations? Much less who can pretend to prescribe to him? Those are excellent words of a Primitive Writer, * "It is not "easie for every one to know the Mind of God. Man that is a blind Creature, "and knows not himself cannot possibly comprehend by what means and ways "God orders his Affairs. What is fit to be done, and when, and in what sort, is "known only to him who is the Father, Moderator, and Lord of all.

* *Neque enim promptum est cuiquam Dei videre mentem, &c.* Arnob. l. 2.

Seeing it is thus, it is the greatest folly imaginable to quarrel with Providence or in the least degree to doubt of it. Seeing we are short-sighted, and cannot search

search into the Divine Secrets, it is highly unreasonable to find fault with them. It becomes us rather to cry out with the great Apostle *O the Depth!* Since we have no Plum-line to fathom this profound Abyss, let us humbly admire it, and stand amazed at it. Let us fix this on our Minds, that things and events may be Convenient and Worthy, though we apprehend them not. Things may be justly administred, although we cannot reconcile the way of it. For there are *ends*, that God hath regard to, which we can't see; his *designs* are above our shallow Capacities. What though we can't comprehend the reasons and ends of some of God's Actions towards us in the World? Notwithstanding this, we ought to conclude that if we could comprehend them, we should find them to be infinitely Wise and Just, and every way best for us. We ought to believe that there is a reason for all that God doth; we ought to think that the laws and proceedures of Heaven are just and good, though they may seem to us not to be so. There are many Intricacies in Providence, but no understanding Man will impeach the Wisdom or Goodness of God upon that account. *Solomon* in his Book of *Ecclesiastes* sets down what *Objections* and *Difficulties* troubled him, what came into his thoughts sometimes against the Providence of God: but at last he fixes on this as certain and indisputable, that we should *fear God and keep his Commandments.* As much as to say, though there are some inscrutable things in the doctrine of Providence, yet we are not to make that an Argument of our disbelief of it, but to persist in our acknowledgment of God's Care and Government of the World, and to Fear and Worship him and obey his Commandments, and throughly to perswade our selves that *the Judge of all the Earth will do right*, that he who punishes others for wrong will not do wrong himself. And especially in the close of all things his Justice and Providence shall be most eminently display'd, *for God shall bring every work into Judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good or whether it be evil.* Thus he concludes.

And this reminds us of the last Answer which is to be return'd to the *Objections* against *Providence*, and that is this, That the *Last Judgment* and a *Future State* shall reconcile every thing in Providence which seems to be harsh and unequal in this Life. I said something of this before, but it was wholly with reference to the *Punishment of those who had been prosperous in this World:* but now I shall more largely apply it, and then proceed to *the Inferences* from the whole. It can't be denied, that, there are some things which look very strangely, and we may be puzled to give an account of them, there are many things acted on the Stage of the World, and that by the Divine Order and Appointment which are very dark and intricate, and confound the Spectatours with their difficulty: but this at last will be so far from being a disparagement to God's governing of the World, that it will be a high Commendation of it; for then the whole Plot and Intrigue will be laid open, and the wise contriver of Heaven will be applauded by Men and Angels. Whilst we view the present entangled Scene, we are tempted to entertain no good Opinion of it; but stay till the last Catastrophe, wait the last Act, expect the concluding Scene, and then you will approve all with a *Grande ὀφῶς.*

We are short-lived Creatures, and continue not here long enough to see the full events of some things; we see but *little* of them and *a-sunder*, and therefore are not able to judge of them: but there is a day coming when *the whole* shall be set before us, and the several parts will appear *together*, and all at once; which will give us a true account of them, and such, as will gain our Approbation. I have seen a Picture made up of scattered and deformed Pieces, united into one Face by a *Cylindrical Glass* aptly placed. Such will be the Art of Heaven at the final Conclusion of the World: things that were separated before shall now be join'd, and those that seemed to lie out of Order and to be strangely misplaced, shall then by better and truer Opticks be represented in another Shape and Figure, such as will ravish us with it's beauty and excellency. There seems to be an unequal distribution of good and evil here in this Life, and such as consists not with the Wisdom, and Goodness, and Justice of God: but we must allay our prejudices, and silence our doubts by considering that there is another life after this; and that will set all things Right and Streight. We must know that the greatest part of Punishments and Rewards is reserv'd for another place. Had *Epicurus* and his Disciples believ'd this, their cavils against Providence would have been soon baffled. But so it was, they who denied a Providence, denied also the Immortality of Humane Souls, and a Life to come: and this latter made way for the former. But

we,

we, who have an assurance of an immortal State hereafter, have no ground of cavilling at God's Dealings here. If we believe another world after this, that will take off all our Prejudices against Providence, that will justifie all God's Dispensations towards Mankind. The lesser Spheres of Man's shallow Reason turn about too fast within his narrow Brains, and don't keep time with the vast circle of Providence, which is larger and wider, and goes not so fast, but will at last come to it's just Period, and then it's motion and operation will be seen to be exact and regular. The final issue is not yet come; but when that arriveth, all objections will cease. The last day will clear all.

Thus I have removed the *Objections*. It remains now that I shew what are the proper *Inferences* which are to be made from the foregoing Doctrine, and what *Influence* this truth hath on our Lives and Manners.

1. Heartily *Own* and *Acknowledge a Providence*. This is the first thing I urge; and the necessity of it will be perceiv'd if we consider how inclinable some have been in all Ages to question the truth of it. I have taken notice in the examples of *Job*, *David*, *Jeremiah*, *Habakkuk*, how *Good* Men have been tempted to this: and now I will observe how, among the *Gentile* Philosophers, others besides the *Epicureans* have spoken contemptibly of Providence and some of them have acted in defiance of it. Some perhaps may think, that *Homer*'s Philosophy was corrupted by his Poetry, and therefore he is not to be heeded, when he tells us that *Sleep is the King of all the Gods as well as Men*. And accordingly we find the *Homerick* Gods sometimes taking a Nap, and not able to hold up, and take care of humane Affairs for some time. That even *Aristotle*, reputed the greatest of all the Philosophers, had a mean esteem of God's Government of all things is asserted by several of the Fathers, as *Clemens Alexandrinus* (l. 5. Strom.) *Epiphanius* (l. 3. Tom. 2.) *Ambrose* (l. 1. de Officiis) and others, who alledge some passages out of his Writings, which sufficiently discover his low Conception of Providence. And indeed it were easie to mention some Sentences of his, whence we might be enclined to gather that he partly excluded God from the Management and Care of things below.

This fault was common to other great and celebrated Philosophers, as *Tully* and *Plutarch*, especially the former in his second Book *of Divination*, and in his Book *of Fate* he flatly denies Providence. The latter, though a very Grave Writer, in several places demurrs about it, and is next to denying it. *Lucan* represents *Pompey*, warmly disputing against Providence when he lost the Battel at *Pharsalia*, because having (as he thought) the better Cause, he came off so ill in that Expedition. Nay, the Grave *Cato*, who had been always the most Religious Asserter of the Divine Administration and Management of Affairs in the World, as soon as he perceived that Victory was gone over to *Caesar*'s side, cryed out of the Gods and their ill Government of the World, and forthwith dispatched himself. If the World were ruled by Providence, *Phalaris* and *Dionysius* would never have deserved a Kingdom, nor *Rutilus* and *Camillus* Banishment, nor *Socrates* Poyson, as *Cacilius* wildly talks, the *Gentile* that disputes against Christianity in *Minutius Felix*'s Dialogue. Let these ill Precedents and Examples have this good Effect upon us, to make us careful not to add to the number of such Persons by our staggering at Providence or (which is worse) by discarding it.

But, on the contrary, let us confirm and establish our selves in this great and substantial Truth. And let this be subservient towards the corroborating of our belief of it, that though at *sometimes* and upon *some Emergencies* a Providence was *question'd* by some of the wise Men among the *Pagans*, yet *generally* they were *satisfied* with this Doctrine. Even that great Man before cited, who seem'd to hesitate about this matter, hath these remarkable Words, * "What "a Pilot is in a Ship, what a Charioteer is on his Chariot, what "the chief Leader is in a Dance, what the Law is in a City, "what a Commander is in an Army, that is God in the World. Which doth very positively express the ruling and governing Power of the Almighty. † *Whatever God doth is full of Providence* saith the Royal Philosopher. ‖ God dispenseth and governs all things well, and with the greatest Art and Wisdom, saith the excellent *Platonist*. And the *Stoicks* agree to it, for their *Fate* was no other than *Providence*, if you look narrowly into it, and are not lead away by vulgar Prejudice: for, according to *Zeno* the great

* Καθόλου ὅπερ ἐν ναῒ κυβερνήτης, ἐν ἄρματι ἡνίοχος, ἐν χορῷ ὁ κορυφαῖος, ἐν πόλει ὁ νόμος, ἐν στρατοπέδῳ ἡγεμών, οὗτος θεὸς ἐν κόσμῳ. Arist. de Mundo.

† Τὰ τῶν θεῶν προνοίας μεστά. Antonin.

‖ Ὁ θεὸς οἰκονομεῖ τὰ πάντα οὗτος καλῶς καὶ τεχνικῶς καὶ ἐπιστημόνως. M. Tyr. Diss. 16.

great Founder of that Sect, Fate is that * connexed cause of things, or that Reason, by which the World is manag'd. Which is as much as to say, *Fate* is God's way of administering the Affairs of the World, which is the same with *Providence*.

* Ἔστι δὲ εἱμαρμένη αἰτία τῶν ὄντων εἰρομένη, ἢ λόγος καθ' ὃν ὁ κόσμος διοικεῖται. Laert. in Zenone.

And not only the Philosophers generally, but the Common-people among the *Gentiles* own'd this. It was a received and usual *Formula* among the Ancients to cry out upon occasion that *there are Gods, and* that *they govern the World*, as *Livy* testifies (l. 3.) And in another Book he brings in *Manlius Torquatus* uttering these words as of course and according to Custom, † *There is most certainly a heavenly Numen: thou art, O great Jove; and not only a Looker-on, but a Judge and an Avenger.* This was the common Notion, which the most dissolute had, and 'twas in every one's Mouth, as appears from that of the *Greek* Tragedian, ‖ *The great God is in Heaven, who inspects and governs all things.* Seeing then this important Truth is universally receiv'd, and consequently is the dictate of pure and unbiassed Reason, we cannot with-hold giving our suffrage to it. We must be forc'd to acknowledge God's ruling Hand, we must confess him to be the wise disposer of all things, and that whatever befalls us is from *Providence*.

* *Est cœleste Numen: es magne Jupiter, nec Inspector solum, sed & Judex idem est & Vindex.* lib. 8.

‖ Ἔστι μέγας ἐν οὐρανῷ Ζεύς, ὃς ἐφορᾷ πάντα καὶ κρατύνει. Sophocl.

2. We are obliged not only to *own* God's Hand, but to be *thankful* for it. With gratefull Minds we are to adore his Wisdom, Power, and goodness in the Government of the World. 'Twas rightly said by the excellent * Commentator on *Epictetus*, that that Man will admire Providence, who hath these two Qualifications, namely a faculty to see and apprehend the nature of things in the World, and likewise a thankful Mind. The former is requisite to the right understanding the sundry excellencies of created Beings; the latter is necessary in order to make a good use of them. And truly the first will make way for the second; for if we attain to a knowledge of the Things and Transactions that are in the World, and how they are manag'd and order'd by the Supreme Ruler, we shall forcibly be push'd on to acknowledge the Divine Artist, and to return thanks to him for them. We have before us innumerable Demonstrations of God's Care and Concern for the World, and for every one of us in particular. We are all environ'd in the Circle, we are all wrapt up in the Lap, and foster'd in the Bosom of Providence: God, the great Master of all the Families of the Earth, looks after them, and bountifully maintains them and provides for them. We experimentally find our Saviour's Words to be true, *Man liveth not by Bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the Mouth of God*, Mat. 4. 4. We are supported by the Divine Blessing rather than by the supply of outward means for our sustenance. Shall we not then gratefully resent this happy lot of ours, and give proof of it by opening our Mouths in praises and thanksgivings? If we be continually govern'd by a watchful and unerring Providence and if the influence of it be so beneficial to us all our Lives, we cannot but express our thankfulness for this inestimable Blessing and Favour.

* *Arian.* l. 1. c. 16.

3. Be *not over-careful* and *sollicitous*. This is another natural Result of the doctrine of Providence. *Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and he shall sustain thee*, Psal. 55. 22. That he doth and will do so, is an Argument and Motive for our casting our Burden off of our selves, and throwing it upon Providence: which is the Inference, that our Saviour makes from the consideration of God's providential Care, *Mat.* 6. 25. *Take no thought for your Life, what you shall eat, or what you shall drink, or what you shall put on.* And it is observable that he expressly cautions, against this *taking thought*, no less than four times together afterwards, as you may read in v. 27, 28, 31, 34. And what is this *taking of thought*, but a tearing and and distracting of the Mind, as the *Greek* word used in these places properly denotes? And it is appositely express'd by another word in *Luke* 12 29. *Be not of a doubtful Mind*, hang not dubious and hovering in your thoughts like a *Meteor* in the Air, as that term imports. By no means excruciate and torture your Minds with the Affairs of this Life, and the events of it. For, as our Saviour suggests in that Chapter, *our heavenly Father, who feeds the Fowls will feed and sustain us* v. 26. *And if God cloth the grass of the Field, shall he not much more cloth us?* v. 30. therefore indulge not that Suspension and Anxiety of Mind which you are too subject to, lay aside all perplexing and sollicitous Care. St. *Peter* expresses it thus,

cast

cast all your care upon him, i. e. upon God, *for he careth for you*, 1 Pet. 5. 7. We live under a Divine Regimen, nothing is done without God's Disposal.

Quicquid patimur mortale genus,
Quicquid facimus venit ab alto.

Therefore 'tis mighty folly to disturb and distract our thoughts with what will come to pass in the World. *The dye is cast*, as that great Man said when he was passing the *Rubicon*. We see such things are begun and have actually happen'd, but what will be the Success and Issue, we can't tell. There is one that takes care of us, and he will secure us without our Sollicitudes. Therefore, if we believe this, let us not live in over-careful Suspense, but banish from us all excessive thoughtfulness.

4. Banish all *undue Fears* and *Dread*. This is the Inference which the Psalmist makes, *Psal.* 3. 3, 5, 6. *Thou O Lord art a shield for me: the Lord sustaineth me*: therefore *I will not be afraid of ten thousands of People that have set themselves against me round about.* And in Psal. 23. 1, 4. *The Lord is my Shepherd, and I shall not want*, &c. therefore *I will fear no Evil.* And again, Psal. 27. 1. *The Lord is my Light and my Salvation, whom shall I fear? The Lord is the strength of my Life, of whom shall I be afraid?* And the Holy King is yet in a higher and loftier strain, *Psal.* 146. *God is our refuge and strength: a very present help in trouble. Therefore will not we fear though the Earth be removed, and though the Mountains be carried into the midst of the Sea, though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the Mountains shake with the swelling thereof. God is in the midst of her, she shall not be moved: God shall help her and that right early. The Lord of Hosts is with us, the God of* Jacob *is our Refuge.* This we may build upon as a certain truth that no evil can befall us from any Man, but first it must be will'd by God. *I have created the waster to destroy*, saith he, *Isa.* 54. 16. He appoints the Persons that are to disturb and molest us, and he sets the time when they shall do it: and no waster, no destroyer can effect his Will upon us without God's Order and Appointment. For this we may assure our selves that Man hath not an absolute Power over us, his strength is restrain'd, his force is limitted. God must give leave before Man can assault us, and lay hands upon us, as our Saviour told *Pilate, Thou couldst have no power at all against me unless it were given thee from above*, John 19. 11. How absurd and unaccountable a thing then is it to tremble at Man, who can do nothing without God, and who shall do nothing but what God hath decreed to be done by him? And we are sure he hath determin'd nothing but what in some respect is just and good, and what more especially is for the good of his chosen Servants. I cannot but give you here the excellent words of the *Greek* Moralist, who after he had said, * *Good Men are the Friends of God*, immediately adds, *It is impossible that such a Person, one that is loved of God, should not fare well, should not be successful and prosperous.* Thus the consideration of the Divine Blessing and Care wherewith we are constantly supported, should expell all our *Fears*, and cause us to triumph with an holy Exultation.

* Φίλοι πῶς θεοῖς οἱ ἀγαθοὶ. τὸν θεοφιλῆ μὴ τ εὐτυχέστατον εἶναι ἀδύνατον ἐστι. Plut. cont. Epicur.

And this is our Saviour's Inference in *Matt.* 10. 29, 30, 31. *A Sparrow falls not on the ground without your Father: and the Hairs of your Head are all numbred: fear ye not therefore.* Be under no dismal apprehensions of danger, for your heavenly Father takes care of you. There is a watchful Providence concern'd for us, whether we sleep or wake; the great Sovereign Lord of Heaven and Earth presides over the Affairs of the World, and disposes them according to his Pleasure. And though things may seem to be strangely carried on sometimes, and to be wonderfully disorder'd, yet 'tis certain God governs the World, and always for the best: wherefore let all our frightful Thoughts and Surmises Vanish. Nothing of evil can ever come to a good Man, either Living or Dead: and he is always taken care of by God. This *Socrates* maintain'd before his Judges. And shall not *We*, who have greater assurance of this Truth by the Revelation of the Gospel, boye up our Spirits with it? And charm down all our Fears by meditating upon it? It is true, we should be miserable Creatures, if we were exposed to the Will and Lust of our Enemies. Into what a desperate Condition should we be plunged if the wicked were permitted to do all that they would? It would be endless to instance,

stance, in the Sins that would be tolerated, in the mad and villainous Attempts that would be on Foot, and in the dreadful Judgments that would be pull'd down upon us. But, blessed be God, his Providence concerns itself in our wellfare; the Will of the Almighty countermands all the Designs and Machinations of the Children of *Belial*. The great Rector of the Universe governs all things with the nicest Wisdom, and therefore let us not affright our selves or others with black and melancholy Thoughts.

The grand source of *Fear* in us is *Defect* and *Weakness*, an inability to grapple with the Evil which we see approaching toward us. If a Man be *able* to repell the Evil which is contrary to the good which he desires and loves, he will not be afraid: he will no more stand in fear of it than a Lion doth of a Lamb, or a Giant of a weak Child. No Man fears him whom he knows he can over-match in Power, Wealth, Friends, or the like. If a Man be able either of himself, or through sufficient help from others to overcome the danger which is threatned him, he presently ceases to fear. Let us then remember that there is no power of any Man (be he never so Great and Terrible) but it may be resisted and overcome, though not by our own strength, yet by the Divine Assistance, and the Hand of God ingaging for us: what ground is there then of *Fear*? Is not our Protector, our Helper, our Defender able to shield us from our Enemies, and to secure us from their utmost Fury? To this purpose St. *Austin* saith very appositely, [Commanders have thought themselves safe when their Guards were about them, and fear'd nothing from such Mortals as themselves. Shall we then be afraid of Men when we are defended and guarded by the immortal God? Shall not the Protection of the Lord of Hosts be a greater Security to us than a Band of armed Men?] And let us not be affrighted because of the Multitude of our Enemies, but rather let that incourage us: for when they are many, God will more signally stand by us, to shew his Power in our Weakness. Nay, such is the courage of a Holy Man that he will not be utterly dismayed though he seeth no way of escaping the Evils that surround him: for though *he* doth not see any, yet he comforts himself with this that *God* doth, and that he is able to produce means where at present there are none. Hence it is that he takes Courage, *and boldly saith* at all times, *The Lord is my helper: I will not fear what Man shall do unto me*, Hebr. 13. 6.

5. *Trust* and *Rely on God*. The Consideration of Providence begets a *great Faith* under the greatest Calamities, and the most deplorable Circumstances we can fall into. For, we are to remember, that all Conditions are by God's Disposal: he governs and manages all things in Heaven and Earth to the best Ends and noblest Purposes. His actings and influences in the way of his Providence respect all States of Life. As he is the universal Governour of the World, he superintends over every thing, he over-rules every Event. Not only Nations and Kingdoms are under the Divine Conduct, but every individual Creature. Wherefore nothing can be more serviceable to create in us a firm *Trust* in the Almighty, and to establish and confirm this Truth. In all the changes and chances of this present Life, in all the Commotions and Combustions of the World, we have reason to make God our Refuge and Sanctuary, and, having sincerely and heartily repented of all our evil Ways, to incourage our selves in the Lord, and to rely on his Wisdom and Providence. To which end it is requisite to consult the Holy Scriptures, above all other Writings, because as *there* are the most signal Instances of Providence, so the most eminent Examples of such as *confided* and *trusted* in it.

6. The efficacy of the Doctrine is seen in this, that it engages us (not only to trust in God, but, as the natural Consequence of that) to possess our Souls in *Patience*, meekly and contentedly to resign our selves to the Government of the Almighty. There was a sort of *Hereticks* of old who got the name of *Theocatagnostæ*, because they found fault with what God did in the World. There are at this day too many every where of this Sect, such as Murmur and Repine at Heaven, and with the impatient *Israelites* cry out, *Can God prepare a Table in the Wilderness?* Is not Providence at a stand? Are we not forsaken of the Divine Help? Hath not God left the World? If this be not the Language of some Men, yet it is the inward Suggestion of their Hearts; which they cannot but know proceeds from a very vile and wretched frame of Spirit. They are very fine words of

of *Seneca*, * That is a great and brave Soul that gives itself up to God with all Submission: But on the contrary, that is a puny, base and degenerate Mind that expresses any resistance to the Divine Will, and hath an ill Opinion of the Management of the World, and hath more mind, to correct God's Behaviour than its own. Let us then give no harbour to this vile Disposition, or rather Disease of Murmuring and Discontent. Let us with humble silence entertain the dispensations and dealings of Providence, and let our behaviour be agreeable to our Condition.

* *Hic est magnus animus qui se Deo tradidit: contrà ille pusillus & degener, qui obluctatur, & de ordine mundi malè existimat, & emendare mavult deos quam se.* Epist. 108.

It was equal folly in *Democritus* to laugh, and in *Heraclitus* to weep, at the World's Vanity. It was ill done of *Crates* to throw his Goods into the Sea, and it was worse done of *Menippus* to hang himself for the loss of his. It was unphilosophical in *Tully* to express an immoderate fear of Death, and it was more unbecoming such a Philosopher as *Cato* to bring it upon himself with his own Hands. But of all the *Gentile Sages Socrates* was the most commendable in his Behaviour as to the things of the World, for it is said that he was always the same Man, and shewed a generous indifferency and unconcernedness in whatever circumstances he light into. Thus, and from a *Nobler Principle*, *we* should demean ourselves, *we* whose *Christianity* will help us to do it much *better* than he did: for this *throughly* informs us of the emptiness of all inferior Possessions, and it lets us know that these things have no power of themselves to afflict and vex us, but that we ourselves make them both Vanity and Vexation of Spirit. If *we* then be the cause of these, we ought to correct and discipline our selves, and to lay the fault at our own Doors. It is not fitting we should be Impatient and Discontented, seeing these things are but what we make them. They were all well enough till they came into our Hands, but then we rendered them Vain, and ourselves miserable. Wherefore let us surcease our complaints for the Future, and let us not disturb and excruciate our Souls: let us not give these things power to rack and torment us, to vex and crucifie us, but let us patiently submit ourselves and all our concerns to the disposal of the wise God. Nay, I will add, let us not only be Patient, but Rejoyce: for this is the Conclusion which the Royal Psalmist makes from the Consideration of God's being the King and Governour of the World, *The Lord reigneth; let the Earth Rejoyce*, Psal. 97. 1. And this he had done before, 1 *Chron.* 16. 31. *Let the Heavens be glad, and let the Earth rejoyce: and let Men say among the Nations, The Lord Reigneth.* That God is the great Master of the World, is a comfortable Theam. When we dwell upon this, we cannot but be Calm aud Serene in our Thoughts, we cannot but be chearful and pleasant; for nothing can afford us more solace than this, that the All-wise and All-powerful Being that made the World, doth rule it.

Lastly, To speak all in few words, let this truth effectually influence on our *whole Lives* and *Practices*. Let us live daily in the sense of God's Providence: in the Morning let us say with the Psalmist, *I laid me down and slept: I awaked, for the Lord sustained me*, Psalm 3. 5. At night let us speak the same Holy Man's Language, *I will both lay me down in Peace, and sleep, for thou, Lord, only makest me dwell in safety*, Psal. 4. 8. Yea, every Hour, (as well as Morning and Evening) administers matter for our Contemplation of God's providential Care over us. We can never be idle: there is constant Employment for us: we have the whole Volume of the World, the great Book of the Creatures before us: let us read and peruse it, and study it with great Diligence and Application. Wise Men are styled *Masters of Collections* (for so we may render the † *Hebrew* words in *Eccl.* 12. 11.) they gather here and there; from several, yea from all occurrences they make Observations: they compare things together, and view them in their mutual Relations and Aspects, as well as take notice of them in their absolute Consideration: and they are always attentively hearkning to the voice of *Providence* in whatsoever is done or happens in the World. A good Man, a Religious sanctified Person sees God in all things, in all events, in all Transactions. This is a practical Acknowledgment of Providence, as before I spake of an Oral one.

† Baali asupposth.

But especially we ought to take care to make this Doctrine serviceable for the restraining us from the Commission of Sin, and for the promoting of all Vertue and Holiness in our Lives. For it is certain that nothing can be more effectual toward

ward the reforming of our Lives than a firm belief and deep sense of this great Truth. If the opinion of some Philosophers be true, saith * *Tully*, that the Gods take no care of humane Affairs, what Piety, what Religion, what Sanctity can there be in the World? As truly we may say on the contrary, If that Opinion be false (as most certainly it is) and if Men were throughly perswaded concerning the Providence of God, how would Religion and Piety and all Vertue and Holiness flourish in the World? How forward would Men be to serve God and discharge their Duty? For there cannot be a greater Excitement to these than the sense of *this* upon their Minds and Consciences. This will check and deterr them when at any time they are about to take liberty to sin in Secret, or to enterprize any thing openly that is unworthy of their Profession. And nothing can baffle the Devil's Temptations in an evil and degenerate World more than this. This will encourage us to keep our place and station, and not to go out of our way, but to persist stedfastly in our Duty, and to be valiant for the Truth, and vigorously to oppose Vice, and to walk sincerely, and to strive to please God in all things: for he presides over the World, and consults our Good, and we are under his Guidance and Direction, and therefore we are safe. Our business is to do all things faithfully and chearfully in obedience to God, and to beg his blessing on our Endeavours, and then to let him alone to order and dispose of the Events of things as he thinks most fit. We are to look to our own Work, and to leave it to his Wisdom to govern the World and all the Concerns of it: and finally, we are to satisfie ourselves, as to this, that Innocence and a holy Life will bring a Man peace in the End: and it is not long to that End.

* De Nat. Deor.

ARTI-

ARTICLE II.

And in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.

A Discourse on JOHN I. 14.

The only begotten of the Father.

WHEREIN

The *Divinity of Christ* is Treated of: And on Occasion of that, the Catholick Doctrine of the *Sacred Trinity* is fully Explain'd, Asserted, and Proved: With a Particular Answer to the Arguments and Objections brought by the *Arians*, *Socinians*, and late *Unitarians*.

AS the First Article in the Creed contains and expresses our Belief concerning the First Person in the Sacred Trinity, *God the Father*, (not excluding the two other Persons;) so the Second Article, and the five next that follow particularly, contain what we believe concerning the Second Person in the same Holy Trinity, *viz. Jesus Christ our Lord*, who is here call'd *the only Begotten Son of God*. This is spoken with reference to those Words in the First Article, *God the Father*, who is signally stiled so in respect of his *Son Jesus Christ*, who was begotten of his own Nature and Substance by an unconceivable Generation, and that from Eternity. And therefore here I shall take occasion to Discourse concerning the Blessed *Trinity*: For you see that the Profession of our Faith in God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost is not placed and mention'd *together* in any one single Article of the Creed, but is inserted according to the three distinct Parts of it, into three different Articles. There is mention of *God the Father* in the First, *God the Son* in the Second, and *God the Holy Ghost* in the Eighth, in these Words, *I believe in the Holy Ghost*. And so these *Three Divine Persons*, as such, might be discours'd of as they occur in the different places where they are expresly mention'd, which is the way that is usually taken by those that Treat on the Articles of the Creed.

But I chuse rather to treat of them *altogether*, as they are known by the Name of the *Holy Trinity*, because these Three Divine Subsistences have reference to one another, and are united in One Essence, and therefore it is convenient to Discourse of them *joyntly*, and to place them together under the same Head of Divinity. And, besides, by this means our Thoughts and Conceptions concerning this grand Mystery of our Religion will be the more entire, when we shall see it demonstrated how these Three distinct Personalities in the Holy Trinity are United in One common Essence. For these Reasons I conceive it is most proper and fitting to Treat of this sublime Subject under this Article, and so to handle it all at once, and not to divide it into Parts.

Nor indeed could I insist upon this Doctrine till I had finished the Divine *Attributes*, because they do *principally* respect *God* as *Essentially* taken: But the *Trinity* is a more restrained Term, and therefore should come after the general ones. In this place then it is seasonable and proper to fix my Discourse of the *Trinity*. And this Doctrine is the more seasonable at this time, because there is risen up a Race of perverse Men, who make it their Business to oppose it. Wherefore it will be requisite to be Establish'd in this Fundamental Principle of Christian Theology. That we may form a right Notion of the True God, we must set him before us as He is a most Blessed Essence consisting of Three Persons. This is a Truth to be heartily embraced by us, That although God is *One*, (and but *One*, as we expresly read in *Deut.* 4. 35. *The Lord is God, and there is no other but he.* 1 Cor. 8. 4. *There is*

no other God but one, i. e. One as to his Divine Nature and Essence. And this necessarily follows from his Immensity and Perfection; for there can be but One Infinite and most Perfect Being. If we could suppose more, then we must also suppose that some of them have that Infinity and Perfection which the rest have not, and so we grant a most Perfect Being destitute of some Perfection, which is an intolerable Absurdity and Contradiction. Though, I say, God is but One, yet this is an impregnable Truth, that this Unity of the Divine Essence doth not destroy the Trinity of Persons. In the Deity, which is but One, there are Three distinct Subsistences.

This is the Christian Doctrine, and herein the Professors of *Christianity* are distinguish'd from all Worshipers in the World. This one thing is peculiar to those who own the Gospel: They hold and believe that there is a Plurality of Persons in the Divine Nature. None acknowledge and profess this sublime Verity but Christians. The *Modern Jews* for the most part, notwithstanding some clear hints in the Old Testament (as we shall see afterwards) and the *Pagans* (though *some* of them had a Notion to the contrary, as I shall prove) and all *Mahometans* generally deny a Trinity. So that this is the *Shibboleth* of the Christian Church, it is the distinguishing Character of Christ's Disciples and Followers. They are known by this not to be *Jews*, *Heathens*, or *Turks*. They only, of all the Persons in the World, Worship the Unity in Trinity, and Trinity and Unity. *They*, I say, *i. e.* those who are of the *Orthodox* Profession of Christianity; for otherwise 'tis certain that there have been several counterfeit Professors of the Christian Religion who have swerved from the Catholick Faith concerning the Trinity, of whom I shall give some Account before I put a Period to what I have to say concerning this Matter. We that are Orthodox Christians do firmly and unanimously assert that, as there is but One True God, so in him, or in his Essence there is a Plurality of Persons, and these Persons are Three, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

Here I will undertake these four things, 1. To explain the true Nature of the Trinity. 2. To confirm it by what the *Old Testament* speaks of it, and likewise by what the *New Testament* more plainly asserts concerning it. 3. To shew what Confirmation it hath from *Humane Authority*. 4. To let you see that it may be illustrated even by *Reason*.

I. I am to shew what is the *Nature* of this Great Mystery. And that consists in these two things, 1. There are different Persons in the Godhead. 2. These different Persons are one and the same God. First, It is evident that there is a *Difference* and *Distinction of Persons* in the Divine Nature. Each of them hath a different and distinct Relation to one another. It is the peculiar and incommunicable Property of the First Person, the *Father*, that he communicated his Divine Essence to the *Son* and *Holy Ghost*. *As the Father hath Life in himself, so hath he given to the Son* (and consequently to the Holy Ghost) *to have Life in himself*, John 5. 26. The First Person communicates his Essence to the other Two; and the Divine Essence being derived to them, they by Vertue of that Derivation are Divine Substances, for that Communication of the Divine Nature makes them such, and they are all Three *equally God*. More particularly the First Person in the Trinity is call'd the *Father*, on the account of his Relation to the Second Person in the Trinity, and the Essence which he from Eternity communicated to him by Generation. For the Fathers communicating of his Divine Essence to the Word, was that which is call'd *Generation*. By this he *begot* his Son from all Eternity. And hence he is call'd the *Father of Jesus Christ*, *Rom.* 15. 6. 2 *Cor.* 1. 3. *Eph.* 1. 3. *Col.* 1. 3. And in several other places.

And as it is peculiar to this Divine Person to *beget*, so it is the distinct and incommunicable Property of the Second Person to *be begotten*, i. e. to be the *Eternal Son* of God the Father. It is true, this Title, *the Son of God*, is given to others besides him. Thus *Adam* is call'd *the Son of God*, Luke 3. 38. because he had no other Father but God; whereas those mention'd in that Chapter, and all other Men have. For the same Reason *Angels* have this Appellation, *Job* 1. 6.—38. 7. And those that are in Authority are honour'd with this Epithet, *All of you are Children of the most High*, Psal. 82. 6. And other Persons of great Excellency and Eminency had this Title, because they in some measure resemble God: Whence we hear that Language of the *Centurion*, *Truly this was the Son of God*, Matth. 27. 54.

27. 54. So all that are Holy and Regenerate are call'd the *Sons*, or *Children of God*, *John* 1. 12. *Rom.* 8. 14, 19. 1 *John* 3. 1, 2. because they are like him. But we never read that any besides Christ is call'd *God's own Son*, and his *only begotten Son*, the express Testimonies for which I will produce forthwith. There is a vast difference between these and those we read before: And therefore where Christ is said to be the *Son of God*, we must understand it in a higher Sense than any before mentioned; namely, in respect of his Eternal Generation.

Again, it is to be granted that Christ himself, the Second Person in the Trinity, whom we are now speaking of, hath some times this Denomination of *the Son of God*, for other Reasons besides his Eternal Generation. Thus 'tis said, *He shall be call'd the Son of God*, Luke 1. 35. Because (as it there follows) *the Power of God, the Holy Ghost, overshadowed the Virgin his Mother.* Because of his wonderful Conception and Birth, in a Divine and extraordinary manner, the Angel gives him this Title. A farther Reason of it is because he was *Sanctified by the Father, and sent by him into the World*, John 10. 35, 36. to be Mediator, Head, and Ruler of his Church, which may justly give him the Denomination of *the Son of God.* Moreover, his Filiation is grounded on his Resurrection, because God rais'd him from the Dead, and was the Author of a new Life to him, and so was his *Father*; he is said to be *begotten* by him, *Psal.* 2. 7. *Acts* 13. 32, 33. *Heb.* 1. 5.

But besides these, there is a more particular and special Reason, why the Second Person in the Trinity hath this Appellation of *the Son of God*, viz. because of his receiving his Divine Nature by *Generation* from the *Father.* This is the great Mystery which the Holy Scriptures of the New Testament in plain Terms acquaint us with. He is there expresly call'd, not only the *Son* of God, but his *own Son*, i. e. of his own Essence and Nature, *Rom.* 8. 32. *And the only begotten of the Father*, John 1. 14. And again, *v.* 18. *His only begotten Son.* And so in *Chap.* 3. 16, 18. *Heb.* 11. 17. 1 *John* 4. 9. Because there never was any other naturally begotten of the Father. The Divine Nature was communicated by way of Generation to him alone. He is by this singular and peculiar Generation the Son of God. And therefore here in this Second Article of the Creed he is call'd God the Father's *only Son*, because there is no other that was so Generated, or could possibly be. He was so the Son of God, that he was begotten of the Essence of his Father from Eternity. When therefore the *Socinians* tell us that Christ is call'd *the Son of God* because of his Birth, Resurrection, and because of his being Sanctified and sent by God in an immediate manner; the Answer is obvious, *viz.* That though this be applied to his Nativity and Rising again, and the like, yet this doth not exclude his *Eternal Filiation*; yea, this was manifested and proved by those, for *he was declared to be the Son of God with Power, by the Resurrection from the Dead*, Rom. 1. 4. Unless he *had been* the Son of God *before*, he could not be *declared* to be so *then.* Therefore his Sonship was Eternal, he being from Eternity Generated of the Essence of the Father. And consequently it was groundlesly said of * *Episcopius*, That *it is not necessary to believe the Filiation of Christ*, i. e. *that he is the Son of God by Generation by the Father, because there are other ways of Filiation.* We must believe them *all*, *and this more especially*, that God the Father begot a Son of his own Nature and Substance, equal to himself.

* De Trinitate.

And concerning this Substance, we are to conceive that, though, as it is communicated by the Father, and from the Father, it may be said to be derivative, and thence according to the *Nicene Creed*, the Son is said to be *God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God*, yet it is certain that this Derivation, or Communication of the Divine Substance or Essence doth not hinder or destroy the *Self-origination* of it. And the reason of this is because the Essence of the Father being Self-existent, that of the Son's must be so too, seeing the Essence of the Father, and of the Son is the *same.* On which account the Son (as well as the Father) is αὐτόθεος, and was expresly call'd so by *Athanasius* of old, as well as by *Calvin*, and *Beza*, and others of modern date. He is God of himself, though he be begotten of the Father; which ought not to seem strange to those who are acquainted with our Saviour's own Words before recited, *As the Father hath Life in himself, so hath he given to the Son to have Life in himself*, John 5. 26. The Divine Nature and Life are *given*, and yet he hath them *in himself.* Thus you see how these Two Divine Persons, the *Father* and the *Son*, are distinguish'd from one another by their pro-

per and peculiar Relation towards one another, to wit, the Paternity of the First Person, the Filiation of the Second.

The incommunicable Property of the next Person, *viz.* the *Holy Ghost*, is his *Emanation* or *Proceeding* from the Father and the Son: For if the Second Person in the glorious Trinity was derived from the First, as hath been shew'd, then it is not to be questioned, that the Third Person was from both. He, as well as the Second Person hath his Essence (but Eternally) from the First; I say, *Eternally*, and therefore, what I assert ought not to seem strange, for there never being any Moment when they were not in Being, and they being Infinite as well as the Father, this Derivation is no Disparagement to them, as it is to created Things, and such as had a Beginning. But particularly as to the *Holy Ghost*, as he proceeds from the First Person in the Trinity, so by Analogy of the Christian Faith, we are taught that his *Procession* (or *Spiration*, as some of the Ancients used to stile it,) is also from the Second Person, because his Subsistence is communicated by them both. This seems not to have been believ'd by some of the † *Greek Fathers*, or at least not as a necessary Article of Faith. When some of them speak of the *Procession* of the Spirit from the Son, they mean only their Con-substantiality: And at other Times they understand by it, not an Eternal, but a Temporal *Procession*, which is the same with the Spirit's *Mission*. In the *Nicene* Council and Creed, there was nothing at all of the Former: And afterwards, when to that Creed there was Addition made concerning the Holy Ghost by the Fathers of the *Constantinopolitan* Council, upon the rising of *Macedonius*, this only was added, τὸ ἐκ τοῦ Πατρὸς ἐκπορευόμενον.

† *Athanasius, Basil, Greg. Nazianzen, Cyril, Theodoret, Theophylact.*

But it is certain that the *Latin Fathers* expresly held and taught the Spirit's Procession from the Son also, and grounded it on his being called *the Spirit of the Son*, Rom. 8. 9. and on his being *sent by him*, for the *Mission* depends upon the Right of Procession. And it may be said even concerning the *Greek* Fathers, or some Part of them at least, that though they did not expresly assert the Procession of the Spirit from the Son, yet they acknowledged the Sense of it, *viz.* That the Spirit is of, or from the Son, as he is of, or from the Father, and that he received his Essence from both. Thus both the Eastern and Western Churches differ'd only in the manner of wording this Mystery, but agreed in the Thing itself. But it is true, that afterwards the *Greek* Church expresly denied the Procession from the Son; and Disputations were frequent in the *Roman* one, till at length they put it into the *Athanasian* or *Constantinopolitan* Creed.

But at what Time the *Latins* did this, is hard to tell. * Some say, this Addition of the *Filioque*, was made by Pope *Nicholas* I. *Vossius* saith, it was about the Time of *Charles* the Great: Others think it was about the Time of Pope *Sergius* III, which was above a Hundred Years afterwards. But this we are sure of, that the Addition occasion'd the *Schism* between the Eastern and Western Churches. The Former professedly and openly fell off from the Latter in *Leo* the IXth's Time, *A. D.* 1051. Then it was that *Michael* the Patriarch of *Constantinople* pronounced all the *Latin* Churches excommunicate, for adding the *Filioque* to the Creed. And though in the Council of *Florence*, which was held, *A. D.* 1431. there was an Union, *i. e.* the *Latins* and *Greeks* united in the Assertion of the Procession of the Holy Ghost from the Son, yet it was dissembled and forced, and was not free or general, the *Greeks* being drawn to consent by the Hopes of Assistance from the Pope, against the Incursions of the *Turks* and *Saracens* into their Territories. At this Day, it is well known, the *Greek* Church holds the Procession of the Holy Ghost from the Father only.

* *Pytheus, Petavius, Stillingfleet.*

I shall not now dispute whether his Proceeding from the Son, as well as from the Father, be absolutely necessary to be believed as an indispensible Article of Faith, and whether the Disbelief and Denial of it be an Heresy: But this I conceive is to be said, That it is a Conclusion which is drawn from the Doctrine of the Trinity, and it is consonant to what the Evangelical Writings suggest to us: For we not only read, that *the Spirit proceedeth from the Father*, *John* 15. 16. but (as hath been observ'd before) that he is called *the Spirit of Christ*, the Second Person in the Trinity, to acquaint us that his Procession is from both: And the Ancient Writers of the Church interpreted these Passages thus. Thus we see the *different Relations* of the Persons in the Trinity to one another, and we cannot but discern the real Distinction between them. And consequently we ought to have distinct

distinct Apprehensions concerning them: Though I find this is opposed by a learned Writer of our own, who tells us, that *Generation and Procession are Words concerning which we can form no distinct Conception.* And afterwards he saith, concerning the manner of the Emanation of the Spirit from the Father, *We must acknowledge, that we have no distinct Thought concerning it.* If he had said, we cannot comprehend it, he had spoken rightly: But to say, that we have no distinct Conception or Thought of it, is contrary to what hath been before made good; namely, that the Divine Essence or Nature hath peculiar and Distinct Properties, and thence hath different Names. This is the Sense of the *Greek Fathers*, when they say, that the *Persons* are τὶ πρός τι, a *Relative* or *Mutual Habitude.* So St. *Augustine* expresses it by ‖ *ad aliquod*, or *quid relativum*; that is, the *Persons* are *Relative Properties.* Some speak thus, The Godhead is the *Father* as it hath Relation to the *Son*: It is the *Son*, as it hath reference to the *Father*: And it is the *Holy Ghost*, as it refers to the *Father* and the *Son.* Or take it thus, the Divinity as it begetteth its like by an ineffable Way of Generation, is called *God the Father.* As the Godhead hath the Property of being begotten, and subsisteth in that particular Manner, it it called the *Second Person*, or *the Son.* And the *Holy Ghost* or Third Person, is the Divine Essence as it is endued with the Property of Proceeding. The Father is from himself: The Son is in a peculiar Way of Subsistence from the Father; and the Holy Ghost both from the Father and the Son, and that in a particular manner proper to himself alone.

*Bishop of Sarum's Exposition of the 39 Artic. p. 69.

‖ De Trin. l. 5. c. 5.

This is the Notion of *Personality* according to some; it consists in such Properties as are incommunicable to any other. A *Person* is one who hath something peculiar and proper to him, which cannot be in any other. Which is applied thus, the Father *begets*, the Son is *begotten*, the Holy Ghost *proceeds.* These are incommunicable Properties, and therefore constitute Three distinct *Persons.* Or, it amounts to the same if we say, that there are these Personal Properties which make the Distinction of the Trinity, the Paternity of the First, the Filiation of the Second, and the Procession of the Third. Thus you see how the *Diversity of Properties* produceth the Sacred Trinity; it constitutes those Three Persons so often mentioned. This by the *Greek* Fathers is called τρόπος τῆς ὑπάρξεως, *the Manner of existing.*

But are *Properties* and *Relations* the only Things that make the Distinction between the *Persons* in the Godhead? Are the Three *Persons* in the Trinity, as they are *Persons*, no more than Three Properties or Relations, or, as others stile them, *Modes?* The answering of this Question, is of absolute Necessity for the right understanding of the Nature of the Trinity. If we will acquiesce in the Determination of the *School-men*, (*i. e.* the generality of them) the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, are Three *Modes* or *Relations.* And other Writers follow them of late, since the reviving of the Controversy of the Trinity: They place the Trinity in so many *Respects* or *Modes*; *Three Modes in the One God, like Three Postures in One Man.* So Dr. *Wallis* and Dr. *South.* The Persons in the Trinity are Three Abstract Considerations of the same Thing, as some fansie; they are nothing else than the Divine Essence consider'd Three manner of Ways.

But a *meer Relation* is but a *Denomination*, and this was that, which *Sabellius* held and was condemned by the Church for, *viz.* That the Three Persons were only Three Denominations of the same Essence. Wherefore I conceive that those who assert this, and those others before mention'd who hold that the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are meer *Properties* or *Attributes*, come very short of the Christian Belief: For though there are peculiar *Relations* and *Properties* belonging to them, as I have before shew'd, yet the Persons themselves are not Relations or Properties, and therefore it is very unfit to explain the Doctrine of the Trinity by these *only.* It is certain, that *Relative Properties* can't make a *Person*, and therefore, if you don't take in *Essence*, *Being*, or *Substance*, into the Notion and Definition of a *Person*, you make the Persons in the Trinity to be a meer Logical Notion, a bare Abstract Act of the Mind devoid of all Reality: Which is unworthy of the Trinity, and therefore no wise or good Man will assert it. Again, if *Person* signify only a *Property*, then there are Three *Qualities* only in the *Trinity*: Which is a very mean Thought of the Trinity. We must be forc'd then to say, that the Divine Persons are not bare *Properties*, nor meer *Modes* of Being or Existing, for a *Mode* did not make the World, and a *Mode* was not Incarnate:

But

But they are Things or Persons with the Modes of being and existing; and they are not only Modally but Really distinguish'd.

A *Person* is not a Mode or Propriety, but a certain particular *Individuum* subsisting, though a Person be not without a Property. Wherefore we must avoid such Language as this, which some of great Note seem to be pleas'd with, namely, That the Son and Holy Ghost are but meer Attributes or Properties of the Divine Nature; especially seeing our very Reason will inform us (without any farther Assistance) that incommunicable Properties cannot have those Things said of them, which we can truly say of the Second Person; nor can peculiar Divine Attributes be said to do what is ascrib'd to the Holy Ghost.

But to make this more evident, I will be more particular and positive in the Account which I give of this Matter. To constitute a *real Personality* in the Trinity, 1. There must be Personal Action. 2. Personal Subsistence. First, There must be *Personal Action* added to Modes and Properties. As for Example, The communicating of the Divine Essence to the Son by the Father, is that *Eternal Generation* of the Son which is asserted; and therefore there must be that Eternal *Act* of deriving the Divine Nature to the Son: And this *Act*, and the other distinct and peculiar *Acts* belonging to the other Two Persons in the Trinity, shew them to be different Persons, and really distinguish'd from one another: For the Father can't be the Son whom he begets, nor the Son that Father that begat him, nor the Holy Ghost either the Father or the Son, from whom he proceeds. Consequently they must be distinct Things or Beings, and real and proper Persons; for he that begets, and he that is begotten, and he that proceedeth from both can't be the same Persons and Beings. But this peculiar manner of Production differences those two latter from the Father, tho' both of them are from him by a Derivation of his Divine Essence to them: But this Communicating of the Divine Nature to them is in a different way, which is the Ground of our asserting the Two Persons of the Son and the Holy Ghost. And as they are distinguish'd according to their particular *Inward Acts* and *Operations* toward one another, so they are distinct as to those Acts which are *External*, John 8. 18. *The Father that sent me, beareth witness of me*, saith our Saviour: Now it is not to be denied that He that beareth witness, and he of whom the witness is born, are different Persons. *The Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the World*; so it is said, 1 *John* 4. 14. But it must be granted, that He that sends, and He that is sent are different Persons. And so of the Holy Ghost, Christ saith, *I will send him to you from the Father*, John 15. 26. He that is sent by Christ, and from the Father, is really distinct from the Son and the Father. Thus the peculiar Personality is evidenc'd from these *different Acts*.

And besides, there are *other Acts* and *Operations* which respect the Make and Government of the World, and the Welfare of Mankind. The Father's chief Work was the Creation of all things at first, and ever since the Just, Wise, and Merciful Disposing of them. The Son's principal Employment was the glorious Undertaking of our Redemption, and the Compleating of it is still his Care and Business. The Holy Ghost's particular Province is the Enlightning and Sanctifying of those whom the Son Redeemeth. These distinct Offices of the Persons of the Sacred Trinity are expresly specified in the Holy Scriptures, and none but those that are great Strangers to this Divine Volume, can be ignorant of it: Therefore I will not enlarge here, especially, because I intend in the Close of this Discourse to resume this Subject, and to give a full Account of it. The Sum of what hath already been said under this Head is this, That (as there are *Actions* in common to the Three Persons, which shew that they are but *One God*) so there are others that are proper and peculiar to them, which shew that they are *Three distinct Persons*, for if they act severally and distinctly, and the Actions of one are not the Actions of another, then it is clear that they are Three distinct Persons: For distinct Personal Actions argue distinct Subjects or Persons acting.

Secondly, Besides *Relation* and *Action*, there must be *Subsistence* to Constitute a *Person*. The Language of the *Fathers* is to be Reverenc'd, and so far as it is agreeable to the Holy Scriptures it is to be followed; but this ought not to tye us down precisely to their Words, so as we should make use of no others. This is not the meaning of the *Injunctions* set forth some time since by *Authority*. It is well known to those that have perus'd the Fathers Writings, that the *Greek* and *Latin* Fathers

Fathers speak not alike as to the Trinity. And some of the *Greek* Fathers express themselves differently from others; and so amongst the *Latin* ones the same may be observ'd. For the Fathers being assaulted by divers sorts of Hereticks, who in a different and contrary way endeavour'd to run down the Trinity, they were by that Means under some Distraction of Thoughts and Expressions, and spake not so consistently as otherwise they would. Whilst they endeavour'd to attack their different Adversaries, they seem'd sometimes to favour one Side most; for indeed it was very difficult to confute contrary Enemies, without enclining to one Part.

It could not be, but that whilst they were attending to *one*, as suppose the *Arians*, they should not be so careful of obviating the *others*, namely, the *Sabellians*. For this was the Case (as the *R. R.* Bishop of *Worcester* observes in his *Vindication of the Trinity*, Chap. 7.) The Writers of the Church were to oppose and confute the *Arians* on one Side, who held that there were Three different Substances or Individuals, as Three Men are; and the *Sabellians* on the other Side, who held that there was but One Person in the Godhead, and that the Son and Holy Ghost were only different Denominations of the same Godhead. In Opposition to these, it may be observ'd, that they speak sometimes as if they contradicted themselves. Why? because they had such different Parts to act: They were to shew themselves Enemies to *Sabellianism* as well as *Arianism*. But this is certain, that as to *the Main*, the generality of the ancient Writers of the Church agree: All the Christian Churches speak the same Language, *i. e.* that each of the Divine Persons have an absolute *Subsistence* distinctly belonging to them. Or, as the *Greek* Church express'd it, there are Three *Hypostases* in the Godhead: For οὐσία was generally by them applied to the Divine Nature, or the whole Trinity, and ὑπόστασις to the Three distinct Persons.

But this Distinction of Expressions is not always observ'd by them, for sometimes they confound those Two Words, and apply the ὑπόστασις to the *whole Trinity*, and οὐσία is sometimes attributed to the *Persons*. These were the ancientest Fathers generally; but those that follow'd them, agreed to make a Difference betwixt the Two Words. Most of the *Greek* Fathers did thus: They gave the Title of οὐσία to the whole Trinity, and that of *Hypostasis* to every one of the Persons of the Trinity; and we know that the *English* of this is *Substance* or *Subsistence*. But the *Latin* Church dislik'd this, and though they retain'd the *Latin* Word for οὐσία, that is *Essentia*; yet they express'd the Latter by *Persona*. Which caus'd a great Feud between the Eastern and Western Churches. The *Greeks* held to their οὐσία, and Three *Hypostases* in the Divinity; but the *Latins* stuck to One *Hypostasis* or οὐσία, but Three Persons. And to shew their dislike of *Sabellius*'s Doctrine, they represent the Three Persons, as Three distinct *Substances*: But to obviate the *Arians*, they defend the Unity of the Divine Substance or Essence, and hold but One *Hypostasis*. So it is, They sometimes used the Word *Substantia*, to signify the Divine Nature in general; and sometimes the Three Persons are called *Substances*: But most frequently *Persons*. But it is not according to the Phrase and Language of the *ancient Fathers* of the Church, to say positively and without any reserve, that *there are Three distinct Substances in the Trinity*. And therefore we are to be cautious in this Case, and to abstain from such new Expressions, which any Ways may prove offensive or dangerous.

But I would willingly act the *Reconciler* and *Moderator*, after the warm and tedious Disputes in this Cause. And I know not how to express the Matter, in Order to that, but in such Language as this, which I think will be acceptable to all sober and impartial Persons. They may be said *not to be Three Substances*, and yet in a *qualify'd* Sense they may be said *to be*: As in some Respect they are not *Three Persons*, and yet *they are*. This I conceive will be the best Way of explaining this Doctrine, and letting us into the true Meaning of it, and it will be the only Way to allay the fierce Contrasts about it on both Sides. This then I offer, that the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are not Three Substances, as *Three Men* are said to be so: Which was the profess'd Error of the *Arians*, who held the Three Persons to be Three distinct Substances, in the same Manner that *Three Men*, or any other *Three Animals* are Three different Substances. But this cannot be, for this Reason; because they are joyned and united, nay indeed, become One in a *common Essence* or Nature. On which Account we reject the Doctrine of those Men, who

who asserted the Three Persons to be *Three Substances* in this Sense, that they were not united in *one Essence*. The *Nicene* Council and Creed strike at this Error, when they declare that all the Three Persons are ὁμοούσιοι *Co-essential* or *Con-substantial*, and all the Orthodox Fathers subscribed to this, that the Three Persons are of One general Essence or Substance.

But then it is as true, that in a *qualified* Sense the Persons in the Trinity may be said to be *Three Substances*. My Reason for it is this, Because the common Essence or Substance of the Divinity appertains equally to each of the Persons, and is *one*'s as much as the *others*, and so on that Account is an Individual Substance. It is very evident, that though the Divine Essence or Substance is the same, as it belongs to all the Three Persons, yet it may be said, not to be the same as it is communicated from one to the rest, and resides in different Persons. Whence I gather, that as there is an *Identity of Substance* as it relates to the Divine Nature in general, so there is a *Difference of Substance*, as the Reference is to the *Persons*. I am not dogmatical in this, or any Thing of this Nature, but I only modestly propound it to the thoughtful and considerate. As a worthy Prelate hath attempted something of this Nature, so I have presumed to offer my Sentiments and Thoughts; and what I have mention'd, I hope may be a fair Way of accommodating the Differences about the Trinity. There is but one Substance in the Trinity, and yet *on some Consideration* and *Respect* there may be said to be Three. And so by this Means, we reconcile all the Disputes about the Trinity; The *Homoousians*, and the *Arians* are agreed: Yea, and we reconcile all the seemingly different and contradictory Passages in the Writings of the Fathers.

For if we will be impartial and indifferent in the present Case, we must acknowledge what I said before, that the Fathers, *Greek* and *Latin*, speak not alike sometimes about the Trinity; nay, either of them separately contradict themselves, as we are apt to imagine: For sometimes one Father asserts, That there is but one Essence or Substance in the Trinity, another Father saith, There are Three Substances. Nay, the same Father at one Time asserts the Unity of Substance or Con-substantiality, but at another Time speaks of Three *Hypostases*, or Substances, or Subsistences, (for these Names are all of them used) belonging to that One Substance, or Essence, or Nature. It were very easie to make this good from the Writings of the Fathers that have writ concerning the Trinity, as *Athanasius*, *Basil* the Great, *Cyril* of *Alexandria*, *Hilary*, *Ambrose*, *Augustine*, *Gregory Nazianzen*, *Origen*, *Tertullian*, *Cyprian*, *Justin Martyr*.

I know some have made a false Consequence from their asserting the *Unity and Indivisibility of the Divine Essence*, viz. that consequently they deny the Three Persons to be Three substantial Beings: And therefore, when those Writers abovemention'd speak any Thing that imports Three substantial Beings in the Godhead, those that are of another Perswasion, make it their Business to shew that those Writers say nothing at all that tends to this Latter. But by this Means they expose themselves to the Adversary, and at the same Time let the World know, that they either have not perused the Fathers with sufficient Diligence and Attention, or else they have a Mind to pervert their Sense. But if they would sincerely act, they might see their Mistake, which is this; they think, because those Writers hold the indivisible Unity of the Godhead, therefore they must not, and do not *in any Sense* assert the Plurality of Beings or Substances in the Godhead. Whereas, it is plain, that the Substance may be the *same*, and yet *distinct*. And this is the Thing I offer at present; namely, That the Divine Substance being consider'd in general is *One*, entirely *One*, but consider'd as being possessed by *Three Persons*, it may be said to be *Three Substances*: No otherwise are we to understand it. This I take to be the true Way of reconciling the Fathers, and of explaining the Doctrine of the Trinity as it is reveal'd to us in the Bible. This solves the seeming Contradictions in the ancient Writers of the Church, and I know no other Thing that can do it but this. For to say, as some very Learned Men have asserted, that those Writers hold not a Triplicity of Substances, or Subsistences in the Trinity, is too gross to be maintain'd by those that will adhere to the Fathers. It is true, they labour to bring them off, but in vain; for they distort their Words, and give Occasion to the Adversary to observe in them a false Way of Dealing.

For

For the farther explaining of what hath been offered, I think it will not be unseasonable to produce *Theodoret's* Words, which are these; * *According to the Doctrine of the Fathers, ὐσία Essence, differs from ὑπόστασις Subsistence, as Common differs from Proper, and Genus from Species or Individuum.* And then presently after, *As that Name [Man] is a common Name of the same Nature, so we have received* (*viz.* from the Fathers) *that the Divine ὐσία or Essence, signifies the Holy Trinity, and that ὑπόστασις, Subsistence, denotes some Person, as of the Father, or the Son, or the Holy Ghost.* And this is the Language of several of the Fathers. They compare the *Divine Essence* to *Genus*, and the *Persons* to *Species* and *Individuals*, to signify to us, that they have a Singular and Peculiar Subsistence, and are particular individual Substances. In the Trinity there is something Universal, and something Singular: The Divine Essence is the Former, the Persons are the Latter. As the *Species* and *Individuum* contain the *Genus or Generical Nature*, so here the *Persons* include in them the *Common and General Nature* or *Essence* of God, and have, besides that, something that is Proper and Peculiar to them. And this Essence or Substance may be said to be both *Common and Proper*; the Former, as it hath respect to the whole Trinity; the Latter, as it relates to the particular Persons.

* Κατὰ δὲ τῶν πατέρων διδασκαλίαν, ἣν ἔχει διαφορὰν τὸ κοινὸν ὑπὲρ τὸ ἴδιον, ἢ τὸ γένος ὑπὲρ τὸ εἶδος, ἢ τὸ ἄτομον, ταύτην ἡ ὐσία πρὸς τὴν ὑπόστασιν ἔχει. ——— ὥσπερ τὸ ἀνθρώπου ὄνομα κοινόν ἐστι τοῦ τῆς φύσεως ὄνομα, ἐπὶ τὴν θείαν ὐσίαν καὶ ἁγίαν τριάδα σημαίνειν εἰλήφαμεν. Theodoret. Dialog. 1. adv. Hæres.

But having mention'd the Word *Individuum*, I must add this, to prevent Mistakes, that we are not to imagine or assert that there are Three distinct Substances in the Trinity, as *Individuals* are distinct; *i. e.* such Individuals as are of a finite Nature. The Three Persons in the Trinity are not distinguished as Three finite limited Substances are, that are Creatures. The Three Persons can't be said to be Individuals, as among Men Three Men, or Three other Animals are said to be Individuals. We must not think of any such Thing, because this is to confound Infinite and finite Natures. And if the Three Persons be not such *Individuums* as created Beings are, it follows that they are not to be distinguish'd as such. Wherefore in *this Sense*, we must hold that each *Hypostasis* hath not an Individual Substance; but otherwise it may safely be said that the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are distinct Individuals. Some of the Expressions which the ancient Fathers of the Church use, let us know that they had this Apprehension of the Trinity.

Thus, I think it is evident, That the Fathers meant more by ὑποστάσεις than *Properties* or *Modes*. For tho' they held the *Persons* to be *Properties* and *Relations*, yet they held them to be something more; for *Hypostases* is certainly so. And this is what one of them gives as the true Account of the Matter, to wit, That *there is but one Divinity, but yet the Father hath an Hypostasis of his own, and the Son and Holy Spirit have so too*, Epiphan. 57. n. 22. And tho' sometimes, the Fathers define the Nature of the Personality by the different τρόπος ὑπάρξεως *manner of Existing*, yet this doth not interfere with the Former, because every one of the Divine Persons hath a *proper* and *peculiar* Manner of subsisting: So that the Persons are Three distinct and real *Subsistences*, which certainly are more than *Relations* or *Properties*.

This I further prove from the confessed Notion of *Person*, which is applied to the Three distinct Subsistences in the Trinity, and which is absolutely necessary to be cleared up, because otherwise we can't have a true Notion of the Trinity, and how it is to be understood that there are three Persons in it. By the Word *Person*, I mean a Being that hath Understanding, and that is a Distinct, Entire Substance of it self. This is the Sense, in which you find it used in 2 *Cor.* 1. 11. where πολλὰ πρόσωπα are many intelligent, individual, and distinct Substances or Persons. * *Boetius* rightly defin'd a *Person* to be the *individual Substance of a rational Nature*; for it belongs only to *Substances*, and those that are *rational* or *intelligent*, and those not Universals, but Individuals. You may join with this, the *R. R.* Bishop of *Worcester's* Definition of *Person*, † It is (saith he) *a compleat intelligent Substance with a peculiar Manner of Subsistence.* All are agreed in this, and most readily grant that is the proper and genuine Notion of a *Person*, that it is a Substance, and that it hath an intelligent Nature, and hath a peculiar Subsistence, and that it is not a *Property* or *Relation* only that makes a *Person*. *Substance* must concur to the Definition of it.

* De duabus naturis.

† *Vindication of the Trinity*, p. 261.

And this is according to the Sense of the Fathers, who join *Substance* and *Property* together to make a *Person*. This is the acknowledgment of one that had studied this Point very well, and had learned it from the Fathers both of the *Greek* and *Latin* Church; and he lays it down as a Proposition agreed upon by them, viz. * *That the Names of the Personal Properties, such are* Hypostasis, Persona, Subsistentia, *tho' they signifie not the Divine Essence or Substance, but only in an oblique Manner, yet they really and truly are the same with the Divine Substance.* And that excellent Prelate before-mention'd, who was extraordinarily conversant in the ancient Writings of all kinds, tells us, according to what he finds there, That † *there is a Common Nature which must be join'd with a peculiar Manner of Subsistence to make a Person, otherwise it would be a meer Mode:* And then adds, *We never conceive a Person without the Essence in conjunction with it.* As the common Essence alone doth not make a distinct *Person*; so the incommunicable Property or Relation differing from all others, doth not make it: But both these together do it. Whence it is evident, what is the true Nature of *Personality*, and how truly and justly it is to be applied in the present Case before us.

* Petav. Tom. 2. lib. 4. cap. 10.

† Vindication of the Doctrine of the Trinity, *Chap.* 6.

But here the Caution which I mention'd before, is absolutely necessary to be observ'd; when we say the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are distinct Persons, we must not think that there is such a Difference of Persons in the *Trinity*, as is among *Men*, i. e. that the Three Divine Persons differ as Three Men do: For Three Men are so distinct, that they can't be One. But the Three Divine Persons, however different and distinct from one another, are but One common Essence. Three humane Persons are Three Men, because though they have the same specifick Nature, yet they have not the same numerical Nature. But Three Persons in the Godhead are not Three Gods, because they have the same numerical Essence. Their having of this, hinders them from being Three Gods. Whence it is plain, That when we discourse of the Sacred Trinity, the Word *Person* must not be taken as 'tis among Men, where each Person hath a separate Essence belonging to him, and not at all belonging to another. But it is not so in the Trinity. They have all One general Essence that appertains in common to them all: And yet every One hath his own peculiar and distinct *Subsistence*, which (as I have shew'd) is more than a bare Relation or Property, and in that *limitted* and *qualify'd* Sense before explain'd, (and in no other) is a distinct Substance.

But *how* can this be? Indeed *there* is the Difficulty, and if it were not for *this*, we should have no Contest at all about the Doctrine of the Trinity. All that we are able to say is this, That our knowledge of this Matter hath Bounds and Limits, and therefore we can't expect to have a full and adequate Idea of it. We can only, with the deepest Humility, confess and admire the vast Difference between God and Man, between an Infinite Being, and those that are Finite. *How* one Substance in the Deity is communicated to more, and becomes theirs, is not for us to know; *How* of *One Essence* there can be *Three Persons* numerically different, is above our reach. But we are sure this is the Truth, for the Holy Scriptures, as well as the Holy Writers of the Church agree in this, and this is it which makes the Doctrine of the Trinity a *Mystery*. If the *Persons* be only Three Relations, or Three Modes, there is no Mystery in that. Therefore all that acknowledge it to be a *Mystery*, must hold more than this, or else they talk idly. Where lies the Difficulty and Mystery of the Trinity, if according to the *School-men* the Persons are only *Modes* or *Relations*? Or, according to the *Sabellians*, if they be only Different *Denominations*? It is plain, That One Divine Essence with various Properties, or various Titles and Names is no Mystery, no Difficulty. Three Divine Attributes, or Three Respects and Considerations in the same Divine Essence, exceed not our Comprehension.

But here we shall be call'd *Tritheites*; and what if we are so entitled by some? This should not affright us, for the same reproachful Language was used against the ancient Orthodox Fathers. All of them that held this Real-Distinction between the Persons in the Deity, were accused of *Tritheism* by their Adversaries, both *Jews* and *Pagans*, *Athanas. cont. Arian. Orat.* 4 & 5. These cried out against them that they held *Three Gods*. Let us not then be concern'd for this trite Objection, but assert the true Faith concerning the Holy Trinity; namely, That there is a Real (not meer Nominal or Notional) Trinity in the Divinity; That the Three Divine Persons that constitute the Godhead, are really distinguish'd from one another,

ther, and distinctly subsist such, and yet these Three are but One, which leads me to the next Head of my Discourse.

The Second Thing, which I undertook, under the first General Head, was to shew, That notwithstanding there are Three distinct Persons in the Trinity, who differ in that Manner from one another, which I have explain'd, yet they are but One Divine Essence and Substance. 'Tis positively said by our Saviour, *John* 10. 30. *I and my Father are One*, not only *One* in Will and Affection (as the *Arians* and *Socinians* interpret it) but one in Nature and Essence. Though the Persons in the Trinity are distinguished, yet they agree in this, that their Nature or Substance is indivisible, *i. e.* they are One and the same God. This may evidently be gather'd from what hath been already suggested; but now I will purposely and designedly handle this important Point, by giving a particular Account of the Grounds of it: Which will also mightily confirm and establish the Doctrine before discourse d of.

That the Three distinct Persons in the Deity are but *One God*, will appear, 1. From the peculiar and transcendent Nature of the Deity. 2. From the Manner of the Son and Holy Ghost's partaking of the Divine Nature.

First, I say, we may argue from the transcendent Nature and Dignity of the Divine Being: It is rational to think that the *Godhead* is not like other Beings even as to its Existence, and the Manner of it. Our natural Apprehensions concerning the Divinity, will incline us to believe, That *this* is after another Way than created Beings are: For these subsist singly, and have nothing more in their Nature; but the Fecundity and Exuberance of the *Divine Essence* are such, that *it cannot possibly exist alone*, but necessarily produces a Divine Issue. *It* hath such a Plenitude above all other Beings, that *it* cannot possibly be included in One Person, but displays *itself* in more. But whilst it doth thus, *it* can't multiply *itself*, because *it* is of a Nature that is Infinite: For what is Infinite, is wholly uncapable of being multiplied; nay, it is utterly impossible that there should be any more of that kind: For Infinite takes in *all Infinity*, and therefore if you could suppose Two, or Three, or more Infinites, you must also at the same Time suppose them not to be Infinite, which is such a Contradiction as no rational Man will admit of. When therefore we assert the Matchless Nature of God's Existence, and his Infinity, we cannot with any Colour or Pretence of Reason maintain, or so much as imagine the Contrary to this, That the Three Persons in the Godhead are but One God. The Contemplation of the unparallel'd Excellency and singular Perfection of the Deity, directly leads us to own these to be the same God, because the Divinity cannot produce any Thing from itself; *i. e.* from its Divine Essence, but what is such: And because it is of an immense and infinite Nature, it must needs be but One. Whence we infallibly gather, That the Plurality of Persons in the Godhead are but One God, One Divine Essence.

It is true, if we speak of finite and created Beings, a Plurality of Persons necessarily infers a Plurality of Essences. Thus (as was said before) Three Humane Persons are Three Men, and so Three Angelical Persons are Three Angels, because every one of those Persons hath an Essence proper to itself, and separate from any other. But it is not so in the supreme Being, whose Nature and Existence differ from what is in the Creatures. It is necessary in these Latter, that as many Persons as there are, so many distinct Essences there should be: But it is the Transcendent Property of the Divine Nature to reside in more Persons than one: And this proceeds from the *Infinite Perfection* of it, which no finite Being or Nature is capable of. This reconciles the Christian Theology; namely, that Three distinct *Persons* are united and identify'd in one and the same common *Nature*. This is the Ὁμοουσία, the same with Ταυτοουσία, which the ancient *Fathers* asserted, and whereby they distinguish'd themselves from Hereticks. The Three numerical Subsistences are join'd in one General Nature or Common Essence, and this constitutes *their Identity*, which is the Thing we now assert. And we found it upon the infinite and perfect Nature of the Divine Being, which surmounts and excells all others. This affords us sufficient Ground to conclude, That though the Eternal Spirit or Mind distributes itself to Three Persons, yet the Unity of that Infinite Mind or Spirit remains entire.

Secondly, I shall prove the Three Persons to be but One God, from the Consideration of the *Manner* how Two of these Persons partake of the One individual Divine Nature; namely, not by Division, but by Communication. This is a No-

tion that is very requisite for the right apprehending this great Mystery which we are at present treating of. Tho' the Divine Essence be imparted from the First Person in the Trinity to the other Two, yet we must not say, That the Essence is *divided*, for absolute *Unity* is of the Nature of it: Yea, it is one of the Essential Properties of the Divine Nature; and therefore it is not possible it should be divided. But with all the Orthodox Writers of the Church, and according to the repeated Language of the Fathers, we are to say, That the Divine Essence is *communicated*, and it is this *Communication*, which makes the *Trinity*. The Divine Nature imparts itself to Three Individuals, and yet there is no multiplying of the Nature or Essence. This is part of the Mystery of the Trinity. And if it be not divided or multiplied, then it is the same. Especially we must pronounce it to be such, because this Divine Nature or Essence is *wholly* and *entirely* communicated to the Son and Holy Ghost: So that the whole Divine Essence is in every One of the Persons wholly in the Father, wholly in the Son, and wholly in the Spirit. For God the Father from Eternity gave his Divine Nature or Essence to the Two Persons, and yet still continued to have it himself. When the Divine Nature was from Eternity imparted and communicated, it remain'd in the same Person, where it was from Eternity. I say, from Eternity; and on that Account the Divine Essence or Substance could not but continue undiminish'd, and perfectly the same that it ever was: And likewise the communication of the Essence was Eternal, and there was no Alteration made by it, because there was no Time when it was not. Now, if it be thus, if the Divine Essence remains undivided, and yet is communicated to Three divided Persons, then all the Persons, though they have their own proper Subsistence, are but the same Divine Essence. It must needs be so, because the Communication of the Divine Nature or Essence from the Father to the Son, and from both to the Holy Ghost, is without Division and Separation of the Divine Substance or Essence: And therefore, these Two Persons must have the same Divine Essence with the Father.

I can't see what can possibly with any Reason be objected against this. For seeing the Divine Nature or Essence is communicable, and yet is indivisible; if all the Persons partake of the Divine Nature, they cannot but be all the same, One God: Because their Essence is the same, and is impossible to be divided or multiplied. Here then we see *how* God may be said to be One, and not One, which was the Problem maintain'd by the * ancient Writers of the Church, and which they explain'd by the Unity of the Divine Essence, and the Plurality of the Persons. Whence they are wont to say, God is One, and yet Three; the Former, as to the One indivisible Nature; the Latter, as to the Trinity of the Subsistences or Persons. There are distinct *Hypostases*, and yet there is the same Essence; so that the Persons in the Trinity are the same and not the same; they are One, and they are Three, *i. e. in different Respects*, and so there is no Contradiction: but we may on good and solid Grounds, believe and assert a *Trinity of Persons* in an *Unity of Essence*. Which was the Thing I undertook; and it *was requisite* to be thus Large, That I might clear this difficult Point, *so far* as it is capable of being clear'd and made intelligible. For when we have said all that we can, and have sufficiently proved, that in One and the same Divine Nature, there are Three distinct Persons or Subsistences, yet we must acknowledge, That the more particular Way how Three Persons can reside in the Godhead, and yet the Godhead remain One and Undivided, is above our clear *Knowledge and Apprehension*.

* Ἓν δὴ, ἢ οὐχ ἓν — ἓν τῇ οὐσίᾳ καὶ τρία τοῖς ὑποστάσεσι. Greg. Nyss. l. 1. cont. Eunom. Greg. Naz. Orat. 32, & 39.

II. Having fully dispatch'd the First Thing I undertook, which was to explain *The Nature of the Sacred Trinity*, I am in the next Place to confirm this from the infallible Writings of the Bible. For though what I have said already, is founded on Holy Writ, and upon that only (for thence we derive our Knowledge of this Mysterious Doctrine, and thence we learn to explain and unfold it;) yet I shall now proceed to let you see more distinctly, that the Scriptures both of the Old and New Testament assert and maintain the Truth and Reality of this Article of our Faith; namely, That there is a Trine Existence of the Deity, and that this Triple Manner of Subsisting, doth not hinder the Persons from being the same God. I begin First with the Old Testament, where we shall meet with many Texts that discover a Plurality of Persons in the Godhead. None denies that *God the Father* or Creator, is spoken of in Multitudes of Places in these Books.

Therefore

Therefore the present Task is to produce those which speak not only of God the Father, but of *God the Son* likewise, or of *God the Holy Ghost*, or of either of these Latter, or of both of them together. Some think the Unity of the Deity and the Plurality of Persons, is intimated in the Word *Elohim*, a Plural Noun, join'd with a Verb in the singular Number, *Gen.* 1. 1. Some Protestants (as *Zanchy* and *Junius*) as well as some of the *Roman* Church are of this Opinion. But for my Part, I don't see that there is any real Ground for it; yea, I see Reason to believe the contrary: For 1. *Elohim* itself can't denote the *Trinity*, because in the next Verse is mentioned *the Spirit of Elohim*, which is the Third Person in the Trinity. 2. *Elohim* with a Verb in the Plural is applied to God, *Gen.* 20. 13. *Gen.* 35. 7. 3. At other Times *Elohim* is applied to a single Person, *Ex.* 4. 16. 7. 4. 4. *The Enallage of Number* is common in the Scripture. 5. More particularly *Adonim* is put for *Adonai*, Gen. 24. 9. 39. 2. 40. 1. So *Baganalim* for *Baganal*, 1 King. 22. 17. And why not *Elohim* for *Eloah*? 6. The Learned *Mercer* and *Drusius*, two excellent *Hebricians*, resolve it into the Propriety of the *Hebrew* Tongue.

But notwithstanding this, it can't be denied, That the two first Verses of the Book of *Genesis*, discover to us Two of the Persons of the Trinity. *In the Beginning God* (*i. e.* God the Father, or God more generally and essentially taken for the entire Deity) *created the Heaven and the Earth.*——— *And the Spirit of God* (*i. e.* the Third Person) *moved on the Face of the Waters.* Some have thought that by Spirit here, is meant *Wind* or *Air*; but this is a groundless Fancy, for we must remember, That *Moses* is speaking here of the formless *Chaos*, before either Air or Wind were created. Now, the Air could not be *moved* before it was; and there could not be a Wind or Exhalation which is raised by *Heat*, before there was any Heat or Luminous Fire. Wherefore by *the Spirit of God*, we must necessarily understand the *Holy Spirit*, call'd so by Way of Eminence, the Third Person in the Glorious Trinity, frequently stil'd *the Spirit of the Lord* in the Old Testament. All the Three Persons were united in the Work of the *Creation*, which is the Subject of this Chapter. The First is often mention'd; the Second is implied, for the Apostle assures us, That *God by his Son made the Worlds*, *Heb.* 1. 2. And again, *All Things were created by him*, i. e. by Christ, *Col.* 1. 16. The Third is here particularly express'd *The Spirit of God moved upon the Face of the Waters*, by his Infinite Power he influenc'd upon the rude Terraqueous Mass, and as it were hatch'd it into Form and Fashion, and effectually set forward the Production of the World. Thus the very first Words of the Bible, compared with other Places of it, give us an Account of the Doctrine of the *Trinity*. There were the Three Persons of the Godhead acting in the Creation of the World. And accordingly you'll find that with Reference to this, our Church hath appointed the First Chapter of *Genesis*, to be the First Lesson in the Morning Service for *Trinity Sunday*.

Those Words of the Deity, [*Let* Us *make Man in* Our *Image*, *after* Our *Likeness*] Gen. 1. 26. imply that Plurality of Persons which I am speaking of. *Us* and *Our* do necessarily import this, That there are more than one single Person in the Godhead: And therefore * *Tertullian*, † *Athanasius*, ‖ *Cyril* of *Jerusalem*, ‡ *Chrysostom*, ** *Augustine*, and other great Men of the Church understood these Words of the Trinity. To imagine, as some do, That *Moses* here introduces God speaking in the Style of Princes and great Men, who are wont to speak in the *Plural Number*, is very idle and impertinent; for as there were no *Men*, and therefore no *Great Men* when this was spoken; so it is certain, that there was no such Style among that Rank of Persons for many Ages after *Moses*, yea, before our King *John*'s Time, the Kings of *England* used the *Singular Number*, which Custom is still to be seen in the close of Writs, *Teste meipso apud Westm.* The like may be observed of the Kings and Princes of other Countries and Nations, of the King of *Spain* at this Day: But especially in those ancient Times wherein *Moses* lived (which is more to our present Purpose) this Mode of Speaking and Writing was not thought of: But the greatest Men even in their Publick Instruments and Letters, spoke in the *First Person*. This Language therefore of *Moses*, is not to be thought to be in imitation of Kings and Potentates, but he represents God speaking as he is, that is, in a *Plurality of Persons*, which is essential to the Deity. And to give yet farther Strength to this, we might consider, That whenever God himself

* Adv. Prax. cap. 12.
† Dialog. 3. de Trinit.
‖ Catech. 10.
‡ Homil. 8. in Genes.
** De Civ. Dei, l. 16. c. 6.

self (as Essentially consider'd) speaks of himself in the Holy Scripture, he speaks in the *singular Number* : There are not above Five or Six Exceptions to the contrary in the whole Bible. Some others, among whom is *Philo, are so vain as to think that these Words, *Let us make Man*, &c. were spoken by God unto the Heavenly Host. It is their Conceit, That Angels were Co-operators in framing *Adam's* Body, and that to them God directed himself when he utter'd these Words. But this is without any Ground at all; yea, it is confuted by the following Words, *So God created Man*, which ascribe this Creating to God alone. Wherefore it is evident, That these Words express the *Consultation* (as it were) of the *Holy Trinity*, about the making and forming of Man.

*De Opificio Mundi.

Again, what is said Ironically in the Third Chapter of this Book, *v.* 22. *Behold, the Man is become as one of* Us, clearly intimates, that there are more than One in the Divine Essence. † *Helvicus* and some others are perswaded, that these Words, I *have got a Man the Lord*, Gen. 4. 1, (for so they read them) signify *Eve's* Foresight of the Divinity of Christ, who is called here *Jehovah*, or *the Lord*. But I lay no great Stress on this Place, because this Interpretation may be disputable.

† Desider. Matris Evæ.

But that seems to be an unquestionable Text for Proof of the *Holy Ghost*, Gen. 6. 3. *My Spirit shall not always strive with Man.* The Meaning is, those Antediluvian Sinners shall not always be permitted to resist the Holy Ghost. That Sacred *Dove*, like *Noah's*, after it hath been sent out once and again, (yea very often) will not return unto them any more. God the Father calls him *his Spirit*, because (as we have heard) it proceeded from Him, as well as from the Son.

Some of the Ancients have thought that the *whole Blessed Trinity*, is represented by the *Three Angels* appearing to *Abraham*, Gen. 18. and this they gather from the Circumstances of the Apparitions, and the Manner of the Expressions used in that Chapter, for these Three Men or Angels are united in one single Compellation, *my Lord*. But however, it is not to be questioned, That the *Second Person* in the Trinity was one of these, in Shape of an Angel, and is called *Lord*: And the Two other Divine Persons may be supposed to be eminently concern'd in this Apparition. Whence (as you may observe) in the Devotionals of our Church, the 18th Chapter of *Genesis* is appointed to be read for the First Lesson of the Evening Service on *Trinity Sunday*. So great a Mystery was thought to be couched in that Narrative.

That Text *Gen.* 19. 24. *The Lord rained Brimstone and Fire from the Lord out of Heaven*, is made use of by *Irenæus*, *Justin Martyr*, *Hilary*, *Epiphanius*, *Cyril*, *Augustine*, for the Doctrine of the Trinity.

I cannot but think that this Plurality of Subsistences in the Godhead, is intimated in *Jos.* 24. 19. for though in the very First Verse of *Genesis*, and in some Hundreds of other Places, God is call'd *Elohim*, in the Plural, yet here the Word is more signally and remarkably used, being joined with an Adjective of the Plural Number, *The Lord Jehovah is* * *the Holy Gods*, or (if you will render it exactly according to the Original) *the Lord Jehovah himself is the Holy Gods*. And accordingly in *Dan.* 8. 14. God's People are called, *the People of the Holy Ones*, for though our Translators render it *the Holy People*, yet as being sensible that this differs from the *Hebrew*, they translate it in the Margin, *the People of the* ‖ *Holy Ones*, the very same Epithet that is used by *Joshua*, and seems to express the Persons of the Trinity, who are by Way of Eminency and Transcendency *the Kedoshim, the Holy Ones.*

* Elohim Kedoshim.

‖ Kedoshim.

David speaks of the *Spirit of God* in a distinct Manner, as it is his proper Office to *sanctify* and *cleanse* Men's Hearts, *Ps.* 51. 10, 11, 12. And we may observe, That Prophesying, Visions, Revelations, and such like Gifts, are particularly attributed in the Old Testament to the *Spirit* : For though under this Dispensation it was not distinctly known in the Church, that all extraordinary Endowments were the Special Donation of the Third Person in the Trinity, yet such eminent Men as *David*, were no Strangers to it.

It is very material to consider that Christ, the Messias, *shall be called Immanuel*, i. e. God with us, *Isa.* 7. 14. which is a plain Attestation of the *Second Person's* Godhead. And so is that which we find in the same Evangelical Prophet, *Chap.* 9. *v.* 6. where among other of his Magnificent Titles, these Two are rehearsed, *The Mighty God, the Everlasting Father* ; *Everlasting* in Respect of his Eternal Existence, (as

(as he is characterized by the Prophet *Micah ch.* 5. *v.* 2. *his Goings forth have been from Old, from Everlasting*) *Father* in regard of his Love to Mankind as his dear Children.

He is call'd *Lord* (Jehovah), and *God*, *Isa.* 40. 3. for that this is spoken of Christ we learn from all the Evangelists, *Mat.* 3. 3. *Mark* 1. 3. *Luk.* 3. 4. *Joh.* 1. 23. And I might mention the 48th Chapter of this *Prophecy*, 16, 17, *v.* where you read of the *Lord God*, and *his Spirit*, and *the Redeemer*, who is also called *the Lord* or *Jehovah*, a Place which is urged against the *Jews* and *Arians* for the ever Blessed Trinity, by *Athanasius*, *Eusebius*, *Chrysostom*, *Austin*, and other ancient Fathers. There may be some Question, Whether *the Redeemer* be meant here of Christ (for it seems rather to be applied to God the Father, who is in the next Words, stiled *the Holy One of Israel*) but it cannot be denied, That the other Two Persons are here intended. The Prophet *Jeremiah* foretold concerning Christ, *That this is his Name whereby he shall be called, the Lord* (or *Jehovah*) *our Righteousness*, Jer. 23. 6. This is a certain Proof of the Second Person of the Trinity, and his Divinity, for it is the unanimous Confession of the *Jews*, That that Name *Jehovah* is never given to any but *God*.

Some Learned Men have attempted to prove, That *the Word of God*, and *the Word of the Lord*, so often mentioned in the Old Testament, is in some of those Places to be understood of St. *John's* ὁ λόγος, *the Word*, the Second Person in the Sacred Trinity: But this shall be particularly insisted upon, when I come to treat of the Third Article of the Creed, under that Text, *The Word was made Flesh*.

Likewise, it might be observed, That the Old Testament in many of its *Types* and *Representations*, points at this Divine Person: And the *Holy Prophets* and *Saints* had, upon Occasion, some Special (though obscure and imperfect) discoveries of him, according as that Oeconomy they were then under would permit. As for the Texts which I have produced, all of them, or most of them at least, do bear Witness to the Doctrine which I have been treating of; namely, That though there be but One God in Essence, yet there are Three Persons in the Godhead; or (which is the same Thing) God is One in Nature, and Three in that different Way of subsisting. From the Evidence of these Places, and some others some of the *Jewish Rabbies were not averse from acknowledging a Trinity of Persons in the Godhead. † *Eusebius* acquaints us, That the ancient *Jews* were generally perswaded of the Divinity of the Messias, and it was only in Opposition to the Christians, that others of them took up another Belief. It is evident from several Passages in ‖ *Philo*, That he held a Trinity in the Divine Essence. It is said in the *Book of the Creation* written by *R. Abraham*, That *the Spirit* (*i. e.* the Deity) *bringeth forth the Word and the Voice and these Three are one God*, This is quoted by *R. Aniel* in his Tractate concerning *Sanctity*. Our * Dr. *Pocock* declares it to be the Sense of the *Jews* on the Second Psalm, That *God's Son* was his Eternal Son, of the same Substance with the Father. And he and others tell us, That the Second Person in the Godhead, was called by the *Jews* the *Word of the Lord*. And truly it is to be wonder'd, That the *Jews* at this Day do not believe this Doctrine so clearly asserted in the Old Testament. I say *so clearly*, namely, in respect of *that Dispensation*; but otherwise (as I said before) it was but a dark and imperfect Discovery.

* *See* Galatinus de Arcan. Cathol. Verit. *And Dr.* Scot's *Notes at the End of his* Christian Life, Part 2. Vol. 2.

† Demonstr. Evan. l. 4. c. 1.

‖ De Sacrif. Abel & Cain. De Agricult. Noæ. De Cherub.

But now I will proceed to that perspicuous and perfect Manifestation of this Mystery, which we have in the Writings of the New Testament. The First Person, *God the Father*, call'd *the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ*, is often mentioned, and concerning his Divinity it is not disputed. I shall therefore chiefly speak of the Two other Persons in the Christian Triad. And First, *God the Son*, Christ Jesus the Redeemer of the World, hath undeniable Testimonies to his Divinity in these Scriptures of the New Testament: In so much that it might create an Amazement in us, that Men who pretend above others, to be Masters of Reason, should resist so great a Proof and Evidence.

* Not. Misc. ad Maimon.

First, he is expresly call'd *God*, as in *John* 1. 1. *The Word was God*: Where 'tis certain that the Term *God* is strictly and properly taken, and is meant of Christ's Divinity, for (as that ancient and learned Writer *Irenæus* observes) the Evangelist's Design here (as in other Places of his Gospel) is to confront the Heresie of *Ebion*, *Cerinthus*, and other *Gnosticks*, who denied the *Godhead* of Christ. Here he plainly tells us, That *He was God* from all Eternity; and surely then none

can

can deny that *He is God*, and ever *shall* be so. The same Denomination is given to him in *Acts* 20. 28. *Which* (i. e. the Church) *He* (namely *God*, immediately before-mention'd) *hath purchased with his own Blood.* Which must be meant of Christ, and none but him. There is a * *Socinian* Writer indeed, who understands it of God the Father, *in a figurative Way of speaking, because this Blood may be said to be God's Blood, it being shed by his Command and Will.* So the Blood of Beasts in Sacrifice may be call'd God's Blood. But this is a very poor Evasion, and is baffled by the very Text itself,, for thence we learn, that it is a *strict and proper* Way of speaking, not a *figurative* One, for (as it were to obviate this bold Objection) it is said that God purchased or redeemed his Church, διὰ τοῦ ἰδίου αἵματος, *with his own, or proper, Blood.* Which shews that it can't be meant in a figurative Way of Speaking, as the Blood of the Sacrifices might be said to be *God's Blood*, but it must be understood in a plain and direct Sense; namely, That God who had taken upon him our Humane Nature by the Effusion of *his own Blood*, that very Blood which came out of his own Body, redeem'd and sav'd Mankind. There is no Reason then to apply this to God the Father; for *his own Blood* can't possibly agree to him. Nor can any one so much as imagine that it is applicable to the Holy Ghost. Wherefore it remains, That this is spoken of God the Son: And accordingly the *Syrian* and *Armenian* Version render it, *Christ* instead of *God*, only to explain it, and to tell us that *Christ* and *God* are the same. But all the *Greek* Copies of any Authority read it *God*, and thence we irrefragably gather the Divinity of Christ. Only for the better understanding of these Words, we are to know that there is in Scripture *a Communication of Properties*, by Reason of the intimate Conjunction between the Divine and Humane Nature of *Christ*, and their Union in the Person of the Son. Hence those Properties and Attributes which strictly belong to the one, are given to the other. Which gives us an Account of the *Blood of God*, by which we are purchased, *i. e.* Christ, in whom were united both the Godhead and Manhood, who shed his Blood for us as he was Man, and in both Capacities redeem'd and sav'd us.

* Smalc. Refut. lib. de Verbo Incarnato. cap. 24.

The Title of *God* is attributed to our Saviour in 1 *Tim.* 3. 16. *God was manifested in the Flesh, justified in the Spirit*, &c. which is a Place of Scripture that one would think could not be evaded, but yet there have been vain and perverse Men, who by Vertue of their *Critick Art* have endeavour'd to expunge the Word *God* out of this Text. Among the rest *Monsieur Le Clerc* reckons this in the Number of the corrupted and adulterated Texts; and saith of them, That † *they are defended and propagated by Divines that have no Skill in Criticks, or who seek for that in Books, which they wish for; not that which is in the Books.* But every one that knows this Writer's Sentiments, and how he hath distorted other Places of Scripture; namely, because they assert the Divinity of Christ, will not wonder that he labours to corrupt and pervert this, tho' with very little Success. I remit the Reader to the incomparable * Bishop of *Worcester*, who hath Learnedly confuted this Author's Opinion concerning these Words, and hath abundantly satisfied the World that God is in the Original Text. And truly this were enough to satisfie us (tho' we should wave the *Critical* Part) that it is impossible to understand the Words otherwise; for all that follows, is plainly spoken concerning Christ, and can't be applied to any Thing or Person else.

† Art. Crit. cap. 16.

* *Vindication of the Trinity.* chap. 8.

Those Words in 1 *Thess.* 4. 14. are not taken Notice of, or by very few, *them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him*, where Christ is expresly call'd *God*, for he it is that shall at the last Day (which is here spoken of) bring the Saints with him from Heaven, which is called *his Coming with all his Saints*, 1 *Thess.* 3. 13. So that 'tis not possible to understand the Place otherwise, and therefore it may be justly number'd with those Texts wherein Christ is called *God.*

I will not insist on what the Apostle from the Testimony of the Psalmist (*Psalm* 45. 6.) produces, Heb. 1. 8. *Unto the Son He saith, Thy Throne, O God, is for ever and ever.* Where we see the Divine Appellation is fix'd on the *Son*, and 'tis impossible to understand it any other Ways than strictly and properly.

There is another very clear Text in 1 *John* 3. 16. *Hereby perceive we the love of God, because He laid down His Life for us.* No other Person laid down his Life for us but *Christ*, and this is the Person who in the foregoing Clause is stiled *God*: For the Pronoun *He* hath Reference to *God*, He being the Person last mention'd.

And

And in the same Sense that before he was said, to *purchase his Church with his Blood*, is said here, *to lay down his Life for it.* And here, before I proceed any further, I will take notice how Vainly and Groundlesly it is said by one of our late *Socinians*, That, † *If in any Text of Scripture, Jesus is said to be God, or a God, it is to be understood of that God-like Power, Authority, and Glory, which God his Father hath conferr'd upon him.* Whereas it is evident, that neither in this Text last quoted, nor in any of the foregoing ones, is there the least shew or likelihood of any such thing; for no Man of Sense and Reason, can think that such *Personal Acts* as these that have been mention'd, can be understood of a God-like *Power*, *Authority*, *or Glory* conferr'd by God the Father.

† *The Exceptions, &c. Examined.*

But other *Socinian* Masters tell us, That Christ hath the Name of *God* given him in Scripture, as Kings and Magistrates have, who are call'd *gods*. Christ, say they, is Exalted by God in an extraordinary manner, and is advanc'd to be a King, and a Prince; and thence it is, that he hath that Honourable and Glorious Title of *God*. But, I would only desire the Reader to look back and consult the Places before alledged, and then he will be fully satisfied, that this is a very silly Evasion; for there, as well as in other places, *the Name of God is attributed to Christ in such a manner, as by it no other can be understood but the One Almighty and Eternal God*; as was rightly observ'd by the Judicious Dr. *Pearson* on the Second Article of the Creed. That Christ is *God*, not only by Authority and Office, as Magistrates are said to be *gods*, but that he is *God* by Nature, and in Contradistinction to a Created Being, appears from this, that he is mention'd by the *Apostle* in way of Opposition to *Man* or *Men*. *Paul an Apostle, not of Men, neither by Man, but by Jesus Christ*, Gal. 1. 1. And again, *v.* 12. *I neither received it*, (i. e. the Gospel) *of Man, neither was I taught it, but by the Revelation of Jesus Christ.* Where you see plainly, that *Man* and *Christ* are opposed to one another, to acquaint us, that this latter is not said to be *God* in the Sense that *Men* may be said to be, *i. e.* as to their *Place* and *Dignity*. This is only a Nominal sort of Divinity, it is only a Title given them to express their Greatness and Authority. But Christ is *God*, Really and Strictly, and such is no Creature whatsoever.

Therefore to distinguish him from all *Titular* and *Official Gods*, he is not only barely stil'd *God*, (as in the preceding Quotations) but there is some Epithet or Adjunct annex'd to it, that shews it must *properly* be understood, and in the highest and most transcendent Sense. Thus He is call'd the *Great God*, *Tit.* 2. 13. For I make *the Great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ* to be the same Person: Which Interpretation, (because I know it is not according to the usual way of Exposition) I will Establish by offering these two things to be consider'd; 1. That here is but one Article in the *Greek*, τοῦ μεγάλου Θεοῦ καὶ σωτῆρος ἡμῶν, *of the Great God and Saviour of us*; which shews, that One and the same Person is meant, else another *Article* would have been inserted to shew the difference. This way of speaking, *the Great God and Saviour*, lets us know that *God and Saviour* are applied to the same Person, *i. e.* Jesus Christ. The same manner of Expression is used in 2 *Pet.* 1. 1. *Through the Righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ*, so we Translate it; but it should be rendred thus, *Through the Righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ*, for so 'tis according to the * *Greek*, which more evidently shews, that *our God and Saviour Jesus Christ* are the same Person; especially, if you consider that there is no *Article* before σωτῆρος, whereas there is always one when σωτὴρ is apply'd to God the Father, as in *Tit.* 2. 10. and in other places. As for the Conjunctive Particle καὶ, there is no arguing from that against what I have offer'd, because (as I shall make it manifest afterwards) καὶ is sometimes the same with our *English even*, and so the *God and Saviour* is no more than *God, even our Saviour*, or *God, who is our Saviour*, viz. Jesus Christ, who is immediately mention'd in both places. 2. I propound this to be thought of, that we never read in the Scriptures of the New Testament, that God the Father is said to *appear*; and therefore the Apostle mentioning here *the Glorious Appearing of the Great God and Saviour*, he means *Christ*, of whose *Appearance* there is frequent mention. This, if we duly consider it, ought to prevail with us to confine and restrain the Words to our Lord Christ, and to believe that the Name *God*, as well as *Saviour* is attributed here to him.

* Θεοῦ ἡμῶν.

Before I produce any other Text, I will corroborate that which I last quoted out of St. *Peter*. It is evident, that *God and our Saviour Jesus Christ*, is the same with *our Saviour Jesus Christ who is God*; because the Saints are said in that place to *obtain Faith*, and so consequently any other Grace, *through the Righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ*: But we obtain not Grace through the Righteousness of God the Father, but of his Son Christ; *Ergo*.

Again, That we may not think that the Word *God* is equivocally apply'd to Christ, (as the *Unitarians* perswade their Disciples) let us take notice of another remarkable *Epithet* joyn'd with it, *viz.* ἀληθινὸς, 1 *John* 5. 20. *This is the True God*. Which words, (tho' rightly interpreted of Christ by *Athanasius*, *Cyril*, *Hilary*, *Basil*, *Ambrose*, *Augustine*) *Erasmus* and some others since would refer to God the Father: But there is no Ground for it, because the Person last mention'd is the *Son of God*, *his Son Jesus Christ*. Now, 'tis well known that Relative and Demonstrative Pronouns (such as οὗτος here) are always to be referr'd to what immediately foregoes, unless there be some necessity for the contrary, and the Scope of the Words forces us to it, but there is no such thing here. So that it would be Ungrammatical and Impertinent, to referr οὗτος to any other Person or Thing. Which some of the most considerable *Unitarians* have been sensible of, and therefore they go another way to work, and acknowledge the Words to be spoken by St. *John* concerning Christ, and accordingly own him to be *True God*, i. e. not Imaginary or Fictitious, but not *True*, as it signifies the *Eternal* God, or the same God with the Father. But this is such a thin piece of Sophistry, that any one may easily see thorow it: For if Christ in all the Places before-cited, and some that are yet to be Cited, hath the Name of *God* Attributed to him in the most solemn and proper manner, (as hath been already shew'd) and, moreover is call'd the *Great God*, and also the *True God*; any unprejudic'd Man would conclude, that He, whose Divinity is so often asserted, is no other than the Eternal God, having the same Divine Essence with God the Father; for else it were a meer imposing upon us to give him the Title of *the Great God*, and *the True God*. And here I will further observe, that Christ is in this Text call'd *God*, with an *Article* before it in the *Greek*, ὁ ἀληθινὸς Θεὸς, which shews how unskilful * he was, that tells us, that the Name of *God* with an Article prefix'd, is never attributed to *Christ*. (Though he might truly have observ'd, that the Article is sometimes us'd, and at other times omitted, when the True God, or false Gods are spoken of, as might be made evident from several Examples.) But, to null his Observation, we can produce several places, where Christ is call'd ὁ Θεὸς, as in *Mat.* 1. 23. *Acts* 20. 28. *Heb.* 1. 8. *Tit.* 2. 13. 2 *Pet.* 1. 1. Which are places that have been already nam'd, and there are some behind.

* *Slichting. contr. Meisner. de Trinitate.*

But to proceed, He hath not *only* the Name of *God* given him, but of *Lord God*, as we find in *Luke* 1. 16. *Many of the Children of Israel shall be turn to the Lord their God*. Which is a very remarkable place, and I wonder it hath not been taken notice of by those that have vindicated the Deity of our Saviour from the Holy Scriptures. The Words are the Angel's Prophetick Message concerning *John* the Baptist, whose Office should be to Convert many of the Unbelieving *Jews*, and to win them to the Acknowledgment of the *Messias*, whose Forerunner he was to be. This is the plain Meaning of *turning them to the Lord their God*; as undeniably appears from what immediately follows, *he shall go before him*, that is, he shall go before *Christ*, who is *the Lord their God*: It is impossible to understand the Words of God the Father; for this St. *John* could not be said *to go before him*, and therefore it must be meant of Christ, who is truly *the Lord God*. And by the way, we may take notice, that the Article ὁ is here prefix'd to Θεὸς, which confutes the Rash Assertion of *Slichtingius*, before-mentioned.

Again, Christ is stil'd *Lord and God* by *Thomas*, *John* 20. 28. *Who answer'd, and said unto him, My Lord and my God*. On which place one of our Adversaries confesses, that it is as much as if that Apostle had said, *Thou art my Lord and my God*: But see how he interprets it, after the *Racovian* Mode; the meaning of the Words is this, *I acknowledge thee to be truly that same Lord whom I before follow'd, and not a Man only, but to be also God, in as much as thou hast overcome Death, which keeps all Men under its Power*. *This* is all the meaning of *Lord and God*.

Christ

Christ is said to be *God* here, because he *overcame Death*. But if this be all the Account he can give of his Divinity, then for the same Reason all Men may be call'd *Gods*, for they *overcome Death* at the Resurrection, and are no longer *kept under its Power*. If you say, they don't rise by their own Power, the very same is said by the *Socinians* (as every one knows) concerning Christ. Here then is a poor slender *Divinity* (such as every Man is capable of) attributed by this Writer to the Eternal Son of God. But such most certainly was not intended in this Text by St. *Thomas*; for we cannot but own, that he plainly and expresly gives Christ the Title of *God*, without any such Limitation as this Author mentions, and without the least Hint or Intimation of any such thing. And therefore this Name being *absolutely* given him, and set down by St. *John* the Pen-man with an *Article* before it, (contrary to the fond Fancy already taken notice of) we can infer no less than this, That Christ was the True Eternal Supreme Lord God. And our Saviour knew that *Thomas* spoke rightly and truly when he said so; and therefore did not Correct him for so speaking, which certainly he would, nay, must needs have done, if he were *not God*, if he were falsly Stil'd so by this Apostle.

To this Place in St. *John*, may be added that other in 1 *Tim.* 1. 1. Where Christ is call'd *God and Lord*, or rather *God, even the Lord*; for so ὁ may be rendred, and is frequently. I know, Commentators generally apply *God* here to God the Father, but I conceive 'tis meant of God the Son: And my Reason is, because St. *Paul* here saith, He was *an Apostle of Jesus Christ*; and then explains himself thus, *By the Commandment of God our Saviour, and Lord Jesus Christ*; as much as to say, he was Constituted an Apostle by the Immediate and Extraordinary Appointment of Christ, and not as the rest were made Apostles; which he oftentimes expresly takes notice of, and mentions with Admiration and Thankfulness, and particularly he doth it here: So that it is very plain, that Christ *is the God, even the Lord*, who is spoken of here.

And so I understand, *Tit.* 1. 3. *According to the Commandment of God our Saviour*; (tho' others are of a different Opinion) for *the Commandment of God our Saviour*, is that particular and extraordinary Call, which the Apostle had by Jesus Christ from Heaven, to Preach the Gospel, as the Words themselves shew.

Moreover, he is *the Lord of Glory*, 1 Cor. 2. 8. And *the Lord of all*, Acts 10. 36. Yea, *he is over all, God Blessed for ever*, Rom. 9. 5. The very Title by which the One Supreme Almighty God was known among the *Jews*. Some object, that the Word *God* is not in the *Syriack*; but their Friend *Erasmus* rejects that Version, and owns *God* to be according to the Original; for so those Ancient Fathers, *Tertullian*, *Irenaeus*, *Athanasius*, *Hilary*, *Ambrose*, *Augustine* read it. A late * Learned Critick assures us, that all the Copies have the Word; and the † *Oxford Annotators* tell us, they find it in all the Manuscripts. And as for the Pretences in *Grotius*, and some others, about the leaving out of Θεὸς in this Text, they are particularly and fully Answered by the Excellent ‖ Bishop *Pearson*. And to give our selves more Satisfaction, (if it be possible) we may consult the most Accomplish'd ‡ Bishop of *Worcester*, who directly proves, that the Word *God* is not missing in any of the best Copies. However, if the Word were left out, yet *Blessed for ever* is sufficiently expressive of the Deity; for the Title of *the Blessed*, signifies the Supreme God, *Mark* 14. 61. And *the Blessed for ever* is attributed to God the Father, *Rom.* 1. 25. And accordingly *the Blessed, and the Blessed for evermore* were always us'd by the *Jews* to express the only One God of *Israel*. It is well known, that among *Rabbinical* Writers, *the Blessed One* is the *True God*. When therefore we find this applied to our Saviour, as in 2 *Cor.* 11. 31. and in the Text before us, where there is also the Addition of *God*, we cannot possibly doubt of his Divine Nature. Nay, further, he is call'd *the Only Lord God*, and *the Only Wise God*, as I shall make appear, when I come to alledge *Jude* 4. and the last Verses. How Blind and Stupid then, how Sottish and Insensate are those Men, who, notwithstanding this evident Proof of Christ's Real Divinity, acknowledge him to be a God only by Deputation, one that Represents and Personates God, but is not indeed so? Any Man of an unprejudiced Mind, must grant, there could not be more full and expressive Terms used to signifie to us, and to assure us, that Christ is truly and really God.

* F. Simon. *Crit. Hist. of the New Testament*, c. 54.

† *Annotat. in Cypr. adv. Judaeos.*

‖ *Exposition on the Second Article of the Creed.*

‡ *Vindication of the Trinity*, c. 8.

Moreover, from the *Essential Attributes* of a Deity ascribed to him in the New Testament, we infallibly gather, that he is God. I will mention at present only three

three of these Divine Properties, *viz.* Eternity, Omniscience, Omnipotence. *First*, His being *Eternal*, is an irrefragable Argument of his being God, for nothing is so but the Deity it self. This his Divine Prerogative is asserted by Himself, *John* 8. 58. *Before Abraham was, I am.* And *John* 17. 5. *The Glory which I had with thee before the World was.* Which is an Expression to set forth Eternity, *Psal.* 90. 2. *Prov.* 8. 23, 25. Again, *Rev.* 1. 8. *I am alpha and omega, the beginning and the ending, (the first and the last,* as it is afterwards express'd, *v.* 11.) *which is, and which was, and which is to come.* The very same which is attributed to God the Father, *v.* 4. And *Rev.* 16. 5. And long before we find this applied to him in *Isaiah* 41. 4.—44. 6.—48. 12. Which renders this a clear Text, to prove, that as the Father is Eternal, so is the Son. The Apostle *Paul* attests this, *He is before all things*, Col. 1. 17. *He was without beginning of days*, Heb. 7. 3. In the highest and strictest Sense of which *Melchisedeck* was only a dark Type.

But the entrance of St. *John*'s Gospel is the most famous Testimony concerning the *Eternal Existence* of the Second Person in the Trinity, that we meet with in the whole New Testament. *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God; the same was in the beginning with God*, 1 John 1. 2. Which was urg'd of old against the *Arians* by *Athanasius*, *Hilary*, *Ambrose*, *Basil*, *Gregory Nyssen*, *Nazianzen*, *Augustine*. The *Word* is Christ Jesus, for it is said, *he came into the World*, v. 10. And *was rejected by his own*, v. 11. And *was made Flesh, and dwelt among us*, v. 14. And this *Word* is expresly call'd *Jesus Christ*, v. 17. This *Word* was *in the beginning*, that is, it always was, for so one of * the Ancients rightly expounds it. [*In the beginning was the Word*, this (saith he) signifies Eternity, for he that was in the Beginning, most certainly did ever exist; for 'tis not said, He was made in the Beginning, but he was in the Beginning.] We can't conceive any thing to have been before the Beginning, for it would not be the *Beginning*, if it had any thing before it. Fitly therefore here *in the Beginning*, is of the same import with *from Eternity*, or before the Creation of all things; for it is added, *all things were made by him*, v. 3. Now it is certain, that nothing could exist before the Creation of all things but the Creator, (for there could not be a Creature before the Creation) and this Creator is God. This is an unanswerable Argument of our Saviour's Divinity. He that was before the Creation of all things is God: Christ was before the Creation of all things, therefore he is God. And that by *the Beginning* here is meant, (in the full Latitude of the Word) *Eternity*, is clear from the Acception of this Term in other places. So the *Hebrew* Word *rosh*, which is Translated ἀρχὴ by the Septuagint, is to be understood in *Isaiah* 41. 4. This is that *Beginning* which is spoken of in *Prov.* 8. 22, 23. (which is a most remarkable Passage concerning this *Eternal*, *Substantial Wisdom*, the Son of God, and therefore might have been mention'd among those other Texts which I before produced out of the Old Testament,) *The Lord possessed me in the beginning of his Way, before his Works of old. I was set up from Everlasting, from the Beginning, or ever the Earth was.* And in the Six next Verses, this *Eternity* of the *Divine Wisdom* or *Word* is further set forth; and it is of the same Import with this of St. *John*, *In the beginning was the Word.*

* Ἐν ἀρχῇ ἦν ὁ λόγος· τοῦτο δὲ τὸ ἀΐδιον δηλοῦσθαι· ὁ γὰρ ἐν ἀρχῇ ὤν, ἀεὶ ἦν δηλονότι· εἰ γὰρ εἴπεν, ἐν ἀρχῇ ἐγένετο, οὐ ἐν ἀρχῇ ἐκτίσθη, ἀλλ' ἐν ἀρχῇ ἦν. *Theodoret Div. Decret.* cap. 2.

Next, It is said, this Word *was with God*. He could be with no Creature, because there was no Creature in being: Therefore it is fitly said, *He was with God*: And this proves that there was another Person in the Deity, *viz.* God the Father, for else he could not be said to be *with God*. And this Word, this Son of God, this Second Hypostasis in the Trinity *was God*, he was really and truly so, and that *in the beginning*, from all Eternity. And if he *was* God, he *is* so still; he that was *God in the beginning*, is *God* (as well as *Blessed*) *for evermore*: He cannot cease to be what he was. This Text alone is sufficient to prove the Eternal Deity of the Son of God. But in conjunction with the rest before mention'd, it is an accumulative Proof of this: For he that *was in the beginning with God the Father*, he that *was before Abraham*, he that *had the same Glory with God the Father before the World was*, he that is eminently call'd *the First*, he that *was before all things*, cannot be denied to be Eternal; but such is Christ, therefore he is the Eternal God. Being thus convinced of the Truth of our Saviour's Præexistence from Eternity, we shall despise and disdain that dilute Stuff of *Socinus*, that by *the Word* in *John* 1. 1. is meant Christ's Incarnation, and *in the beginning*, is *in the begin-*

beginning of the Gospel State; and the Meaning of those Words, *by him all Things were created*, is, That all Spiritual Things were restored by him: Which *strained* Sense all sober Men laugh at, and that deservedly.

That he is *Omniscient* likewise, is another Testimony and Assurance of his being God. For *God only knows the Hearts of all the Children of Men*, 1 Kings 8. 39. He alone can see into the secret Recesses of Men's Souls, and none but he can certainly fore-know Future Contingencies. This distinguishes him from all created and finite Beings whatsoever. Now we are ascertain'd by our Saviour himself, That he knew the Hearts of Men, *I am he that searcheth the Reins and the Heart*, Rev. 2. 23. And it is observable, That in the beginning of all the Epistles to the Seven Churches of *Asia*, this is set down, *I know thy Works*, to signifie Christ's Omniscience. And the Evangelists acquaint us, that *he knew what was in Man*, John 2. 25. *he knew the Thoughts* of the Pharisees Hearts, *Mat.* 9. 4. —12. 25. and the hidden Thoughts and Purposes of his Disciples, *John* 16. 19. for *he knew what they were desirous to ask him. He knew* before-hand *who would believe on him, and who not, and who should betray him*, John 6. 64. And this Place which I last mention'd is the more remarkable, because Christ himself makes it an Argument of his Deity, That among other Futurities, he knew this of *Judas* betraying him: For so I understand those Words in *John* 13. 19. *Now I tell you* (*i. e.* I foretell to you that *Judas* shall betray me) *before it come, that when it is come to pass, ye may believe that I am he.* That is, hereby ye shall know that I am the true Messias, that I am God as well as Man, for none but the former can foresee and foretell, of himself, future Contingencies. It is St. *Peter*'s Declaration concerning him, *Thou knowest that I love thee*, John 21. 17. Yea, it is his farther Acknowledgment in the same Place, *Lord, thou knowest all Things*, i. e. whatever secret Inclination, Desire or Affection is in the Breasts of Men, Thou art fully acquainted with it. And this very Thing gives us an Account of the Reason and Ground of several of Christ's Answers, to Questions which were put to him. They seem at the first View not to be pertinent to what was ask'd; namely, because he sometimes answer'd their *Thoughts*, not their Words. His Omniscience appear'd in this also, that he was able to foresee those Actions and Events which were wholly Arbitrary, and in themselves Fortuitous. He foretold *the tying of the Ass*, and the Owners readiness to send her, *Mat.* 21. 2, 3. and several other Instances there are of his Predictions, and the accomplishing of them.

I could here adjoyn another Text, which I find not taken Notice of by those that treat on this Subject, *Mat.* 18. 20. *Where Two or Three are gathered together in my Name, there am I in the midst of them.* Which is a Promise made by Christ not only to the Apostles, but to the succeeding Pastors of the Church; yea, all the true Members of it met together in his Name, and for his Glory: He will be with them to direct and assist them, to bless and succeed them, which necessarily implies that he hath a *knowledge* of their Condition and Circumstances, that he is *acquainted* with their particular and emergent Wants. So that this is a great Proof of Christ's *Omniscience*, as well as of his *Omnipresence*, which always accompanies it. And as he could dive into all Futurities, so he was acquainted with all Things past, he knew every Thing that had happen'd, though he neither saw them, nor heard any Thing of them; for 'tis expresly recorded, That he told the Woman of *Samaria* all that she had done. If it be objected, That *the Son knew not the Day and Hour* of the last Judgment, *Mark* 13. 32. The Answer is, That it is meant of his Humane Nature, not his Divine: And so *Athanasius*, *Cyril*, *Hilary*, *Chrysostom*, *Theodoret*, *Ephrem*, *Damascen* understand it. The Sum then of all is this, He that was able to *search the Hearts of Men*, and to *know what was in them*, and was no Stranger to their *Thoughts*, and knew what it was that Persons were about *to ask him*, and who *believed in him*, and who *not*, and who *would betray him*; and in a Word, He that knew all Things *past* as well as *to come*, was without Controversy of *Infinite Knowledge*. Such was our Saviour, therefore we must most reasonably conclude him to be *God*.

Further, his *Omnipotence* is another illustrious Demonstration of his Godhead. He is *the Mighty God*, Isa. 9. 6. that is, the *Almighty God*, as it imports in other Places, *Deut.* 7. 21. *Psal.* 50. 1. *Jer.* 32. 18. *Hab.* 1. 12. His *Miracles* are an incontestable Proof of this Attribute: So that to disbelieve these, is the Damning and Irremissible Sin, because the Divine Power of the Holy Ghost in concurrence with

with that of Christ, was so evidently and undeniably exerted here. Not but that the Prophets and Apostles wrought Miracles, but they did this not in their own Name, *John* 5. 36. 10. 37. 14. 11. not in their own Strength, for 'tis particularly recorded, that they had their Power from Christ, *Mat.* 10. 8. *Mark* 13. 15. 6. 7.

Of all Christ's Miraculous Acts that of raising himself from the Dead by his own Power, was one of the chiefest, *I have Power to lay down my Life, and I have Power to take it up again*, John 10. 18. So in *John* 2. 19. *Destroy this Temple* (that is, the Temple of my Body, as he explains himself) *and in Three Days I will raise it up.* This, it is true, is attributed to God the Father, *Eph.* 1. 20. but that is a greater Confirmation still of the Divinity of Christ, and shews that he and his Father are the same, and do the same Acts, and are equally Omnipotent. Certainly it will be granted, That to raise himself from Death, was an undeniable Act of Almighty Power. *I am the Almighty*, so he proclaims himself, *Rev.* 1. 8. And what he saith in *Joh.* 10. 30. hath Reference to this, for those Words, *I and my Father are One*, do not only assert the Unity of their *Essence*, (as hath been already observ'd) but of their *Power*. In the Verses immediately foregoing, our Saviour (who is the great Shepherd) proves, That *his Sheep shall never perish*, because *none shall pluck them out of his Hand*; and here he further gives this as a Reason, because he is of the same infinite Nature and Power with his Father; *I and my Father are One*, i. e. both of us are Omnipotent, we are equal in Vertue and Power. What can be said more to prove him to be God? If the *Father* be God, *He* is so too, because he hath the same Might and Power that he hath: And yet they are but *One*, One in Essence and Nature: For this doth not exclude the other in this Place, and we may be satisfied from the Context, that both are here meant. We may infer Christ's Omnipotence from what he had said before to the *Jews* upon another Occasion, *what Things soever the Father doth, these even doth the Son likewise*, John 5. 19. If therefore we grant the Father to be Omnipotent, we must grant the Son to be so too, and in doing this we acknowledge them to be equally *God*.

If it be objected, That Christ *could not do any mighty Work*, Mark 6. 5. The Answer is, *He could not*, is equivalent with *he would not*; as is manifest from this Way of speaking in *John* 7. 7. *the World cannot hate you*, i. e. the *Jews* are not so *disposed* to hate and persecute you as they do me. *We cannot but speak*, Acts 4. 20. *i. e.* we are mightily enclined and prompted to do so. *He that is born of God cannot sin*, 1 John 3. 9. *i. e.* he hath not an inward Inclination, Will and Affection that carries him that Way. And this is no uncommon Phrase amongst us at this Day, *I cannot do such a Thing*, which signifies not Impotency, but Reluctancy, an Unwillingness of Mind to do such a Thing.

Again, *the making of the Heaven and the Earth*, is propounded as a certain Mark and Evidence of the *Divinity*, Jer. 10. 11. and this we find attributed to Christ, *John* 1. 3. *All Things were made by him, and without him was not any Thing made that was made.* Col. 1. 16. *By him were all Things created that are in Heaven, and that are in Earth.* He is that *One Lord by whom are all Things*, 1 Cor. 8. 6. Who is there that reads these Texts, would imagine that the following Words could drop from the Pen of any Writer? * *To the Father only* (saith he) *is ascribed in Holy Scripture the Creation of Heaven and Earth, to Christ never.* From which peremptory Language we are acquainted what the Temper of these Men is: They will out-face the Holy Scripture itself, and disown the very express Terms of it. With Confidence this Man appropriates the Creation to the *Father*, and excludes the *Son*, and Authorizes it from Scripture, and yet these Sacred Writings give plain Testimony against it. If you come up close to him, and ask him why he thus deals with the Holy Writ, he will tell you, That those forementioned Texts are to be understood in a *Metaphorical* Way: By *making* and *creating* of all Things in Heaven and in Earth, is to be meant *the putting of them into a better State, the new modelling of them by Christ under the Gospel.* Thus they miserably prevaricate, and fly to unthought of Metaphors and Allegories, and yet severely condemn those that allegorize the Scriptures. This they will do rather than they will own the plain Words of the Bible, which inform us that Christ, as well as the Father, *created the World and all Things in it*, rather than they will acknowledge this plain Testimony of Christ's Divinity; for they know that *Creating* is God's Work, not Man's. And we shall find likewise that *Conservation* (as well as Creation) is

* The Exceptions of Mr. *Edwards* in his *Causes of Atheism* examin'd.

is Christ's Work. *Heb.* 1. 3. *He sustains all Things by the Word of his Power.* Col. 1. 17. *By him all Things consist:* which is an unquestionable Argument of his being the true God, for to preserve all Things (as well as to create them) to uphold them in their being (as well as to give them a Being at first) is the peculiar Prerogative of God. Thus you see, That those *Attributes* which are appropriated to the True and only God, belong to Christ the Second Person in the Trinity, and consequently we must own him to be God, the True and Eternal God, of one Substance with the Father. The Argument runs thus, and admits of no Evasion, He that is Eternal, Omniscient, Omnipotent, and is the Maker and Creator of the World is God, but Christ Jesus is such; therefore he is God.

Next, we argue from the *Divine Worship* which is given to him. For we find that *this* belongs to God alone, *Thou shalt Worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve,* Mat. 4. 10. But our Saviour himself who alledged this, acquaints us, That *All Men must honour the Son, even as they honour the Father,* John 5. 23. This is a close and convictive Proof of Christ's Divinity. He to whom Divine Honour is to be given, the *very same* that is given to the Father, is God: But Christ must have the same Divine Honour given to him; therefore he is God. The Minor Proposition is so plain in Scripture, that *Socinus* himself and his Followers asserted it with great Vigour. They formally and solemnly undertook the Proof of this, That Christ is to be worshipp'd with the same religious Worship which is due to God the Father, for they saw there was a clear and express Foundation for this in the Writings of the New Testament. Prayer, which is the most solemn Act of Religious Worship, is directed immediately to Christ, as we see in the Example of that Holy Man *Stephen*; *He call'd upon God, and said, Lord Jesus, receive my Spirit,* Acts 7. 59. Will not a considerate Man gather hence, That it was the Belief of the Holy Men in those Times that Christ was God, seeing they committed their Souls to him at the instant of Death, which is a plain Acknowledgment of his being God? Any one that hath not a Mind to be foolishly and groundlesly Incredulous, must be perswaded of this. And there is something in that Prayer of St. *Stephen* to be observ'd, which I see is pass'd over with Neglect by others: It is recorded that *he call'd upon God,* and then an Instance of it is given, *he said, Lord Jesus, receive my Spirit*; therefore I infer thence, That praying to Jesus Christ, is *calling upon God.*

We read in *Acts* 9. 14. That *all that call on thy Name, i. e.* Christ's Name (as is clear from the foregoing Part of the Chapter) is a *Periphrasis* of the Worshippers of Jesus, and all true Christians: They were known by this, that they pray'd unto Jesus. That it was the Practice of the Saints in St. *Paul*'s Time to pray to our Saviour, is evident from 1 *Cor.* 1. 2. where the Apostle directs his Epistle to the *Corinthians,* and to *all* (*i. e.* all others) *who in every Place call upon the Name of Jesus Christ our Lord*; that is, who pray unto him and worship him, for from several Texts in the Old Testament, and from others in the New, more particularly that in *Rom.* 10. 13. we are assured that that is the Meaning of *calling on the Name.* The Apostle prays to Christ, 1 *Thess.* 3. 11. *Now God himself and our Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ direct our Way unto you, And the Lord make you to increase,* &c. And again, 2 *Thess.* 2. 16, 17. *Now our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God even our Father —— comfort your Hearts, and stablish you in every good Word and Work.* Farther, That Christ is to be worshipped with Divine Adoration, is manifest from those *Blessings* which are used by the Apostle, *The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you,* Rom. 16. 20. *Grace be to you, and Peace from God our Father and from our Lord Jesus Christ,* Rom. 1. 7. 1 Cor. 1. 3. Gal. 1. 3. Eph. 1. 2. *The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the Love of God,* &c. 2 Cor. 13. 14. And so at the Entrance of the Epistles to the *Philippians, Colossians, Thessalonians, Timothy, Titus, Philemon.* The Argument is this, He is to be worshipped with Religious Worship, who is the Author of Grace; but Christ is such, as is clear from the Forms of these Blessings. Besides, no Man of tolerable Sense can imagine that the Apostle and other Ministers of the Gospel, would bless the People in any other Name but his who is to be worshipped; that is, God. And moreover, in these Blessings there is a Prayer included; the Apostle prays for *Grace* and *Peace,* and he begs these of the Son as well as of the Father. And what can be clearer than that Petition in 1 *Thess.* 3. 11. *Our Lord Jesus Christ direct our Way unto you.* And again, *Our Lord Jesus Christ himself comfort your Hearts, and stablish you in every good Word and Work,* 1 Thess. 2. 16.

Not

Not only Prayer but *Thanksgiving* is pay'd to Christ, the very same that is given to the *Father*. *To him (our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ) be Glory both now and for ever. Amen.* 2 Pet. 3. 18. *To the only wise God our Saviour, be Glory and Majesty, Dominion and Power, both now and ever. Amen.* Jud. v. 25. *To him* (Jesus Christ) *be Glory and Dominion for ever and ever, Amen.* Rev. 1.6. *Blessing and Honour, and Glory, and Power be unto him that sitteth upon the Throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever*, Rev. 4. 13. The same Honour is given to the Son that is given to the Father. This is very plain, and therefore the Friends of *Socinus*, who hold that Christ is to be *worshipped*, and yet say, he is not *really God*, cannot possibly clear themselves of Idolatry, *i. e.* of worshipping a Creature, for Christ as *Man* is a *Creature*. They asserting him to be such, and no other, are Idolaters as often as they worship him, for they worship him as a created Being. It is true, the Humane Nature of Christ is adorable in an oblique and relative Manner, as it hath respect to, and is joined with the Divinity: But the worshipping of Christ, respects not his Humanity consider'd barely in itself, but the Divine Nature to which the Humane is hypostatically united. Wherefore, they acknowledging no such Thing as this, directly worship the Humane Nature, *i. e.* the Soul and Body of Christ, and consequently they commit Idolatry. This they run themselves into by their absurd and unwary Assertions: But in the mean Time, from their Absurdities we may be the more confirm'd in the Doctrine of the Trinity.

The Sum of what I have hitherto said is this, That Christ is frequently in the New Testament call'd *God*; and it appears, That this Title is not a Title of Office, but a Character of his Nature and Essence. And the Divine *Attributes* agree to him; and withal, he hath just claim to those *Works* which are God's peculiar; and lastly, he is the Object of Divine *Worship*. Who would desire a greater Evidence of the Truth of Christ's Godhead?

And yet after all this, some have the Confidence to averr that he is no God. And as I have demonstrated his Divinity from several Texts in the Old and New Testament, so these Men pretend to alledge others against it; wherefore, it will be requisite to hear what they object, and to examine the Places which they produce; and to shew how they are mis-interpreted and distorted by them. I will mention but one Place in the Old Testament, and that is Prov. 8. 22. *The Lord possessed me in the beginning of his Ways*; or, as it was heretofore read, *the Lord created me the beginning of his Way*: Whence the *Arians* inferr'd, That Christ was a *Creature*, and had a Beginning. It is not to be denied, that the Ancient * Fathers, even those who opposed the *Arian* Heresy, adhered to the *Septuagint*, who render the *Hebrew*, Kanani, Ἔκτισε, *Creavit*, and gave it the Sense accordingly; that is, they generally understood it of Christ's Humane Nature, his being made Man. The Text was understood as Prophetically spoken concerning what was to come to pass at Christ's Incarnation, in respect of which he may be said to have been *made* or *created*: And 'tis certain, that this Way of speaking was not balked by some of the *Ante-Nicene* Fathers. But it is applied by † *Origen* to Christ's *Divine Nature*, and even ‖ *Athanasius*, and * *Hilary* do the like, and tell us, That Christ's Eternal *Generation* may be called a *Creation*. But some of the Fathers at last found, That the *Hebrew* Word *Kanah* signifies not only to *create* but to *possess*, and accordingly they read the Words thus, *the Lord possessed me the beginning of his Ways*, without the prefix ב *in*, and so 'tis the same with *from Eternity*, for so we find it explain'd in the next Verse, *from Everlasting*. It is then very strange if the Adversaries of Christ's Divinity can make this Text serviceable to their Purpose.

* Athanasius, Epiphanius, Basil, Greg. Nazianzen & Nyssen, Hilary. Ambrose, Augustine, Jerom.
† In Johan.
‖ Contr. Arian. Orat. 3.
* Lib. de Synod.

I proceed to the New Testament. First, they make use of *Mat.* 19. 17. and would prove Christ not to be God from his own Words there, *why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is, God.* But this is a very perverse Corruption of his Words, for our Saviour by this Manner of speaking, brings the Person to acknowledge his Godhead: For it is an Argument *ad hominem*, as we commonly say, and our Blessed Master is pleased very often to make use of such, because it best suited with the Genius and Apprehension of some of those Persons he dealt with. It is as if he had said to the Man who spake to him, and call'd him *Good*; if I be a Man, this Title that thou givest me, cannot in the strictest and highest Sense be applied to me, for none is essentially, infinitely, absolutely and perfectly *Good* but God: Therefore if thou dost acknowledge me to be thus *Good*, thou must also

also own my *Divinity*, because none is after that manner *Good* but God alone. Thus he with Art and Skill insinuates into this Person the Belief of his Godhead, or rather, he forces him by this discreet way of applying himself to him, to confess that he was God. This is the true and genuine Strain of the Words, and therefore no Anti-Trinitarian can make use of them to his wicked Purpose. They do not imply that Christ is not God, no more than Christ's Words in *Mat.* 22. 43. *How then doth David call him Lord?* imply that Christ was not *David's Son*. The short is, Christ doth not here deny himself to be *Good*, in Opposition to *God*, but with relation to the Apprehension which that young Man had of him, who took him to be a *meer Man*.

Another of their principal Texts, on which they found their Blasphemy, is, *John* 17. 3. *This is Life Eternal, that they might know thee the only True God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent.* Christ Prays here to his Father, and calls him *the only True God*, and thereby, (say they) excludes himself, (whom he particularly mentions immediately after) from being *God*. This Cavil is grounded on the wilful Mistake of the Word *Only*; for it is not (as they imagine) spoken Exclusively of the other Two Persons in the Trinity; as if Christ and the Holy Ghost were not God, because the Father is said to be *the only True God*. But his being call'd so, is no Argument that the other Persons may not have the same Denomination; for this is certain, that all the *Persons* in the Trinity have the same Essence, and therefore all of them are *the only True God*. But

1. We are to know, that this Term *Only* is here used in Opposition to the *Gods* of the *Heathens*, who were very numerous. With respect to these False and Fictitious Deities, God the Father is justly styled *the only True God*. So * the Ancients interpret the Place: *Athanasius* speaks their Sense thus, † He is call'd *the only True God*, εἰς ἀναίρεσιν τῶν μὴ πεφυκότων εἶναι ἀληθινῶν, to set aside those who are not Gods by Nature, from being True Gods. So that it is evident, if this is said in contradistinction to the Gods of the Pagans, it doth not exclude the *Son* and the *Holy Ghost*. These with the Father being One God, are properly *the only True God*.

2. Nor are those Words, [*and Jesus Christ*] to be understood, as if Christ were distinct from *the only True God*, for the Conjunction καὶ, *and*, denotes not that the word which follows it, signifies something of a *different* nature from that which was immediately before mention'd. I desire this may be attended to, for it is able of it self to clear the Text, and the Point in hand, and perhaps it may do it more dexterously than any Answer yet given hath done. It is said by the *Socinians*, that καὶ in this Text expresses the Discrepancy between *the only True God*, and *Jesus Christ*; or rather the Opposition of one to the other; whence they conclude, that Christ is not God. But if they would correct this Conceit, and consider that καὶ in this place, (as in several others of the New Testament) signifies rather the Agreement of the things spoken of, than their Opposition, they would soon alter their Opinion, and reckon this Text as one of the best Proofs of Christ's Divinity, as certainly it is.

And this was the Sense and Judgment of the Ancient and most Learned Asserters of the Trinity. *God* in this Text, saith *Tertullian*, *is applied both to the Father and the Son, and it is as much as if it were said*, [*That they may know thee and Jesus Christ to be the only True God.*] And so the Words are Expounded by several * other ancient Fathers; they took the Conjunction καὶ in the Sense before named.

I will explain this by some Passages which we meet with in the New Testament, and which I find quoted to my hand on another Occasion, by a very fierce, but subtle † *Socinian*, but I will make use of them against himself. Those words in *Mark* 16. 17. *Tell his Disciples and Peter*, are not to be understood, as if *Peter* were not a Disciple, but 'tis suppos'd that he was one, and an eminent one. In a resembling sort, say I, *the only True God and Jesus Christ*, intimate not any Opposition between those two; or as if *Jesus Christ* were not also *the only True God*, but they imply that he is. When it is said, *A great Multitude follow'd Christ from Judea, and from Jerusalem*, Mark 3. 7. Who will thence gather, that *Jerusalem* was not comprehended in *Judea*, or that *Judea* excludes *Jerusalem*? It rather appears that *and* is here a Note of Relation and Agreement, and signifies that *Jerusalem* belong'd to *Judea*. This we may easily apply to the present Subject.

* *Chrysost. in loc. Nazianz. Orat.* 36. *Basil. adv. Eunom. Epiphan. hæres.* 62. *Cyril. in cap.* 5. *Johan. Augustin. cont. Max. l.* 3. *c.* 13.

† *Orat. cont. Arian.*

* *Greg. Naz. Orat.* 36. *Cyril. in Johan. cap.* 5. *Ambros. de fide, lib.* 5. *c.* 1. *Augustin. Tract.* 105. *in Johan.*

† *Engedin in Gal.* 1. 1.

And among Prophane Authors, there might be many Instances produced of the like kind. I will only mention one, that the foresaid Writer hath quoted on a far different Account. that you may see how these Men fall by their own Weapons. He takes notice, that at the beginning of *Aristophanes*'s *Plutus*, there is this Exclamation, ὦ Ζεῦ καὶ Θεοί! *Where Jupiter*, saith he, *is not excluded from the Number of the Gods.* Now, let us apply this; as Θεοὶ is not spoken here in opposition to Ζεὺς, or Ζεύς, in way of Opposition to Θεοί, as if he were not one of the Heathen Gods; so after the same manner, (for the Style of the Evangelists, or Apostles, and other Writers, is the same as to these things) *Jesus Christ*, and *the only True God*, are not opposed in this place. Christ in these Words doth not except himself, as if he were not the *True God*, and the *only True God*, for both the Father and he, and the Holy Ghost are the *only True God*. All that our Adversaries are able to say, with any Truth, is this, (and we are as forward to assert it as they can be) That these Words do only distinguish Christ here from the Father, and shew that he is not the same Person in the Godhead, but he is the same in Essence with his *Father*, and therefore, (as I shall prove afterwards) he is expresly call'd the *Only God*, which is the Title here given to the First Person in the Trinity. If these Men would consider what is said in *John* 14. 10. *I am in the Father, and the Father in me.* And in *John* 16. 15. *All things that the Father hath are mine*, they would lay aside their Cavils and Objections.

3. Another Answer I will offer, by further explaining the Import of the *Hebrew* Word *badad*, and the *Greek* μόνος, *only*, or *alone*. If we consult, *Gal.* 1. 23.—2. 20.—3. 2. *Heb.* 9. 10. we shall find that the Adverb μόνον is not strictly taken, so as to shut out all other things. And the Adjective μόνος is not absolutely and simply to be understood in an exclusive Sense, as in *John* 8. 9. Christ was left *alone*, yet the Apostles were with him, and the Woman was there ἐν μέσῳ *in the midst* of the People, only the *Pharisees* were gone. So in 1 *Cor.* 9. 6. *I only, and Barnabas, have not we Power*, &c. Where it is plain, that *only* doth not exclude *Barnabas*, but takes him in. So here *the only True God and Jesus Christ*, doth not debar Jesus Christ from being the only True God. I could observe, that the Word *only*, or *alone*, even when 'tis applied to *God*, is not an exclusive Term. Thus, in *Deut.* 32. 12. *The Lord alone did lead them*, i. e. did lead the People of *Israel* out of *Egypt*; which if you understand to be spoken concerning God the Father, yet you must not exclude God the Son, who in the Form of an Angel conducted the *Israelites*, *Exod.* 23. 20, 21. *Jos.* 5. 14. *Isa.* 63. 9. Again, when 'tis said, *Thou Lord alone hast made Heaven and Earth, and all things therein*, Neh. 9. 6. we must include the Son of God, tho' the Father is only mention'd, for this is part of the Son's Character, That *he made Heaven and Earth, for without him was not any thing made that was made*, John 1. 3. And so those Texts are to be understood, *Job* 9. 8. *Who alone spreadeth out the Heavens. Isa.* 44. 24. *I am the Lord that stretcheth forth the Heavens alone, that spreadeth abroad the Earth by my self:* Where the Son of God is necessarily included. God the Father is *the only Potentate, the King of Kings, and Lord of Lords*, 1 Tim. 6. 15. yet Christ is *King of Kings, and Lord of Lords*, Rev. 19. 16. Yea, we may observe further, that the Word *Only* is attributed to our Saviour as he is *God*; as in *Jude*, *v.* 4. where he is call'd ὁ μόνος δεσπότης Θεὸς καὶ κύριος, our *only Master, God and Lord*; for so 'tis to be *English'd* according to the Original. But can we hence inferr, that the First Person in the Trinity is not *Master, God, and Lord?* No, surely; no more can we gather from the applying of *Only* to God the Father, that the Son is not God. And in the last Verse of this Epistle of *Jude*, Christ is call'd *the only Wise God:* But you may as well say, that this excludes his Father and the Holy Ghost, as that *the only True God* excludes Christ. Thus, if we rightly understand this Word μόνος *Only*, (which is very obvious to any unprejudiced Man) we can't but condemn the *Objectors*, who cite this Text to disprove the Divinity of Christ.

The *Apostles Epistles* afford our Adversaries several Texts for their Purpose, as they imagine. They alledge, *Col.* 1. 15. where Christ is call'd *the First-born of every Creature*; whence they inferr, that Christ is a *Creature*, and consequently not *God*. But the Answer is, that he is *both*, because of his *Humane* and *Divine Nature*. As to the First, 'tis certain that he is a *Created* Being, and he is the *First-born* of them; that is, he is the *Chief* and *Principal* of them, for so that Word signifies

nifies in the Scripture-ſtyle, *Gen.* 4. 22. *Pſal.* 89. 27. *Jer.* 31. 9. Becauſe the *Birth-right* of old did carry with it *Precedency*, *Excellency*, and *Dominion*: And therefore 'tis obſervable, that immediately after the *Firſt-born*, (or *Firſt-begotten*) *from the Dead*, *Col.* 1. 18. 'tis added, *That in all things he might have the Pre-eminence*; which plainly ſhews what is the meaning of *the Firſt-born* in the 15th Verſe. He is ſaid to be *the Firſt-born of every Creature*, becauſe as he is *Man*, he is the *Chief* of the Creation. *Secondly*, As he is *God*, he is *the Firſt-born of every Creature*, as he is Prince and Lord over all the Creatures; for ſtill I take *Firſt-born* as it ſignifies, *Preeminence*, *Excellency*, and *Dominion*; and certainly he is not improperly ſtyled the Lord of the whole Creation, who Created all Things, *John* 1. 3. *All things were made by him.* And this is the very Reaſon that is given in *Col.* 1. 16. why Chriſt is call'd *the Firſt-born of every Creature*; *for*, (ſaith the Apoſtle) *by him were all things Created.* Thus we ſee the Words of that Text are fitly applicable to Chriſt, whether we underſtand them of his *Humane*, or his *Divine Nature.*

Other places are alledged by our Adverſaries out of St. *Paul's* Writings, as that in *Gal.* 3. 20. *Now a Mediator is not a Mediator of one, but God is one.* If God be but One, and therefore there can be no Mediator between God and himſelf; then how can there be a Second Perſon in the Divinity? The Notion of *Perſons* is here excluded by the Apoſtle. But this is a meer Surmiſe, and hath its Original from the Miſunderſtanding of the Apoſtle's Scope in this place, which I will briefly ſet down. *The Law*, ſaith he, *was Ordained by Angels in the Hand of a Mediator*, i. e. that the Law might be the more formidable, it was proclaim'd and divulged by the Glorious Miniſtry of Angels, and with Thunder, and Lightning, ſo that the People durſt not come near the Mountain; therefore *Moſes* was call'd up to be a *Mediator* between God and them, and by his Hand it was deliver'd to them, *Deut.* 5. 5. *Now*, (ſaith he) *a Mediator is not a Mediator of One*, (he is a Third Perſon that acts between Two others) *but God is One, he* was *One* of the Parties in this Mutual Covenant and Compact that was at that time in Agitation, and the *Iſraelites* were the *other*: So *Moſes* was properly a *Mediator*, i. e. he interceded between God and the *Iſraelites*, and God was pleaſed to accept of his Interceſſion and Mediation in behalf of that People.

But afterwards a higher and nobler Diſpenſation broke forth, and then it appear'd to the World that there was a *Greater Mediator*; and that though God was but One as to his Divine Eſſence, yet there was a Plurality of Perſons in that Eſſence, and accordingly God the Father might be Mediated by the Second Perſon in the Godhead. He was to be the *Sequeſter*, the *Internuncius*, the *Mediator* between the Father and the Sinful Race of Mankind. Thus in the moſt extenſive meaning of the Words, *God is one*, (for there is more comprehended in this Paſſage than we have a view of at the firſt ſight) *i. e.* God the Father, by Appointing and Conſtituting this *Mediator*, his Only Son, doth thereby declare, that he is willing to be *at Peace and Unity* with thoſe Perſons who were at Enmity with him; in this Senſe *he is One.* The Quarrel, the Difference between them is removed by the Undertakings of the Son of God, the ſame with the Father, but a diſtinct Perſon. This is the Apprehenſion which I have of this Place of Scripture, and I believe, thoſe who are of conſiderate Minds, will not be backward to concurr with me. *Chriſt Jeſus* the Mediator between God and Man is here included; for *Moſes* was in this *Mediatorſhip* an eminent Type and Repreſentation of *Chriſt Jeſus*, the Peace-maker and Mediator. Thus it appears, that the Apoſtle is ſo far here from Excluding, that he clearly aſſerts, a Second Perſon in the Trinity.

That is a great place with our Adverſaries, 1 *Cor.* 8. 6. *To us there is but one God, the Father.* To which they joyn *Eph.* 4. 6. *There is one God and Father of all.* But nothing is more eaſily anſwer'd; for if the Apoſtle had ſaid, *there is but One God the Son*, and if he had ſaid in another place, *there is but One God the Holy Ghoſt*, both theſe would be conſiſtent with what he ſaith here, *there is but One God, the Father*; for it is truly affirm'd, that every one of the Divine Perſons is God, and yet they are all but the One True God. This is ſufficient to remove the Cavil rais'd againſt the foreſaid Text.

All those Places of Scripture alledged by *Arians* of old, and the *Unitarians* of late, where there is some Prerogative given to the *Father* above the *Son*, as when 'tis said, *My Father is greater than I*, John 14. 28. *I do nothing of my self*, John 8. 28. *My Doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me*, John 7. 16. And some other Passages of the like nature; and when Christ is call'd *a Servant, and a Minister*, *Mat.* 12. 18. *Heb.* 8. 2. All these are easily solv'd, by distinguishing between the *Divine* and *Humane Nature* of Christ.

Some alledge those Texts, where God the Father is call'd *the God of our Lord Jesus Christ*, 2 Cor. 11. 31. Eph. 1. 3, 17. 1 Pet. 1. 3. And where Christ addressing himself to, or speaking of his Father, saith, *My God*, *John* 20. 17. *Mat.* 27. 46. *Rev.* 3. 12. Whence they endeavour to null the Divinity of Christ; for, say they, when it is said, that God the Father is the God of Christ; it is implied, that Christ himself is not God. But this is very shallow, for upon a double Account, God the Father may be said to be the *God* of Christ: First, With respect to the Divinity of Christ, for as he is the Son of God the Father, so the Father may be call'd *his God*, though Christ himself be God. And therefore it is observable, that in those places where the First Person in the Trinity is call'd Christ's *God*, he is also styl'd his *Father*, to let us know in what Sense he is said to be his *God*; that is, as he is his Eternal Father, by whom this Second Person was Begot. *Secondly*, God the Father is the *God* of Christ, as Christ is Man, consisting of Soul and Body. So he may be said to be the *God* of Christ, as well as of us, because he is his Creator and Maker. Besides, as to his *Humane Nature*, he behaved himself towards God the Father in all things as his *God*. In this respect, God the Father may truly be said to be the God of Christ and Believers; (hence you read, *My God, and your God*, John 20. 17.) Though on *other* Accounts he is so in a far different Sense.

This Apostle's Writings afford our Adversaries, as they think, another Text, whereon they may build their Blasphemous Opinion. It is said, *There is One God, and One Mediator between God and Men, the Man Christ Jesus*, 1 Tim. 2. 5. Where Christ the Mediator is distinguish'd from *One God*; whence they gather, that Christ the Mediator is not *God*. They insist, that he is call'd a *Man* here in Opposition to *God*, and that he being but a *Mediator* between God and Man, he cannot possibly be God himself. But all this is downright Mistake, and proceeds from the Misunderstanding of the first Words in this Verse, *There is One God*, which refers to the *whole Trinity*, who, though they are Three Persons, yet are One Godhead. And the Second of these Persons is the *Mediator* here spoken of, who could not discharge this Office, unless he had assumed Humane Nature, and therefore he is emphatically call'd *Man*. But this Man is *God* likewise, because it was absolutely necessary he should be so for the Compleating and Finishing of the Mediatorship, and rendring it a Meritorious Work. He could not have Suffer'd and Died, if he had not been *Man*; he could not have Merited and made Satisfaction, unless he had been *God*. Therefore he was both, and consequently here is no Opposition between *God* and *Man*, or between *One God* and the *Mediator*; for this latter, as he is God, is included in the *whole Trinity*. For though he took upon him the Office of Mediator, yet he is truly God. And though as a Mediator, he was inferior to his Father; (whence he saith, *My Father is greater than I*) yet as to his Divine Essence he was equal to him.

But it will be said, If the Essence of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost be the same, then the Son being Incarnate, the Father and Holy Ghost were Incarnate likewise, and the whole Deity assumed Humane Nature. The Answer is, The Divinity assumed Flesh in the Person of the Son only, and not of the Father and the Holy Ghost. Christ is *Personally*, though not *Essentially*, distinct from the Father and the Holy Spirit; and therefore what he doth as Personally consider'd, is not communicable to the rest of the Persons in the Trinity, who are different Subsistences from him. Hence any Man of Correct Thoughts must conclude, that it is unreasonable, and groundless, to say, that all the Persons were Incarnate, because one was.

The *Socinians* alledge those Words, *Acts* 2. 36. *God hath made that same Jesus whom ye have Crucified, both Lord and Christ*, and gather thence, That Christ is *a made God*; and therefore the Proper and Real Divinity can't be ascrib'd to him: And the *Arians* of old made use of this Text, to prove Christ to be a *Creature*.

But

But the Word ἐποίησε, *he made*, is the same with *constituit*, *he appointed*; that is, God the Father appointed Christ to be Lord of Heaven and Earth, and Head of the Church, and the true Messias. So St. *Chrysostom* rightly interprets the *Greek* Word, * *He made*; that is, saith he, *he appointed*, so that nothing is said here concerning the Substance of Christ. So *Basil* the Great, *Gregory Nyssen*, *Cyril* of *Alexandria*, and *Oecumenius* understand this Place. And the Apostle interprets himself in Heb. 3. 2. *Jesus Christ was faithful to him who made him*, for so 'tis in the *Greek*, but we rightly translate it, *who appointed him*; that is, who appointed or constituted him to be a Mediator, and a High Priest. This Place, saith *Theophylact*, † speaks not of Christ's Essence or Substance, but of his Election to the Dignity of High-Priesthood. And so *Athanasius*, *Epiphanius*, *Chrysostom*, and *Theodoret* expound the Words.

* Ἐποίησε, τουτέστι, κατέστησεν· οὐδὲν περὶ οὐσιώσεως εἰρῆσθαι φησί. Hom. 6. in Act.

† Οὐ περὶ οὐσιώσεως εἰρῆσθαι ὁ λόγος, ἀλλὰ περὶ προχειρίσεως. In loc.

I will mention but one Text more, and that is in the 4th Verse of the Epistle of St. *Jude*.——*denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ*. Here, say they, is asserted *One only Lord God*, i. e. the Eternal Father and Creator of all Things: And *Jesus Christ* is excluded from this Godhead, which is denoted by the Particle *and*, which here distinguishes and separates *the only Lord God* from *the Lord Jesus Christ*. In answer to this, I will prove, 1. That this Text doth not at all speak of God the Father. 2. That the Word *and* hath no such Signification here as is pretended. First, I say, these Words are not spoken concerning the First Person in the ever-to-be-adored Trinity, but concerning the Second, and so they will prove to be a most Signal and remarkable Witness of the Divinity of our Saviour. We may know who is meant in this Text by consulting St. *Peter*, from whose 2*d. Epist.* 2*d Chap.* a great Part of this Epistle of St. *Jude* is borrow'd, for this Apostle having Occasion to warn the Christians against those false Teachers, who were crept into the Church at that Time when he wrote, thought fit to make use of some of the very same Expressions which St. *Peter* had used when he foretold the Coming of those Men. * *There shall be false Teachers among you, who shall bring in damnable Heresies* (the chief of which shall be this, viz.) *even denying the Lord that bought them*. And who is this *Lord* that *bought* or purchased them but Jesus Christ? for he pay'd a Price for all, in as much as all (even the worst Men) have some Benefit and Advantage by him. Of this *Lord* St. *Jude* speaks here, telling us that there were *certain Men crept in unawares, who turn'd the Grace of God* (the Mercy and Favour of God the Father in sending his Son) *into Lasciviousness, and denied the only Lord God*, viz. Jesus Christ himself.

* 2 Pet. 2.

And Secondly, That the Particle *and*, which immediately follows, may not hinder us from embracing this Interpretation of the Words: I add by Way of Answer in the next Place, That this Word καὶ is not a Mark of Distinction or Separation, as if *our Lord Jesus Christ* were different from *the only Lord God*; but it is a Note of *Explication*, and tells us who is meant by the former Words. This Acception of the Particle καὶ I had taken Notice of before, but now I shall have Occasion to insist further upon it, in Order to the explaining the Text which is before us. St. *Jude* tells us, That there were certain Men that *denied the only Lord God and our Lord Jesus Christ*: Where the *Greek* Word καὶ, should not be render'd *and*, but *Namely* or *Even*: And so it should be in several other Places; yea, in those which speak of one or more Persons of the Trinity, which makes it the more observable. *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ*, 2 Cor. 1. 3. Καὶ doth not distinguish *God* from *Father*, but is equivalent with *Even*, and is no more than, *God even the Father*. So in *Gal.* 1. 4. and 1 *Thess.* 3. 11. *God and our Father*. And in *Col.* 2. 2. *Jam.* 1. 27. *God and the Father*; καὶ should be translated *Namely* or *Even*, for it is not a *Copulative* here, but an *Explicative*: It is as much as, *that is*. The very *Socinians* themselves must acknowledge this here, or else they must say, that *God* and the *Father* are Two Persons, or they must say that the Father is not God.

Now, if this Word is thus to be translated in *these* Places, why should we not translate it so in *this* Text which is before us, *viz.* thus, *even our Lord Jesus Christ*? There is as much Reason and Necessity for one as for the other. Nay indeed, if you consult some other Places, you will find that καὶ is render'd thus by our Translators, as in *Rom.* 15. 6. *God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ*. And in 1 *Cor.* 15. 24. *when he shall have delivered up the Kingdom to God, even the Father*. So in 1 *Thess.* 3. 13. *God even our Father*. And in the very Epistle of St. *James*, where (as we took Notice before) it is render'd *and*, it is afterwards

afterwards render'd otherwise, *Chap.* 3. *ver.* 9. *God even the Father.* Our Translators should have used the same or the like Word in this Text of St. *Jude*, and then the Sense would have been perspicuous, and there would have been no Ground at all for the foresaid Objection: But seeing the Translation varies, we must bear with it, and not be troubled that we read often in the New Testament of *God and Jesus Christ*, which seems to make a Distinction between *God* and *Christ*, as if Christ were not God. This we are to remember at the same Time, that we read also of *God and the Father*, and yet none thinks that the Father is not God. Therefore let us (as we ought) understand both alike, and then we interpret the Places rightly. Doing this, we shall be convinced that *the only Lord God* here mentioned by St. *Jude*, is no other than the Second Person in the Trinity.

Who as he is here called *the only Lord God*, so in the last Verse of this Chapter, (that you may see that this Apostle is consonant to himself, and ends in the like Style that he began) he is called *the only wise God our Saviour.* Still he is *the only God.* And that this Place speaks of God the Son, and not of God the Father, is evident from the foregoing Verse, which speaks of the same Divine Person, *him that is able to present you Faultless*: Which is the same with *Eph.* 5. 27. he that *sanctifies and cleanses his Church, and presents it to himself without Spot and Wrinkle.* And this he doth *before the Presence of his Glory*, i. e. at his Glorious appearing at the last Day. Thus the Language of this Place in St. *Jude* shews, that it is particularly meant of our Saviour; and I have proved before, That *He* as well as the Father is *the only God.* It is no Wonder therefore that here he is likewise (as well as the *Father* in * other Places) call'd *the only wise God.* Thus you see the Fourth Verse of this Epistle is explain'd and confirm'd by what we read in this Last Verse of it: And thus that very Text which the Opposers of Christ's Divinity alledge in favour of their Opinion, is so far from abetting it, That it is one of the most eminent Places in the New Testament against it, and of itself alone (rightly understood) is able to confute their impious Tenent.

*Rom. 16. 26. 1 Tim. 1. 17.

Having thus demonstrated the Divinity of *Christ* out of the Evangelical Writings, it remains that I shew you what these testifie concerning the *Holy Ghost.* It is manifest hence, (maugre all the Cavils of perverse and disputing Men) That the Holy Ghost is an Intellectual and Spiritual Subsistence, that he is properly a *Person*, and not (as the *Socinians* hold) the *Vertue* or *Power* of God only. There are those Things said in the New Testament concerning the Holy Spirit, which cannot possibly be understood but of a *real Person.* He is said *to come* unto Men, and to be *sent unto them*, John 15. 26. He is said to *teach*, to *bring to remembrance*, to *reprove the World of Sin*, *to speak*, *to guide*, and *to shew Things to come*, John 14. 26. John 16. 7, 8, 13. These are all *Personal Actions.* And it may be observed in this latter Place that though πνεῦμα be of the Neuter Gender, yet it is † join'd with a Masculine Pronoun, which shews that it refers to a *Person.* We read that the *Holy Ghost descended in a bodily Shape like a Dove*, Luk. 3. 22. but if the Spirit were only a Quality, a Vertue, a Gift or Grace, we could not imagine it to be capable of assuming a Corporeal Figure, or of *descending*, because these are not competible to an Accident, but a Substance. So the Holy Spirit is represented as a *Person* in Acts 13. 2. *The Holy Ghost said, separate me Barnabas and Paul for the Work whereunto I have call'd them.* Personal Acts are ascribed to him in *Acts* 10. 19. *Rom* 8. 20. 27. 1 *Cor.* 3. 16.—12. 8. 11. *Eph.* 4. 30.

† Ἐκεῖνος τὸ Πνεῦμα.

In short, the New Testament speaks every where of the *Spirit* as of a *Person*, in direct Opposition to the *Socinians*, who hold, that he is only the Power of God the Father: For though indeed the Old *Arians* and the *Macedonians* acknowledged him to be a *Person* (notwithstanding their Denial of his Deity;) and though one of the * Modern Opposers of the Trinity treads in their Steps, and holds him to be the *Principal Minister of God*, and a *Heavenly Minister* or *Angel*; so that according to this Writer the Holy Spirit is the chief of the good Angels; yet the Disciples of *Socinus* generally assert the Holy Ghost to be meerly an *Opaeration*, or *Vertue*, or *Inspiration of God.* Which is palpably confuted by all the fore-cited Texts, which mention the Holy Ghost as an intelligent Substance and a voluntary Agent, and not a meer Quality or Power. Which is also clearly baffled by *Rom.* 15. 19. *the Power of the Spirit of God*, which according to a *Socinian* is no more than *the Power of the Power*, which no Man of Sense can admit of. Therefore we conclude, That the Holy Ghost is not a Quality, but a Personal Substance that hath

* J. Biddle, *in his Confession of Faith.*

hath Life, Understanding, and Will: And I have shew'd that he hath Personal Actions ascribed to him.

And moreover, it is evident from these inspired Writings, That he is a Divine Person in the Trinity that is distinct from the Father and the Son? from the Former, because he was *sent by him*, and *proceeded from him*, John 15. 26. from the Latter, because *he received of that which was the Son's*, and *by it glorified the Son*, John 16. 14. Besides, he whose Coming depended on the Son's Departure, was really distinct from the Son; and that this was the Condition of the Holy Ghost is apparent from *John* 16. 7. *If I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you.*

Now, That this Sacred Person who is thus distinguish'd from the other Persons in the Trinity, is of one Substance, Glory and Majesty with them, and consequently is God, I will prove in the same Manner that I did the *Divinity of Christ*, viz. by letting you see that the *Name*, *Attributes*, *Works*, and *Worship* which are ascribed to *God*, are given to the Holy Spirit.

First he hath the *Name* given him, which is implied in *Luke* 1. 35. *The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the Power of the Highest shall over shadow thee: Therefore also, that Holy Thing which shall be born of thee, shall be called the Son of God.* Where we see that Christ was to be called, that is, to be the *Son of God*; and the Reason is assign'd, namely, because Christ was born of the Virgin *Mary* by the Almighty Power and Efficacy of the *Holy Ghost*: Whence it directly follows that the Holy Ghost is *God*, for that is the Ground of this Appellation given to Christ. He could not have been called the *Son of God* here, on this Account now mention'd, but the Son of a Creature, if the Holy Ghost had not been *God*. I take this to be very clear and demonstrative. Only I must add, That though this is one Reason of the Appellation of the *Son of God* given to Christ, yet it is not the only Reason, nor is it the Chief one. For the Chief is the *Eternal Generation* of the Word by the Father, mention'd in sundry plain Texts of Scripture, *Psal.* 2. 7. *John* 1. 18. *Acts* 13. 32. *Rom.* 8. 32. *Heb.* 1. 5. and many more. The Divine Essence was communicated to him by the Father, and that by Way of Generation, and thence he is called the *Son of God*, because he participates of the Essence of God the Father.

Another Place to our Purpose is Acts 5. 3, 4. *Ananias lyed to the Holy Ghost*; and 'tis said, *he lyed not to Man, but unto God*: Whence it is plain, That *to lye unto God* and *to lye to the Holy Ghost* are the same: For he that is call'd the *Holy Ghost* in one Verse is styled *God* in the other. In 1 *Cor.* 3. 16. the faithful are call'd *the Temple of God*: Which the Apostle explains and confirms afterwards, by saying expresly they are *the Temple of the Holy Ghost*, *Ch.* 6. *v.* 19. whence it follows, That the *Holy Ghost* hath the Denomination of *God* given to him. So groundless is that of a late *Unitarian*, That * *neither our Lord Christ nor the Holy Spirit are call'd Gods, or God in the Holy Scriptures.* We see here, That the *Holy Ghost* hath the Title of *God*, no less than the *Father* and the *Son*: And this to any unprejudiced and wise Man, is an unanswerable Testimony of his Divinity, for he is *call'd God*, because he *is really so*: And to think otherwise is against all Reason. This then I take to be a convictive Argument; The Scripture calleth the Father *God*, and the Son *God*, and the Holy Ghost *God*; and the same Scripture saith, There is but *One God*: *Ergò* it saith, that the Father, and Son, and Holy Ghost are One and the same God: It saith, that God is One in Essence, and Three in Persons.

* Brief History of the *Unitarians*, p. 46.

Secondly, The Holy Ghost hath all the *Properties* and *Attributes* of God; therefore he is equally God with the other Two Persons. *Eternity* is ascribed to him by the Apostle, *Heb.* 9. 4. where he is call'd *the Eternal Spirit*. He is *infinitely knowing* (which is another Attribute) and thence is said to *search all Things*, 1 Cor. 2. 10. *i. e.* to have a perfect and compleat Knowledge of them, as it is explain'd in the next Verse. As a Proof of this, he fore-seeth all Things, otherwise he could not foretell them. *The Spirit speaketh expresly* (not only in the Scriptures, but to me by Special Revelation) *that in the last Times some shall depart from the Faith*, 1 Tim. 4. 1. The *immense Power* of the Holy Ghost (which is another Divine Property) is demonstrated from his being concern'd in the Creation of the World at first, *Gen.* 1. 2. and the Formation of all Things since, *Job* 26. 13. *Job* 33. 4. Those stupendous and amazing *Miracles* which you read of in the Gospel, which were

were Actions that far surpassed all natural Strength, were (with the immediate Concurrence of the Son of God) the Effects of this Holy Spirit, and for that Reason the Wilful and Malicious denying that those Miraculous Acts were done by the extraordinary Power of this Divine Person is call'd *the Blasphemy against the Holy Ghost*. The infinite Power and Efficacy of this Divine Agent, is demonstrable from a Multitude of other Passages in the Evangelical and Apostolical Writings. And by fair and rational Collection, though not in express Terms, it appears that all the *other Excellencies* which are appropriated to the Godhead, are found in the Holy Spirit.

Again, the *Works* and *Offices* which are attributed to him, are also the very same with those of *God*, as Renovation, Sanctification, Adoption, and the bestowing of all saving Grace: Whence you read of *being born of the Spirit*, John 3. 5. *the renewing of the Holy Ghost*, Tit. 3. 5. *and the Sanctification of the Spirit*, Rom. 15. 16. 1 Cor. 6. 11. 2 Thess. 2. 13. 1 Pet. 1. 2. and he is called *the Spirit of Sanctification*, Rom. 1. 4. *the Spirit of Adoption*, Rom. 8. 15. *the Spirit of Grace*, Heb. 11. 29. The *Fruits of the Spirit* are enumerated, *Gal.* 5. 22. And that all Spiritual Gifts and Endowments are his Donation, we may be abundantly satisfied from 1 *Cor.* 12. from the 4th to the 14th Verse. And many other Places of the New Testament there are, which speak of these Operations which are proper and peculiar to *God*, and they ascribe them to the *Holy Ghost*.

Then for *Worship*, That follows necessarily from the Premisses, for if the Holy Spirit hath the Perfections and Properties of God, and doth the same Supernatural and Divine Works that he doth, he is to be adored as God. As we prove then, That he ought to be worshipp'd because he is God; so we may infallibly infer that he is God, because he is the Object of Divine Worship. Thus the Apostles *blessed* in the Name of the Holy Ghost, *the Communion of the Holy Ghost be with you*, 2 Cor. 13. 14. which argues his Divinity; for it is not to be thought that the People should be blessed in any Name but *God's* only. And this *Blessing* is a *Prayer* also, for the Apostles and their Successors (as the Holy Patriarchs and Prophets before them) prayed by Blessing; that is, in their Benedictions they begged of God some great Good for the Persons they blessed. Here then is Prayer made to the *Holy Ghost*, as well as to the *Father* and *Son*. He is called upon to bestow Grace and Spiritual Blessings upon the Church of *Corinth*: *The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the Love of God, and the Communion*, &c. And the same Apostle prays to the Holy Ghost in particular, in 1 *Thess.* 3. 12. under the Title of *Lord*, of which I shall speak afterwards.

In the Christian Church of Old it was not unusual to address themselves to him in their Devotions: Whence it was a main Argument used by the ancient *Fathers* against the *Macedonians* (who denied the Divinity of the Holy Ghost) that it was the general Custom and Practice of the Church to pray to him, as well as to the Son. And we have particular Instances of this in * St. *Cyprian*, † *Gregory Nazianzen*, whom we find praying directly to the Holy Ghost. Which discovers the Vanity and Ignorance of a ‖ late Writer, who tells us, that *there is no Example of Invocating the Holy Ghost in Antiquity or Scripture*. And truly it is a Wonder That any Man should question the Lawfulness; yea, the Necessity of invoking the Holy Ghost, for the Holy Ghost is the Author and Giver of all Graces and Spiritual Endowments, as the Apostle assures us: He (I say) is the bountiful Donor and Infuser of them (not excluding, but comprehending the other Two Persons of the Trinity) and therefore we have sufficient Reason to beg them of him. From this we may guess what Sort of Man *Episcopius* is, who confidently averrs, That there is * *nothing at all* in Scripture for worshipping of the Holy Ghost. And accordingly he defends the *Remonstrants*, for not using the Argument of *Adoration* to prove the Divinity of the Holy Ghost. From this, and what I mention'd out of him before about the *Filiation of Christ*, it will be hard to clear him from the Suspicion of *Socinianism*: Especially if we consider, That he all along perverts the Places that are usually cited for the Trinity, and fastens other Senses upon them. Though I must acknowledge (and I should do him Wrong if I did not) that in other Places (especially his Commentary on St. *John's* First Epistle) he plainly asserts the Holy Trinity.

* De Spir. Sancto.
† Carm. 5.
‖ Mr. Whiston Vol. 4. Article 20.
* Nè hilum quidem. Instit. l. 1.

To

To our present Purpose, it is sufficient that I have proved the Holy Ghost to have not only the Name, but the several Excellencies and Perfections of the Divinity; (to which might have been added his *Omnipresence, Psal.* 139. 7.) And likewise that he is to be Worshipp'd and Call'd upon. Whence I conclude that the Holy Ghost is God, or in the more ample Expressions of our Church, That *the Holy Ghost is of one Substance, Majesty and Glory with the Father and the Son, Very and Eternal God.* Article 3.

Hitherto we have *distinctly* proved the Divinity of the *Son*, and the Divinity of the *Holy Ghost*. I will next alledge those Places of the New Testament, which present us with the *whole Trinity together*; which will yet further confirm us in our Belief of this Great and Wonderful Mystery. The Three Persons of the Godhead are expresly mention'd in *Mat.* 3. 16. *Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straitway out of the Water, and lo the heavens were opened to him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him: and lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son*, &c. Here are Three distinct Personalities, the *Father* speaking from Heaven, the *Son* coming up out of *Jordan*, the *Spirit* descending from above. This first Place which I offer is very clear and evident, and puts it beyond all doubt, that there are in the Divine Essence Three distinct Persons, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

This grand Truth is also perspicuous in *Matth.* 28. 19. *Go teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.* The Sacrament of Baptism is here Instituted, and it is order'd to be Celebrated in the Name, not only of God the Father, but of the Two other Persons, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, who are of equal Authority and Power with the Father. And it is not to be doubted, but that the Apostles kept to the very Form of this Commission, and Baptized in the Name of the *Father*, and the *Son*, and the *Holy Ghost*; though it is not in the *Acts*, or any where else express'd at length, but only *in the Name of Jesus*, which implies the rest. And this is an usual thing in the Sacred Writings; we find several things not fully set down in one Place, which were so in another. Any unprejudiced Mind may perceive that the Doctrine of the *Trinity* was to be *taught to all Nations*, and that they were to be Baptized εἰς τὸ ὄνομα, (the same with ἐπὶ τῷ ὀνόματι, *Acts* 2. 31.) *into*, or *upon the Name*, or Profession and Acknowledgment of the *Sacred Trinity*, One God, and Three Persons; in Opposition to all False gods, and Pretenders to a Deity among the *Nations*. And here, by the way, we may take notice of the Vanity and Impertinency of those Men, who say, the Holy Spirit is only a Vertue or Power, whereas we find him here joyned with *Persons*, and himself spoken of as a *Person*: And his *Name*, or the *Profession* of him is equally to be owned with that of the Father and the Son in the Administration of Baptism; which being a Divine Ordinance, can be Administred in the Name of *God* only; therefore the *Trinity* may be proved from the *Form of Baptism* enjoyned by our Saviour. Whence it is no wonder, that it hath been question'd by the late *Unitarians*, as if it were not our Saviour's Words, but added since. But though they shew'd their Good will, yet they could effect nothing, for at last they declare, * *They are satisfied that this Form of Baptism is found in all Copies.* * *Answer to Mr.* Milb.

The Holy Trinity is in express Words set forth in *John* 14. 26. *The Comforter, who is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my Name*, &c. And the like Words in the next Chapter, and 26 *v.* Here is the First Person, the *Father*; here is the Second, who is the Person that speaks, and in other places is styl'd the *Son*; here is the *Holy Ghost*, or Third Person, who is sent by the First, *in the Name of* the Second; ἐν τῷ ὀνόματι, (for the *Greek* is not the same that is rendred *in the Name* in the fore-mention'd Text) *in*, or *by the Authority*, or *in the place* and *room* of the Second Person; for these Divine Persons in the Trinity have distinct Operations and Offices according to the Order of their Subsistence.

These Three Persons are mention'd together in 1 *Cor.* 6. 11. *Ye are washed, ye are sanctified, ye are justified in* (or *by*) *the Name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God*, i. e. God the Father. It cannot be denied, that Sanctification and Justification are the Gifts of *God* alone; none can absolve us from the Stain and Guilt of Sin but He only. Accordingly, this is the Work of the Three Persons of the Trinity, who are One God. We are cleansed from the Pollution and Punishment of our Transgressions, not only by *God the Father*, but by *the Name*

of the Lord Jesus, i. e. (as the Phrase here denotes) by the Lord Jesus himself, (according to that in *Acts* 4. 12. *There is no other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved*) and by the *Holy Spirit*.

Another place, which I find is not taken notice of, is, 1 *Cor.* 12. 4, 5, 6. *There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit*, (there is the Third Person in the Trinity) *and there are differences of Administrations, but the same Lord*, (there is the Second Person) *and there are Diversities of Operations, but it is the same God who worketh all in all*, (there is the First Person, who is the Basis and Head of the Divinity.)

Add also the Apostle's Benediction, 2 *Cor.* 13. 14. *The Grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the Love of God*, (viz. the Father) *and the Communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all.* In which Words, there is a plain distinction of the Three Persons in the Deity, *viz.* The Lord Jesus Christ, and God the Father, and the Holy Ghost: And the different Operations of these Persons, according to the Oeconomy of the Trinity are here specified, *viz. The Love* of the Father, which is the Foundation of our Redemption, the *Grace* of the Son, whereby he was moved to Undertake and Accomplish it; the *Communion* of the Spirit, whereby he renders the foresaid Love and Grace effectual to all true Believers, and makes them communicate of the real Benefits which accrue by them.

The Apostle is as plain and distinct in *Eph.* 2. 18. *Through him*, (i. e. the Son of God) *we have an access by one Spirit to the Father.*

But I will offer another place, which is overlook'd by Writers, when they undertake to prove the Doctrine of the Trinity out of the New Testament. I conceive that those Words in 1 *Thes.* 3. 11, 12, 13. mention the Sacred Trinity; *Now God himself, even* (for so ὁ is to be rendred) *our Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ direct our way unto you; and the Lord*, (i. e. the Holy Ghost) *make you to increase and abound in Love one towards another, and towards all Men, even as we do towards you.* It hath been generally thought by Expositors, that by *the Lord*, is meant the Lord Jesus Christ, before-named; but if you consult the following Verse, you will not be very ready to embrace that Interpretation, but rather to think, that *the Lord* is to be understood of the *Holy Ghost.* The Words of the next Verse, are these, *To the end he may establish your Hearts unblameable in Holiness before God, even our Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, with all his Saints.* The Question is, who is meant here by *he* in the beginning of this Verse. It is certain it must refer to One of the Persons in the Trinity, but that Person is not the *Father*; for he can't be said *to Establish our Hearts before God, even the Father:* It is not the *Son*, the Lord Jesus Christ; for it is improper to say, *The Lord Jesus Christ Establishes our Hearts at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ:* Therefore it remains, that *He* be understood of the *Holy Ghost*, who is call'd *Lord* in the former Verse; and it is his proper and peculiar Office, to *Establish our Hearts unblameable in Holiness*, both now, and at the coming of Christ with all his Saints. He is the *Sanctifier*, and therefore Establishing in *Holiness* is his Work. And that other Operation which is attributed to him, *viz. Making us to increase and abound in Love*, is his peculiar Task, as we learn from *Rom.* 5. 5. *The Love of God is shed abroad in our Hearts by the Holy Ghost.* So that in this 13th Verse, as well as in those two preceding ones, the Three Persons of the Deity are distinctly mention'd. And to make this the more probable, you may remember that the Holy Ghost was before call'd *Lord:* So that that Title being applied to him in another place, it is no wonder that it is here also.

Can there be a plainer Text to assert the ever Glorious Trinity than 1 *Pet.* 1. 2? *Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through Sanctification of the Spirit unto Obedience, and sprinkling of the Blood of Jesus Christ.* Where you may observe, That the Three Persons are not only expresly named, but their distinct Employments, with reference to the Salvation of Man are described. The Father Elects, the Spirit Sanctifies, Jesus Christ sheds his Blood, and thus Man's Salvation is wrought.

There is another eminent Text, 1 *John* 5. 7. *There are three that bear record in Heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost; and these three are one.* If this doth not plainly prove that there are Three Divine Persons in the Godhead, one may despair of citing any thing that may so much as look that way. As here are the Three *distinct Hypostases*, so here is their *Unity*, for these Three are *One*; that

that is, they have One Divine Essence. It can't be understood of the *Consent* of their Testimony; for otherwise there can be no Reason assign'd, why the same Form of Speaking is not used here that is afterwards concerning the Three other Witnesses, *these Three agree in One.* This different way of Expression, when different Things and Persons are spoken of, shews the difference of Sense. And therefore that is very flat and dull, which a Modern Antitrinitarian suggests, That *it is otherwise express'd in the following Verse for variety sake*: And adds, *Or also by meer Accident.* Here surely he was strangely stupified; for would any sensible Man tell the World, That the Holy Ghost in Scripture, when he speaks differently concerning things of a different nature, doth only vary the Phrase? Or would any Man awake, and in his Wits, declare, That the Holy Spirit in these Writings expresses it self thus and thus by meer Chance? Yet this is the Language and Sentiment of our Author, and he was forcibly put upon them to evade and shift off this Text, which is so great a Proof of the Doctrine of the Trinity. *These Three*, saith the Inspired Apostle, *are One*, i. e. They are the same as to Unity of Substance; for if you take it otherwise, the Sense is poor and lank. If you understand it only of *Unity of Consent*, the *Angels* and Blessed Spirits in Heaven *are one*, as well as the *Father*, the *Word*, and the *Holy Ghost*; and therefore 'tis reasonable to conclude, that if we let St. *John* speak like himself, *The Three that bear Record in Heaven*, must be said to be *One* in another and a higher Sense than those can be said to be so. They are One God, One Divine Essence.

But what if this Text be *Suppositious?* *Erasmus* hath this odd Reflection upon the Place, [This Weapon cannot be used with any Success, (saith he) against the *Arians*, because the Words are not in all Copies.] I confess, I am loth to suspect him, (as some do) of favouring those Men. One would think that his *Paraphrase* on *John* 1. 1. and *John* 8. 5, 8. Doth sufficiently clear him from the Imputation of *Arianism*; for he there expressly and fully asserts the Divinity of Christ. But it is true, he rejects the Proof of it from some Texts which are questionless meant concerning it. But in this he is not alone, for (not to mention *Episcopius*) *Grotius* is very Unfriendly to some Passages of Scripture which are to this Purpose; nay, *Calvin*'s usual Custom is to interpret them another way, and too much (one would be apt to think) in Favour of the *Arians*, though it is not to be question'd that he was a great and zealous Asserter of the Godhead of our Saviour, as his *Institution* testifies. But it seems, he did not apprehend that some of those Texts which were quoted by the Ancients, in defence of that Doctrine were to the purpose, and particularly he took notice that these Words are not in some Copies.

It is granted, that they are not found in an old *Latin* Manuscript at *Zurich*, which made *Bullinger* doubt of it. But before the *General Epistles* in this Manuscript, there is St. *Jerom*'s *Preface* prefix'd, where he saith, he was the more exact in that *Latin Translation*, that he might discover the Fraud of the *Arians*, who had erased that Text out of St. *John*'s Epistle. It is evident therefore, that St. *Jerom* found this Text in the *Greek Copy*. Therefore when the *Socinians* cry out, (as they generally do at this Day) that it is not extant in the Ancient *Greek Copies*, it is a meer Evasion. It was in that which St. *Cyprian* had, *A. D.* 240. in the Reign of the Emperor *Decius*, for he hath these Words; **The Lord saith*, [*I and my Father are One*] *And, again, Concerning the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, it is written*, [*And these Three are One.*] And in another place, (*Tract. de Simplic. Prælat.*) he proves the Trinity from the same Words. *Tertullian* (*adv. Prax. cap.* 25.) refers to the same Text. Therefore our Adversaries falsify, when they tell us, That these Words were added since the Council of *Nice*; for it is evident, that they were particularly taken notice of by those that lived before that Time. They are cited by † *Athanasius*, another Ancient Father of the Church, and afterwards by ‖ *Fulgentius*. He that desires farther Satisfaction about this, may consult that ‡ Learned Author, who hath lately defended the Authenticknes of this Text, though it be omitted in some Copies. He hath fully Answer'd the Objections and Cavils of *Socinus*, *Erasmus*, *Sands*, *Simon*, and hath proved, that it was not inserted into the Text by Fraud or Design. That it was Originally in the Epistle, and was not added to it (as the *Socinians* object) is also Learnedly proved by the Bishop of *Worcester*, in his *Vindication of the Trinity*, Chap. 8. And lastly, Dr. *Mills*, after several distinct Premises, concludes it to be Genuine.

*Dixit Dominus, *Ego & Pater unum sumus.* & iterum de Patre & Filio & Spiritu Sancto Scriptum est, *& hi tres unum sunt.* De Unitate Ecclesiæ.

† Lib. 1. Dial. ad Theoph.

‖ In Hæresiolog.

‡ D. *Smith* Miscellan.

The reason why these Words are left out in some Copies is plain, if we remember what *Socrates*, in his *Ecclesiastical History*, Book 7. Chap. 32. saith, *viz.* That the Christian Church complained of the Corruption of this Epistle of St. *John*, even before *Arius*'s Time, by the first Adversaries of the Doctrine of Christ's Divinity. But though those early Hereticks expung'd these Words out of *some* Manuscripts, yet they were then, and are still found in the most Authentick Copies. *Calvin*, who partly scrupled this Text, confesses, (upon the Place) That the Most, and the Ancientest Copies have it. It was in the *Greek* Copies in *Tertullian*'s Time, and in *Cyprian*'s, and *Fulgentius*'s, for they all Quote it, as hath been said before; and it was made use of by *Athanasius* in the Council of *Nice* against *Arius*; and therefore there is no reason to think that it is a *Suppositious Text*, as a * *double-column'd* Gentleman fansied it, and styled it.

* The Exceptions, &c. examined.

Besides, we have no Ground to think it is, (whatever is fansied by some) seeing this Text doth not assert any thing which other Texts are silent about; but on the contrary, there are several places (which I have already produced) that speak aloud the very same thing that is here said.

But I will add another, namely, *John* 10. 30. *I and my Father are one*; which speaks louder and plainer than any of them, as to this particular Doctrine of the Unity of the Three Persons in the Godhead. Christ and his *Father are One*, not one Person, but one Thing, one Essence; for ἕν denotes the Identity of the *Thing* or *Substance*, the Unity of the *Essence*. *Thus* Christ and the Father, and consequently the Holy Ghost are *One*, they are the same God. I had occasion to make use of this Text before, to prove the *Omnipotency* of the Second Person in the Trinity, but now I will shew how it proves his *Identity* with the First Person; that this is the true and genuine meaning of the Words, is obvious from the Carriage of the *Jews*, to whom they were spoken; for as soon as they heard our Saviour utter them, *they took up Stones to Stone him*, v. 31. because this which he had spoken was thought by them to be *Blasphemy*, v. 33. which shews that they understood these Words of the *Unity* of his *Nature* with that of God. They knew very well what Christ meant, when he said, *He and his Father are One*, viz. That he was the same with God; for we read that they laid this to his Charge, *Thou being a Man, makest thy self God*, v. 33. Or, as 'tis in *John* 5. 18. *He said that God was his Father, making himself equal with God.* The *Jews* made both these alike, one express'd the other. And so the Apostle is to be understood, when he saith, That Christ *counted it not robbery to be equal with God*, Phil. 2. 6. For being *in the Form of God*, (as the same Apostle there speaks) that is, being in the same State of Divinity, and enjoying *that Glory which he had with his Father before the World was*; he esteem'd his Divinity not to be a forc'd or usurped thing, he judg'd it not a † *Prey* or *Spoil*, as a thing violently gotten. It was doing no Wrong or Injury to his Father to claim *Equality* with him, for it was his own Right. Surely, [*I and my Father are One*] denotes this *Equality*, and consequently that they are the *same God*. And tho' Christ was pleas'd to evade this Meaning at that time, because he perceived the *Jews* were exceedingly enraged, (and he was unwilling to exasperate them further, seeing the Time of his Suffering was not yet come) yet any but a *Socinian* may discern that this was the very thing which our Saviour intended, and which indeed he could not express in clearer Words than these. And it may be observ'd, that though he seems to wave his Divinity, yet in the same place, v. 38. he intimates it, when he saith, *The Works which he did prove the Father to be in him, and he in the Father*; which is the same with *I and my Father are One*. And 'tis further observable, that the *Jews* understood the Words so; for as they before thought of Stoning him, so now they *seek to take him*, v. 39. *i. e.* to Punish him for Blasphemy, as before.

† Gr. ἁρπαγμὸν.

But *Socinus*'s Friends urge *John* 17. 21. where Christ Prays for all Believers, that they *may be one, as the Father is in him, and he in the Father; that they also may be one in both.* And again, v. 22. *That they may be one, even as he and the Father are one.* Here we see there is the same *Unity* of the Disciples of Christ, that there is of him and the Father; but the Unity of the Disciples and Members of Christ, consists in *Consent* and *Concord*; therefore such is the Unity of the Father and the Son. But all this is unsound and perverse Arguing, and hath nothing at all to support it; for it is falsely suppos'd, that Believers are *one by Consent only*, as the Objectors imagine. There are other ways of their being *One*, and they actually

actually are so; for they are intimately joyned to Christ as well as to one another by the Holy Spirit, and they are also United to God the Father, and his Son Christ Jesus by Faith. Likewise they are One among themselves in Love and Concord, in pursuit of the same Holy Designs and Ends. And this triple Union is so *close* and *entire*, that it hath some kind of *resemblance* to that ineffable Union which is between the Father and the Son. The meaning is, not that all Believers are one in the *very same manner* and *heighth* that Christ and the Father are One; but that in *their Capacity* and *Measure*, they may be said to be One, as those Persons in the Trinity are One.

This is the plain and easie Sense of our Saviour's Words in this Text, and a discerning Eye will soon perceive it, especially if it take notice of those Words of our Saviour, *Be ye perfect, even as your Father in Heaven is perfect*, Mat. 5. 48. A plain Resolution of the present Objection; for as he bids his Disciples be *Perfect, as his Father is perfect*, so he Prays here, That *they may be One, as he and his Father are One.* But who thinks that Christ Exhorts them to the *same Perfection* which is in God the Father, but only to such a Perfection as they are *capable of*, such as approaches as *near as may be* to the Divine and Infinite Perfection? So here Christ Prays, not that Believers may attain to the *same Unity* which is between God the Father and God the Son, but that they may be One in as perfect a manner as they are capable of attaining to, and in the highest degree of it. This is all that is here meant, as appears from our comparing this Text with that before-mention'd. Wherefore the Authority and Force of that Place which I produc'd, remains entire and impregnable; and we may conclude, *upon* our Saviour's assuring us, that *he* and *his Father are One*, that they are one Thing or Substance; and so that place was interpreted by the * Ancient Fathers, though it is true, notwithstanding they interpret it concerning the *Identity of their Essence*; they say that their being *One as to Mind and Will*, is not excluded here.

* Athanasii Disput. contr. Arium. Cyrill. Hierosol. Catech. 11. Greg. Naz. Orat. 49. Chrysost. Hom. 61. in Johan. Basil. Orat. 24. Greg. Nyss. contr. Eunom. St. Augustine de Trin. l. 4. c. 9. Tract. 36. in Johan.

And to confirm and corroborate this Text, and consequently the Unity and Identity I am speaking of, I will produce another, where this same Divine Doctrine is largely and fully express'd, *John* 14. 7. to 12. *If ye had known me*, (saith Christ) *ye should have known my Father also*, viz. Because our Divine Nature is the very same: *And from henceforth ye have known him, and have seen him*, i. e. by knowing and seeing of me, who am his express Image, you may be said to have known and seen him also. Whereupon *Philip said unto him, Lord, shew us the Father, and it is sufficient.* In a well-meaning but ignorant way, he would have a sight of God the Father, notwithstanding Christ had told him, that by knowing of him he knew the Father. *Wherefore Jesus saith unto him* more plainly than before, *Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip?* I tell thee, *He that hath seen me*, (who am the same in Essence with the Father) *hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Shew us the Father? Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me?* i. e. Doth not all that which I have said, convince thee that *we are One?* Yes, surely, it ought to do so, therefore I press again this upon thee, *Believe me, that I am in the Father, and the Father in me*, be throughly perswaded of this great Truth, That I am one God with the Father, for the Divine Essence or Nature is the same in us both. *Thus I and my Father are One.* Now, if it be evident and undeniable, that the *Father* and *the Son* are One Essence, it is needless to take pains to prove that the *Holy Ghost* and these are *One* in the same Sense. This naturally follows, from that Notion that hath been presented of the Trinity. And so it undeniably follows, That there is an Unity in Trinity in the Godhead; or, which is equivalent, That the Three Persons are but One Deity, which is the Doctrine and Mystery which I was to explain; and I hope I have sufficiently done it, tho' none is able to do it fully.

We have now an Idea of this Divine Mystery, which in brief is this; The Sacred Trinity, as to its common Essence is undivided, but as to its Personal Properties is distinguish'd. Or, thus, the Sameness of Nature and Essence makes the Unity of the Godhead; but from the distinct Manner of the Subsistence of the Divine Nature arises the Trinity of Persons. Or, we may unite both Propositions into one, and say, There are in the Blessed Trinity Three real Subsistences united in one undivided Substance. These are *God the Father*, neither begotten nor procee-

proceeding; *God the Son*, eternally begotten of the Father; *God the Holy Ghost* eternally proceeding from the Father and the Son. These are the Thoughts and Apprehensions we ought to have of the undivided Trinity.

There is one Place more wherein the whole Sacred Trinity is mention'd, and with that I will conclude, 20 and 21 Verses of this Epistle of St. *Jude*, *Praying in the Holy Ghost* (*i.e.* by the Assistance of the Holy Ghost) *keep your selves in the love of God*, (viz. God the Father, who is by Way of Eminence call'd *God* here) *looking for the Mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ* (the Son of God the Father) *unto Eternal Life*. Thus we see how plentiful and abundant the Testimonies are concerning this Great and Fundamental Verity, the Trinity of Persons in the Godhead. We see there is a solid Foundation in *Scripture* for this Doctrine: And it is *this* indeed that we are to ground this great and sublime Truth upon. But yet,

III. I proceed to let you see what *Humane Testimony* there is to confirm this Doctrine thus established by the Old and New Testament, especially the Latter: But First, I will acquaint you how it hath been struck at in all Ages, how this Sacred *Depositum* of the Christian Faith hath been assaulted, how it hath been blasphemously contradicted by the rabble of seducing Spirits. Some of these even in the very Infancy of the Church endeavour'd by all the Art and Subtilty they were Masters of, to overthrow this Article. *Simon Magus* was the Ring-leader of them: Who was soon follow'd by *Cerinthus* and *Ebion*, a Pair of stiff Opposers of the Divinity of our Saviour whilst St. *John* was yet alive: And against them he designed the Beginning of his *Gospel*. In the Second Century *Saturninus*, *Basilides*, and *Carpocrates* reviv'd the Heresies of the foremention'd *Simon*, and particularly that of his denying Christ to be God. So did three or four obscure Persons, as *Natalis*, *Theodotus*, *Artemon*, &c. who are mention'd by * *Epiphanius*, † *Theodoret*, and ‖ *Eusebius*. In the Beginning of the next Age appear'd *Praxeas*, who was a *Montanist*, and held our Saviour to be a meer Man. After him appear'd *Noëtus*, who held that the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost were one not only in Nature but Person, and that these Three were incarnate and suffer'd Death. His Followers were call'd *Patripassians*, because they held God the Father (he being the same with the Son) was crucified. And about the Middle of this Third Century arose *Sabellius*, who confounded the Three Persons in the Divine Essence, maintaining one and the same Person to be call'd by the different Names and Titles, or having only the different Relations, of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Now sprang up *Paul* of *Samosata*, Bishop of *Antioch*, who impiously denied that the Word was Incarnate, *i.e.* that God and Man were united in One Person, and he held that Christ was ψιλὸς ἄνθρωπος, a meer Man, nor would he allow his Existence before the Virgin *Mary*. His Disciples agreed with the *Sabellians* to declare that there was but One Person in the Deity, and that the Son and Holy Ghost were no real Subsistences different from the Father, and that the Latter was only a Gift or Power of the Father. In short, most of these Hereticks of the Three First Centuries, confounded the Three Persons of the Trinity in One.

About the beginning of the Fourth Age of the Christian Church (about the 15th Year of the reign of *Constantine* the Great) *Arius* an *African* Priest of *Alexandria* appear'd, who affirm'd that the Father only is God, that Christ was a meer Creature, and that the Holy Ghost was created by the Son: But more especially he shew'd himself a Blasphemer against the Second Person in the Blessed Trinity. He was a Traytor to the Christian Religion, he denied the Lord that bought him, he betray'd the Lord of Life; and therefore it is no Wonder that he had the same End with the Traitor *Judas*, i. e. That * he fell down headlong on the Ground, and burst asunder. *Photinus* (Bishop of *Syrmium* in *Illyrium*) follow'd him, and resolutely maintain'd *Sabellius*'s Doctrine, That there is but one single Person in the Godhead, though there be Three Names: He held with the *Samosatenians*, that Christ is a meer Man. And in this Century was *Macedonius* (Bishop of *Nicomedia*) from whom were the *Macedonians* or *Pneumatomachi*, who chiefly oppugned the Divinity of the Holy Ghost, and instead of owning him to be God, acknowledged him only to be God's Minister or Messenger. These were the Principal Hereticks as to the Doctrine of the Trinity in the Four First Ages of Christianity.

* Hæres. 54.
† Hæret. fab. l. 2. c. 9.
‖ Eccl. Hist. l. 5. c. 27.

* Πρηνὴς γενόμενος ἐλάκησε μέσος. Athanas. in Ep. ad Serapion.

I

I know, some reckon *Eusebius*, Bishop of *Cæsarea* in *Palestine*, the famous Ecclesiastical Historian, in the Number of the *Arians* in the beginning of the Fourth Century: And it is true, he did favour them till the Time of the Council of *Nice*, in which *Arius* was condemned. Yea, at the Council, it appears that he took a middle Way between them and the Orthodox, as may be gather'd from those Writers that have spoken of him. But we are assured, That he subscribed to the ὁμοούσιον of the *Nicene* Creed, yet so as it was explained according to his own Meaning, which was ill enough. Some Passages in his Book of the *Evangelical Demonstration*, shew that he was not right. But this is certain, he held Christ to be from all Eternity, (as appears from his *Epistle* to those of *Cæsarea*) and consequently was not a *perfect Arian*; therefore I do not reckon him among the Principal Asserters of this Impious Heresie.

But now it came on apace, the Emperor *Valens* (who was Colleague with *Valentinian*) favouring that Heresie, and promoting the Patrons of it: So that the Numbers of the *Arians* were very great, far exceeding those of the Orthodox. Now the Note was, *Athanasius against the whole World*, there being such † Multitudes of Persons infected with *Arianism*. Even the Bishops of the Synod at *Ariminum*, were fraudulently induc'd to subscribe to some of the *Arian* Doctrines. But at last, after the Death of some Emperors that were Friends to the *Arians*, the *Nicene* Belief generally prevail'd, and there was Peace and Agreement in all the Churches about the Doctrine of the Trinity, and the contrary Heresie was happily laid asleep, and even buried for several Centuries of Years, even almost till it was awaken'd and reviv'd by *Servetus* a *Spaniard*, who was partly an *Arian*, and partly a *Sabellian*: And by *Valentinus Gentilis* an *Italian*, who held the Three Persons in the Trinity distinct as to their Essence. After these came *Gribaldus*, *Ochinus*, *Blandrata*, *Alciat*, *Francis David*. Then appear'd *Lælius Sozzo* or *Socinus*, and his Nephew *Faustus Socinus* of *Sienna* in *Italy* (about *A. D.* 1555.) who perfectly recover'd this Heresie, and set it upon it's Legs again. It was cultivated by *Enjedinus*, and a great Number of *Polonian* and *Transylvanian* Ministers: Since which Time it hath walked up and down with great Vigour and Boldness, and hath been professed not only in *Poland*, and *Transylvania*, but in *Moscovy*, in *Sclavonia*, in *Illyricum*, in *Hungary*, in the *Turks* Dominions, in the *united Netherlands*, from whence it came over into *England*, and infected some Persons here.

† Ingemuit totus orbis, & Arianum se esse miratus est. *Hieronym. Dialog. contr. Luciferianos.*

Witness the *Quakers*, and the new Sett of *Unitarians*, who have far out-done the old *Arians*; for these confessed that God the Father generated his Son in an unutterable Manner before the World began, and that he made use of him as an Instrument in creating the World, but that the Son was not God properly: But *the Socinians and Unitarians* hold, That the Son did not exist till he was conceived in the Virgin's Womb, and that he is a God only by Office, and as being sent and employed by God. ‖ One of them declares, That the *Popish Transubstantiation is as expressly contained in Scripture, as the Trinity*. He is so prophane as to tell the World, That † *the Doctrine of the Trinity makes the Divine Power of the Godhead to reside in Three distinct Persons, whose Constitution is like that of a Free-State, rather than the more Divine Government of a single Monarchy*. Which is as absurd and ridiculous as it is impious; for he mistakes Oligarchy for a Commonwealth, and makes Three Persons a Free-State; whence 'tis evident, That he will talk Nonsense rather than not Blaspheme the Sacred Trinity.

‖ John Smith's *designed End to the Socinian Controversie*, p. 47.
† P. 53, 54.

There are amongst us many that own the Thing, *i. e. Socinianism*, but will not assume the *Name*. As we know one that refused to assert the Trinity, and by his Raillery about * *Common Nature and Particular Subsistence*, shew'd what Enmity he bore to that Doctrine. Nor will he own Christ's *Satisfaction*, though he hath been urged to it, but agrees with the *Unitarians* in that, and in denying the *Resurrection of the same Body*, and scrupling the *Immateriality of Humane Souls*; and yet he will by no Means be reckoned among the *Unitarians*, but is enrag'd if you number him among them. These Men avoid the *Title* to carry on the *Design* the better. And what is that Design, but to destroy One of the most Fundamental Mysteries of the Christian Faith, and thereby (as in a most compendious Way) to batter down the whole Fabrick of the Christian Religion, which hath this Doctrine for its Foundation? Therefore if they can undermine and overthrow this, they know all the Superstructures of the Evangelick Faith will soon sink and decay.

* Mr. L—'s *last Letter to the Bishop of Worcester*, p. 361, 362, 363.

cay. They have used their utmost Endeavours, and have advanced the Cause with great Wit and Logick, if they may be their own Judges. But if we make a Judgment according to the true Measures of Things, we shall find that they are more Subtile than Witty, they have more Confidence than Logick, and whilst they cry up Reason, they trample upon the Scriptures. This Sort of Men have done an infinite deal of Mischief in the World, and are still going on with the same hellish Design, for whilst they cry out against the Doctrine of the *Trinity*, they silently introduce *Atheism*; by unsettling the Notion of Three Persons in the Godhead, they strike at the Deity itself, and will certainly in Time (if they be not restrain'd) bring all their Followers to abjure a God. For if they can discard God as he is represented in the Holy Writ, they may soon perswade their Disciples to deny the Existence of such a Being as he is any other Ways represented.

But notwithstanding this that hath been said, *viz.* That the Eternal Divinity of Christ and of the Holy Ghost hath been, and is struck at by daring Hands; yet there have appeared in all Ages some able Champions, who have defended this Cause with that pious Concern and Zeal which it deserves. Though many have blasphemously opposed this Doctrine, yet there have never been wanting great Numbers to assert and vindicate it from the Cavils of those Adversaries. So that if we respect even *Humane Authority*, we may be sufficiently furnished and armed with that. We are encompassed with a great Cloud (and that very bright) of Witnesses to this Truth. When some obscure Men denied our Lords Divinity at the latter End of the Second Century, several wrote against them, as *Eusebius* tells us, and *Victor* then Bishop of *Rome* excommunicated *Theodotus*, the chief Ring-leader of this Party, and with great Severity animadverted upon them. And *Zephyrinus* who succeeded *Victor* in the *Roman* See, was very careful to suppress those Hereticks. In the Third Century *Tertullian* Manfully appear'd against *Praxeas* and the *Patripassians*, who held there was but One Person in the Deity.

And afterwards, all the *Greek Fathers* unanimously adher'd to this Doctrine of the Trinity, and many of them writ in Defence of it. *Athanasius* hath several Treatises, Discourses, Letters, Homilies upon this Grand Point, against the *Arians* and *Sabellians*, *Alexander* Bishop of *Alexandria*, *Meletius* Bishop of *Antioch*, *Didymus* of *Alexandria*, *Basil* Bishop of *Cæsarea*, *Gregory Nazianzen* and *Nyssen*, *Chrysostom*, *Theodoret*, and several other Persons of Eminence in the *Greek* Churches strenuously engaged in this Cause: And some of them underwent very great Sufferings for it, of whom the famous *Athanasius* is the Chief, and hath purchased an Immortal Name in the Church of Christ. There were also sundry Books and Treatises written against the *Arians*, and in Defence of the *Holy Trinity* by the *Latin* and *African Fathers*; as St. *Hilary* the Learned and Religious Bishop of *Poictiers*, who was the first of them that with his Pen attacked those Hereticks. His Book *of the Trinity* is an elaborate Piece, and excellently devout and Orthodox as to the main, wherein he at once proves this Sacred Truth, and confutes the contrary Error. This also was done by *Lucifer* Bishop of *Calaris*, *Victorinus* of *Africa*, *Faustinus*, *Damasus* Bishop of *Rome*, *Ambrose* Bishop of *Milan*, *Augustine* the celebrated Bishop of *Hippo*, and others.

And this Doctrine hath been maintain'd and ratified not only by single Fathers and Bishops, but by whole *Councils* and *Synods*. When in the Third Century *Paul* of *Samosata* Bishop of *Antioch* maintain'd that Christ was not God, a Synod was convened there, consisting of a great Number of Bishops and other Divines, which unanimously condemned this Heresy. In the Beginning of the next Century, when *Arius*, a Presbyter of *Alexandria*, opposed the Doctrine of the Trinity, holding that the Second Person, Christ, was not from Eternity, but had a Beginning of his Existence, and was a Creature, *Alexander* the Bishop of *Alexandria* assembled about a Hundred Bishops, and in that Council rejected *Arius*'s Opinion, and excommunicated him and his Adherents. Afterwards there was a General Council of *Greek* and *Latin* Fathers at *Nice*, in *Constantine* the Great's Time, which consisted of Three Hundred and Eighteen Bishops, besides their President and his Attendants, and a vast Number of Priests and Deacons. And *Athanasius* himself was then but a Deacon when he appeared at that Council, he coming thither with the abovesaid Bishop of *Alexandria*, to which

which Bishoprick he was chosen about a Year after. All the Fathers of this Oecumenical Council, two only excepted, signed the Confession of Faith, and exploded the Heresy of the *Arians*, who denied the Son to be *Co-eternal* and *Co-essential* with the Father. And though *Petavius*, from some Collections out of the Primitive Fathers which are obscure and ambiguous, pretends to prove that the Doctrine of the *Trinity*, as asserted by this Council, was not believed by those first Writers, yet herein we are not to credit this Author; for to unprejudiced Persons it will be very manifest, That they and the Fathers of the Council of *Nice* agreed *as to the main*, about the Doctrine of the Trinity, and that particularly the Christian Writers of the Three first Centuries, asserted the Necessity of believing Christ to be the true God. Which is fully evidenc'd and made Good by a Learned and Industrious * Author, who hath treated on this Subject.

*D. Georg. Bull. Judic. Eccles. Cathol.

Afterwards, when *Photinus* denied the Godhead of our Saviour, this his Error was condemned by a Synod of Bishops convened at *Sirmium*, and *Photinus* himself was deposed from his Bishoprick, and banish'd. Some Years after this, an Universal Council was held at *Constantinople*, by Order of the Emperor *Theodosius*, where the blasphemous Tenents of the *Macedonians*, who denied the Divinity of the Holy Ghost, were vigorously confuted and disallow'd. And at the same Time the *Nicene* Faith concerning Christ's Divinity, was ratified by the same Persons. Afterwards it was expressly confirmed by the Third General Council, that of *Ephesus*, convened by *Theodosius* the Second. A Fourth Oecumenick Council, that of *Chalcedon*, consisting of above Six Hundred Bishops and Clergymen, confirmed all the other Three. And some of the *Western Councils* (which were also *General*) bore up with great Zeal against the *Anti-trinitarians*; especially that at *Ariminum* (which was before the other at this Place above mention'd) where were met Four Hundred Bishops, the greatest Part of whom confirmed the *Nicene* Creed, and anathematized the *Arians*. Lastly, It might be mentioned here, That the Trinity was further attested by the ancient *Doxologies* that were in the Church, which were to this Purpose, *Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost*, as we read in †*Eusebius*, ‖ *Basil*, ‡ *Hilary*, * *Prudentius*, and others.

† Eccles. Hist. l. 4. c. 15.
‖ De Spir. Sanct. c. 29.
‡ Op. N. E.
* Cath. Hymn. 5.

Thus from the Writers of the *Primitive Church*, from the *Fathers*, and from the *Councils*, from the pious *Offices* and *Acts* of Worship of the First Ages of Christianity we may be satisfied concerning the Truth of this Article of Religion, and concerning the general Approbation of it by the Christian Churches. For we are not to attend to what †*Sandius*, and some others suggest, who pretend to more History than the rest of Mankind, and would persuade us that we are cheated into a false belief of Things. These are sworn Adversaries to the Divinity of our Blessed Saviour, and therefore attempt to uphold their Cause by feigned History, because they find that they can't effect it by true. It hath been sufficiently evinced by very Learned and Judicious Writers, that some who are reckoned by our Adversaries as ancient Advocates of their Cause, were not so. This is particularly proved against them by our Learned ‖ *Vindicator*. And though they had some (and those too many) Advocates in the Christian Church all along, yet these were disowned, exploded, condemned, and as much as could be suppress'd by the rest: Which is also proved by the same Learned Pen. Whenever any one of them started up, and opposed the Trinity, the General Consent of the Christian Church was quite another Way.

† Histor. Enucleat. Eccles.

‖ *Bishop* Stillingfleet's *Vindication of the Trinity*, Chap. 4.

But I have not mentioned these Things, as if we were to found this Article of our Faith on the *Authority of Men*. Only it was fitting to let you see that we are not destitute of Humane Testimony, and the Tradition of the Christian Church as to this particular. The main and only Basis on which we depend and rely, is the Scripture, especially the Writings of the New Testament, which plainly, expressly, and distinctly deliver this Divine Truth. The Books of the Evangelists and Apostles are our Foundation: But we admit of the Suffrage of the first and wisest Christians of the Church afterwards as our Superstructure: We are willing to understand the Scriptures which relate to this Point, as they were interpreted by the most ancient Fathers and Councils: And we find that fond Reasoning could not invalidate this revealed Truth thus explained and illustrated. No Wit or Sophistry were able to baffle this Article, though it is above Reason, and exceeds the Comprehension of Humane Understandings. In this Manner it

hath been upheld ever since, by all Churches professing the true Faith. Their Creeds, Catechisms, and Confessions, assert a Trinity of Persons having one and the same Divine Essence. And such is the Providence of God in this Particular, that this Doctrine is preserved entire even in the Church of *Rome*. She that hath labour'd to corrupt most of the Grand Points of Orthodox Faith hath not depraved this, but in all its Councils, Synods, and Confessions hath held this uncorrupted, and to this very Day seems to be unmoveable in its Profession of the Article of the Trinity, One God and Three Persons.

IV. According to what I at first proposed, I purpose next to add a few Words concerning the *Reasonableness* of this Mystery. For though it is to be granted that it is *above Reason*, and beyond our Ordinary Capacities, yet *Reason* may be useful someways to establish it. *Reason* dictates to us that we must give assent to whatever is revealed to us by God, because whatever is delivered by him is certainly true. This is the present Case: By Divine Revelation in the Scriptures we are informed concerning the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, we are ascertain'd by this supernatural Testimony, that these Three are One God. Now, it is the immediate Suggestion of our *Reason* that we ought to believe this, for nothing is more rational than to give Credit to him that cannot, and will not deceive us. Therefore though there are Difficulties in this Great Mystery, and such as we cannot comprehend; yet Reason bids us believe it because God hath said it, who is Truth itself. Nor doth right Reason boggle at the Thing itself, for it is reasonable to think, that there is a great and vast Difference between an *Infinite* and a *Finite Being*; and consequently, that that is to be believed and asserted concerning the one, which is not to be admitted concerning the other. It may be true of an Infinite and Uncreated Being, That there is a Distinction of Persons where there is no Difference of Essence, though this be not true of a Finite and created One. *Reason* teaches us to make this Distinction between these two Sorts of Beings, and therefore we are not to Wonder, that there is in *God* the same Common Nature, yet personally distinct, that there is in One Essence a Plurality of Subsistences.

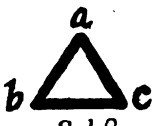
We cannot be backward to assent to this if we consider that the whole Divine Essence is imparted by the Father to the Son and Holy Ghost, so that it is wholly and intirely in them as well as in the Father: And why may not this be as well admitted as that the Divine Essence is wholly in every Place, and in every Person and Thing? For if God be every where, it is not by Parts (because he hath none) but wholly and entirely: This follows from God's Omnipresence. Now then, if the Deity be all of it in all Places, Things and Persons together, and at one Time; why may it not be (though in a Manner extraordinary) in the Three Persons of the Trinity? Perhaps it was upon this Account, that *Socinus* and his Friends denied the *Omnipresence of God*: They foresaw how it might be made Use of, and that very rationally, to illustrate and confirm the Doctrine of the Trinity. Moreover, That this is not unreasonable, we may plainly see in the received Opinion of the ancient Philosophers, that the Soul of Man is whole in the whole Body, and whole in every Part of it; for 'tis no more against Reason to assert, That the same One Divine Nature is wholly and entirely communicated by the Eternal Father to the Eternal Son, and by Father and Son to the Eternal Spirit, without any Division or Separation, which is the Belief and Doctrine of all Trinitarians.

Several have endeavoured to explain the Trinity by such Things as we are acquainted with. *Keckerman* labours to demonstrate it from Philosophy, and so doth *Claubergius*; and the Lord *Morney* attempts something of that Nature. The Ancients, *Justin Martyr*, *Tertullian*, *Cyprian*, *Lactantius*, used the Simile of the *Sun*, and its *Light*, *Heat*, and *Motion*, to represent the Divine Essence and Three Personalities. Though it must be confess'd, That this, and the other Similitudes which I shall mention, being taken from Finite Bodies, can't possibly be thought to be *exactly* applied to God who is Infinite. The Mystery of the Trinity was thus set forth by some others: In *Man* (who is the Image of God) is one indivisible Soul, but in it are Three distinct Powers, *viz. Understanding*, *Will* and *Memory*. They are distinguish'd as Faculties, yet they are the same as to Substance, *i. e.* the Soul. They are not one another, but yet they are all the Soul.

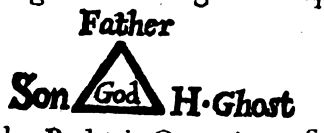
This

This is thought to be a Resemblance of the Sacred Trinity, in which is One Simple Nature, but Three Persons; and these Three are but One Divine Essence or Substance.

To shew that the Three Distinct Persons have One Numerical Essence, it may be Illustrated by a *Triangle* consisting of Equal Sides,



to which answers,



The Nature or Substance of the whole Triangular Body is One, *i. e.* of Gold, suppose, or Silver, or the like; and as here the Angle *a* is Gold, the Angle *b* is Gold, and the Angle *c* is Gold, so in the Deity the Father is God, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are God. But though in the Golden Triangle, all the Angles are of the same Matter, Gold; yet the Angle *a* is not the same that the Angle *b* is, nor the Angle *c* the same with *a* and *b*; so the *Father* is not the same Person with the *Son*, nor the *Holy Ghost*, the same Person with the *Father* and the *Son*. But as the Triangle is the same with the Three Distinct Angles, so God is the same with the Three Distinct Personalities. This in *some* measure sets forth *One God in Nature*, but *Threefold* as to *Persons*. The same Being is One, and is Three, *i. e.* in one respect it is the former, and in another it is the latter. This is not absurd in Natural Bodies, therefore in a higher and more transcendent Nature, it may be possible in that Being, which is Supernatural and Infinite, Three Distinct Subsistences may be but One Essence.

Further, to shew how this Mystery is in some sort adapted to Reason, I will give you the Account of it, as 'tis express'd by the *School-men*, and you may receive it, or reject it, as you please. There are, say they, no *Accidents* in God, and therefore the *Acts* of the Divine Essence, which are *Internal*, and have reference to Himself, are so many *Persons* or *Hypostases*. God the *Father* is *Original Wisdom*; his *Reflex* Act of *Knowledge* is his *Son*, his *Loving* himself, and the Son, is the *Holy Ghost*. Thus *Wisdom*, *Self-reflection*, and *Love* are the distinct Acts of the Deity, as it is a Deity; and they being really distinct are not the same, and consequently are Three Divine Subsistences or Persons. God the Father Begets the Son, (the Second Person in the Trinity) by a Reflex Act, *viz.* of *Knowledge*: He *beholds*, or *knows* Himself, and his own Perfections, and thereby his own Essential Image is produced. The Holy Ghost proceeds from the Father by a direct Act of *Love*, i. e. God Eternally Loving and Delighting in Himself and His own Image, is the Third Person in the Trinity; and so his Procession is from the Father and the Son, that is, the Mutual Love of the Father and the Son produced the Third Person. Thus God, who is One in Essence, is Three in Persons.

This Representation of the Mystery, makes God the Father to be the Head and Fountain of the Trinity, and the Two other Divine Persons Eternally Streaming from Him; which must be resolv'd into the unexpressible Fecundity of the Divine Essence, the unconceivable Exuberancy of the Infinite Nature of the Deity, above all other Beings whatsoever. And *Reason* will assist us here, by suggesting to us, that the Supreme and Immense Being is different from all others, and therefore hath Properties not communicable to any other. And let me add this, that if we study this Point, we shall find that the most absurd Propositions concerning God and the Divine Nature must be granted, if this Doctrine of the *Trinity* be denied; but this being maintain'd, all things do wonderfully hold together, which is an Argument of the *Reasonableness*, as well as of the Truth of it.

Lastly, That it may appear that the Trinity of Persons in the Divine Essence is not *wholly* repugnant to Natural *Reason*, I will here adjoyn the Sentiment of some *Heathens*, (who were guided only by this Light) concerning this important Article. It is true, the *Pagans* generally had no such Notion as we have been speaking of, and those that heard any thing of it, laugh at it as an incredible thing, as we find *Lucian* in his *Philopatris* Scoffing at *One of Three, and Three of One*. But though the *generality* of the *Gentiles* were utter Strangers to this Conception, (as I observ'd in the beginning of this Discourse) yet there were *some* of them that had arrived to it, and are much delighted with it. * *Plutarch* acquaints us, that Three Hypostases in the Divine Essence were held by the Ancient *Persians*. From *Zoroastres*'s Fragments, and the Writings of other *Chaldee* Philosophers, it is apparent

* De Is. & Osir.

parent that they believ'd a Trinity. They (as you may see at large in † *Stenchus Engubinus*) held a *Father* or *Genitour* from Eternity, and his *Son*, or *Word*, or *Mind*, (for these were the Terms they us'd) Generated by him, and a Divine Eternal *Spirit*. And in the Writings of the *Sibyls*, which savour of the *Chaldee* Theology, there are several Passages to this Purpose. Among the Ancient *Egyptians* likewise, (as ‖ *Jamblichus* relates) this seems to have been a receiv'd Notion; for *Hermes*, or *Mercurius*, the Chief of their Philosophers, asserted, that ‡ there is One Divine Nature or Godhead, and that there are Three exceeding great Powers or Faculties in this Divinity, which is the Creator of all Things. And thence, (*viz.* because he asserted these Three Great Powers in the Deity) he was called *Trismegist*, saith *Cedrenus*; and *Suidas* agrees with him in this Account of his Name, telling us, that he had it, because by Divine Instinct he spoke of the *Trinity*. And I am inclined to think, that the *Egyptians* in their Hieroglyphicks, expressing the Power of God by *a Body and three Heads* hinted the *Trinity*.

† De Perenni Philosoph.

‖ De Myst. §. 8. c. 2.

‡ Τρεῖς μεγίστας εἶναι δυνάμεις τῆς δημιουργοῦ τῆς ὅλων Θεοῦ, μίαν θεότητα εἶναι, διὸ καὶ τρισμέγιστον Ἑρμῆς κατωνόμασται. Cedren. Hist. Compend.

This was not unknown to some of the most improved Sages among the *Greeks*: * *Plato* tells us, that *Homer* was the first Author, τῆς τῶν δημιουργικῶν τριαδικῆς ὑποστάσεως, but it is certain that the *Trinity*, (or something very like it) was believ'd by † *Plato* himself and his Followers. They speak of *Three Hypostases* in the Deity, the first whereof is τ' ἀγαθὸν, τὸ ἀνυπόν, τὸ ὂν αὐτοκαλὸν, the *Essential and Original Good*, the same that in the Scripture is call'd *the Father*; the Second is αἰὼν, νοῦς, λόγος, σοφία, ὁ νοῦς ὁ δημιουργὸς, εἶδος and ἰδέα, *the Intellect* or *Eternal Mind*; the same that in the Style of Scripture is call'd *the Son*, the *Wisdom* of God, the *express Image* or Idea of his Father's Person, and by the Seraphick Apostle *the Word*. It is no wonder therefore that *Amelius* a *Platonick* Philosopher, reading the beginning of St. *John*'s Gospel, cried out, That the *Barbarian had stolen those Divine Sayings from his Master* Plato; which you find Quoted by *Eusebius* in his *Evangelical Preparation*, Book 11. Chap. 19. and by St. *Augustine*, in his 10th Book *of the City of God*. And the Third and last Person in this Mysterious Triad, is by the *Platonists* call'd ψυχὴ, the *Soul* or *Spirit*. Thus the *Gentile* Philosophers have left some Footsteps of the *Trinity*. Even *Philo* the *Jew*, who was a profess'd *Platonist*, and others of that Sect, as *Numenius*, *Amelius*, before-mention'd, *Porphyrius*, *Proclus*, *Jamblichus* make mention of this Triple Divinity, this Threefold Subsistence and Intelligence. I do not pretend to say, it is exactly the same with the *Christian Trinity*; but ‖ those who will not allow (on the other side) that the *Platonick* Triad hath *any* Cognation with it, are very much beside the Truth; especially he who tells us, that *Nous*, *Psyche and Logos*, *were but the Names of certain Dæmons placed by* Plato's *Fancy at the Right-hand of God*. Ibid. *Plotinus*, who was a *Pagan* Philosopher of the *Platonick* Sect, hath Writ a Treatise περὶ τριῶν ἀρχικῶν ὑποστάσεων, of the *Three Principal Subsistences*, viz. the *Chief Good*, the *Mind*, the *Soul* of the World; which are but other Names for Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

* In Gorgiâ.

† In Timæo. In Epist. 2. & 5. In Phileb.

‖ Dr. Tenison *of Idolatry*, Chap. 5. Cleric. Art. Crit. cap. 14.

Hence, without doubt, it was that the *Trinary Number*, in the Account of all the *Pagan* Observers of things was very Sacred and Mystical among them. *Trapezuntius* ‡ from a Passage in *Aristotle of the Heavens*, (where it is observ'd by that Sagacious Philosopher, that *Three* is a perfect Number, because *Two* are call'd *both*, but we do not say, *All*, till we come to *Three*; then we first begin to say so) endeavours to prove, that this Wise Man had some Knowledge of the Trinity. But whether there be any thing of weight in this, I will not now dispute; this is certain, that Sober Philosophers of all Ranks have said something that looks this way; but especially the Followers of *Pythagoras* and *Plato* are very remarkable, for many of their Expressions are very high, and approach near to what the Inspired Writings say of this Subject. We have this Doctrine vouch'd by *Macrobius*, namely, the *Divine Father* of all, the *Mind* proceeding from him, and *the Soul* issuing from this. *Somn. Scip. l.* 1. *c.* 14. And, Lastly, I could mention what a * Modern Historian relates, That the *Americans* may be thought to acknowledge a Trinity, which they Worship under the Picture of the *Sun with Three Heads*.

‡ Lib. 1. cap. 10.

* Jos. Acosta.

Not to examine now whether this be rightly applied or no, we are sure of this, from what was said before, that some of the Old Pagan Philosophers were acquainted with the Trinity. It may be, they borrowed it from the Old Testament, as † *Justin Martyr* thinks; and ‖ *Clement* of *Alexandria* is of the same Mind. Perhaps *Plato* by Travelling into *Egypt*, and other Parts, where the *Hebrew* Doctrines were

† Apol. 2.

‖ Strom. lib. 4.

were partly known, arriv'd to this Notion. But that they thought fit to embrace it, and to own it as a probable Sentiment, is a sign that it was not wholly against Reason and Philosophick Principles. *Eusebius* and *Theodoret*, and a late ‡ Learned Writer of our own, are of Opinion, that this Doctrine was derived to the *Gentiles* from the *Jewish Cabala*; but there is no great Proof for this; yea, the contrary seems to be more credible, because this Notion was receiv'd by some *Ancient Gentiles* before the *Jewish Cabala* was in being. But if we should suppose the contrary, yet still it is evident that some of the *Pagans* did not look upon the Doctrine of the Trinity as a thing Irrational and Absurd. They could freely and readily accept of it, and not quit their Principles of Reason, which was the main thing they prized themselves upon.

‡ *Dr.* Cudworth's *Intellectual System.*

And if this Perswasion was not disown'd by Men of *Pagan* Education, surely those that are profess'd *Christians*, must think themselves obliged to believe and entertain it, when it is so clearly taught in the Writings of the New Testament. And I hope what I have at present suggested on this Point, will be serviceable to gain their firm *Assent* to it, and induce them to Own and Profess, to keep and hold fast this Truth, at such a Time as this, especially when so many oppose it, and even ridicule it. A Generation of Men are sprung up of late, who object to us, and upbraid us with the *Ciceronian*, the *Cartesian*, the *Platonick*, the *Aristotelian*, and (which I tremble to mention from their * Writings) the *Mob's* Trinity; taking occasion from the *different Explication* of this Divine Mystery to expose the thing it self. But this is very unworthy and disingenuous; for this is certain that a Doctrine may be true, and we ought to own it, though there be different ways of expressing it, though Writers disagree about the Terms. We see in *Law*, that there are *different* Descriptions of Rights and Constitutions, and in *Physick*, that there are different Accounts of Diseases and Maladies, as well as of the Uses and Designs of some Parts and Vessels of the Body; yet no Wise and Understanding Man doth thence disbelieve the Matters themselves. Neither ought we to discard the Doctrine of the *Trinity*, because some Persons at this Day, (as well as the Fathers of the *Greek* and *Latin* Church heretofore) differ from one another in their Terms, and the manner of explaining this Article. This should not prejudice us against it, but we should rather hold to the main substantial Truth, because we see that all sober Persons, (notwithstanding their verbal Differences) agree in this.

* *Considerations on the Explications of the Doctrine of the Trinity.*

But more especially the owning of the Divinity of *Christ*, the particular Author and Founder of our Religion, is more signally and eminently a part of the *Christian Theology*. Whence St. *John* was call'd by the Ancients, ὁ θεόλογος, *the Divine*, viz. because he begins his Gospel with this grand Point of Evangelical Divinity, the Eternal Godhead of the *Son*, because he speaks distinctly of *the Word*, who was God from Eternity with his Father. † One of the Eminentest Fathers of the *Greek* Church purchas'd the same *Title*, because he defended the Doctrine of *Christ's Divinity* against the *Arians*; and it is observable, that his *Orations* concerning the Sacred Trinity are Entituled *of Theology*. And on the like Account, even *Plato* was anciently styled, ὁ θεόλογος, because he speaks so plainly of this Great Theological Truth. Therefore we are obliged to make Profession of this, which is the choicest and Sublimest Subject of Theology, and the main Prop of all Christianity. We must never dare to cast off this Illustrious Badge of our Holy Religion, but we must constantly wear it, and glory in it.

† Greg. Nazianz.

Nor let the Greatness and Depth of the Mystery discourage us, but rather let us adore what we cannot comprehend. Modesty and Reverence become us whilst we think or speak of this Christian Verity; for we must remember this, that though it is not wholly *against Reason*; yea, 'tis in some respect, (as I have shew'd) conformable to it; yet it is not the proper Debate of it, because, (as I have said) it is on some accounts so far above it. We must therefore be very wary how we express our selves, and what Conceptions we harbour in our Minds of this Article. *Plato* somewhere in his Writings tells us, that *Socrates* was wont to use such a kind of Preface as this, when he was to speak of the Mysteries of Religion, and to entertain his Auditors with those high Matters, ‖ *It is fit*, saith he, *That we should remember this, that both I who speak, and you who are Judges, are but Men*, i. e. we are but finite shallow Creatures, and therefore neither our Words nor Apprehensions can be adequate to those things. This is a very seasonable Caution here; there

‖ Χρὴ μιμνήσθαι ἡμᾶς ὡς ὁ λέγων ἐγὼ, καὶ ἡμεῖς τὸν οἱ κρίνοντες οὐσιν ἀνθρώπινον ἐσμεν.

there is not a more profound Theme within the whole Compass of Christianity, than this of the *Trinity*, and therefore let us be reminded of our Finite, Humane Nature, which is not able to grasp that which is Infinite. We may here take up the Words of a Great Person, which were spoken on the like Occasion; ‡ [What Man is there, *saith he*, that is able, either exactly to understand, or in a due manner to explain the full Force and Meaning of Things which are so Great, and wrapt up in such Obscurities?] It is impossible to express the Plenitude of the Deity; it is utterly impossible to set forth the Pregnancy of the Divine Essence, from whence the Eternal Generation of the Son, and the Procession of the Holy Ghost are derived. And therefore what the fore-mention'd *Royal Author* saith in this Case, is to be observ'd and practis'd by us; **In such Points as these all Loquacity must be check'd.* We must not indulge lavish Disputes, and give way to curious Disquisitions.

‡ Πόσος γὰρ ἐστὶν ἕκαστος ὡς πραγμάτων ἔτω μεγάλων καὶ λίαν δυσχερῶν δύναμιν, ἢ πρὸς τὸ ἀκριβὲς συνιδεῖν, ἢ κατ' ἀξίαν ἑρμηνεῦσαι; Constantin. M. Epist. ad Alexand. & Arium. Euseb. de Vit. Constant.

* Ἐφικτέον ὄντι ἐν τοῖς τοιούτοις τὴν πολυλογίαν. Ibid.

The *School-men*, and some others that have imitated them, have been very faulty in this Matter, for they have perplexed this Doctrine with useless and frivolous Questions, with rash and daring Speculations, and have thereby given occasion to Ill-minded Men to think unworthily of this Mystery; yea, even to disbelieve it; because the Account which they give of it is so larded with their own Conceits and Fancies, and with Attempts of explaining the particular and exact manner, both of the Generation of the Son, and the Procession of the Holy Ghost. This is audacious Folly, and by no means to be Tolerated; for the Explication of the *Modes* of these profound Mysteries is above our Strength and Capacity. *Such Knowledge is too wonderful for us, it is high, we cannot attain unto it.* And therefore *Episcopius* was in the right, when he said, *An Explicit Faith of the* manner *of the Divine Generation and Procession is not necessary to Salvation.* If he had gone no further, he had done well. These Heights are not levell'd to our Capacities; these Depths are remote from our reach; for the Writings of the Evangelists and Apostles have not afforded us any thing to take their Altitude, or to fathom their Profundity. Where the Scripture is silent, there it becomes us to be so, according to that excellent Rule of an Ancient Writer of the Church; † Those things that are silently pass'd over, are not to be search'd into, but the Things that are Written are to be embraced, and with Veneration receiv'd. What the Word of God hath asserted, and what without straining may be fairly deduced from it concerning the Trinity, that, and no other must be the Measure of our Assent and Profession. Let this suffice us, that there is One Living and True God, and that there are Three Persons United in this One God. The One entire Divine Nature spreads it self into Three Subsistences. These Three are each of them God, and yet are all but One God. This the Scripture acquaints us with in sundry places; and this is the profess'd Judgment of our Church, whose plain, but comprehensive Words are these, in the first of its *Articles*, *There is but One Living and True God, Everlasting, without Body, Parts, or Passions, of Infinite Power, Wisdom, and Goodness, the Maker and Preserver of all Things, both visible and invisible. And in Unity of this Godhead there be Three Persons, of One Substance, Power and Eternity, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.*

† Οὐ δεῖ ζητεῖν τὰ σεσιγημένα, σέβειν δὲ προσήκει τὰ γεγραμμένα. Theodoret. Qu. 45. in Gen.

Lastly, Let us not only make this the Matter of our firm Belief, and of our constant Profession, but by Holy Contemplation and Practice, let us render it useful to us in our Christian Conversation. The *Trinity* is not a bare Speculative Doctrine, but if we make a right use of it, it will be very serviceable in our Lives. And when we come to make it so, we shall have a firm Belief of it indeed. Therefore this is the thing that I will betake my self to in the last place, namely, To shew, that in the whole Course of our Christian Life, we are continually made sensible of the Truth of this Doctrine; and that we can't possibly have a right Understanding of the Nature of our Redemption and Salvation, nor can we hold any Communion and Converse with God, unless we are perswaded of the Reality of it. This must needs be so, because the Three Persons of the Godhead concurr severally to our Sanctification and Salvation, in a peculiar Way and Manner, proper to each of them; and therefore we cannot but have a Sense of this, if we be Sanctified and Saved, and have any experience of the Divine Operations upon us. This then I will prove, that all these Persons have *different* and *peculiar Operations*,

tions, in order to our *Salvation* and *Happiness*; and accordingly, if we feel any thing of the Christian Communion and Life, we must be forc'd to own this Divine Doctrine of the Trinity of Persons in the Deity.

First, *God the Father* hath a particular and proper way of effecting our Salvation. He more peculiarly saves us by his Electing us from Eternity to Life and Salvation, on the Foresight and Consideration of Christ's Merits, and by his propounding and offering the Methods of Salvation in time, and by his meer Compassion and Love, setting them on foot by actually sending his Son into the World. This *Sending*, as God the Father's peculiar Act, is very signally mention'd in *John* 3. 16. *Rom.* 8. 3. *Gal.* 4. 4. 1 *John* 4. 9. and in many other places. Insomuch that it is Christ's proper Character, *him whom the Father hath sent*, John 6. 39. The Father gave him Authority and Commission to exercise the Office of Mediator; *he made him to be both Lord and Christ*, Acts 2. 36. Thence is that Solemn Approbation by a Voice out of Heaven from the Father, *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleas'd*, Mat. 3. 17. The Father actually *laid upon him the Iniquities of us all*, &c. *Isa.* 53. 4, 6, 10. *He made him to be sin for us*, 2 Cor. 5. 21. He reckon'd him as a Sinner, because he took upon him the Guilt of our Sins, and he inflicted that Punishment on him which was due to us for them. Thus the First Person in the Trinity acted his peculiar part towards the Accomplishment of Man's Salvation and Redemption; and we must know it, and have Resentments suitable to it, if we be true Christians, and desire to partake of the Benefits of them.

Again, The *Son* hath his peculiar way of managing and procuring our Salvation; for according to the Tenor of Holy Scripture, (which is our only Director and Instructer here) we find that it was agreed upon by the whole Trinity, that the Second Person should interceed with the First for the Pardon of Men's Sins, as a King may put his Son upon Mediating and Interposing in behalf of Rebels and Malefactors. God the Father, being the Head of the Divinity, was the fittest Person to be applied to; and thence it was, that Christ obtain'd of the Father, that he might undertake the Redemption and Recovery of Mankind, and accordingly he freely undertook the Task, *He took part of Flesh and Blood*, Heb. 2. 14. that is, he became Man. And this was in order to his Suffering and Dying for us, therefore *he laid down his Life of himself*, John 10. 17. *he gave himself for us*, he made himself *a Sacrifice*, Eph. 5. 2. 1 Pet. 2. 24. And having thus Atoned for our Sins, he rose from the Dead, he ascended into Heaven, and there Intercedes for us, *Rom* 4. 26. *Heb.* 7. 25.—9. 11, 12. Thus the Second Person in the Trinity had his proper Work, and thereby accomplish'd our Redemption, and reconciled us unto God.

Likewise the *Third Person* in the Godhead hath his peculiar way of effecting our Salvation, to wit, by enlightning our Understandings, by enclining our Wills, by working upon our Affections, by begetting Faith and Obedience in us, and by the Renovation of our Nature and Lives. This is one Foundation of the Title of *the Spirit* given to this Third Person in the Trinity; for tho' he hath that Name because of his Eternal Procession from the Father and the Son, which the Ancient Christians have taught us to express by the Name of Mysterious *Spiration* or *Breathing*, yet he is more emphatically call'd so than the other Persons, because it is his more signal and special Office to *Inspire* our Minds with Holy Thoughts and Desires, with Godly Purposes and Affections, and because he is the Author of all *Spiritual* Life.

And as the Holy Spirit is the Giver and Author of all Grace, so he is our *Comforter* in all our Spiritual Distresses, Agonies, Temptations, and Conflicts, as well as in our Outward and Temporal Afflictions and Distresses. And, besides, all those great things which Christ hath obtain'd for us, are not to be made ours without *Prayer*, and no Prayer is acceptable but what is from the Spirit; [*through him*, (i. e. the Second Person in the Trinity) *we have Access by One Spirit*, (i. e. the Third Person in the Trinity) *unto the Father* (the First Person) *Eph.* 2. 18.] He prepares us for Salvation and Happiness, by making us fit to receive the Benefits of Christ's Undertakings. He it is that *Unites* us to Christ, and by that Union we have those Benefits convey'd to us; and lastly, He *Seals* up our Right and Title to them. Thus we come to be made Partakers of that Grace and Favour, and all those Privileges which the Father and the Son design'd for us. For this is certain, that what-

whatever God the Father and God the Son have done, would be of no Effect, if God the Holy Ghost did not also act his Part, and exert that Power and Efficacy which is peculiar to himself; if he did not apply the Grace of Christ to us, if he did not make his Redemption effectual by the sanctifying Virtue which is proper to him.

Now as these distinct and peculiar Operations of the Three Persons in the Trinity, are singly and severally mention'd in the *Scripture*; so 'tis worth our observing, that they are mentioned jointly and together in the same Holy Writings. See this in 1 *Pet.* 1. 2. where are Three Specifick Acts of the Three Divine Persons, 1. The *Election* and *Foreknowledge of God the Father.* 2. *The Sanctification of the Spirit unto Obedience.* 3. *The sprinkling of the Blood of Jesus Christ.* The *Father* chuses some from Eternity out of fallen Mankind to Salvation. The *Son* makes an Atonement, that is signify'd by *the sprinkling of his Blood.* The *Spirit* works Sanctification, as the Means in order to our being saved. In another Place, *Tit.* 3. 4, 5, 6. These different Operations and Dispensations of the Trinity are thus express'd; as to the First Person, 'tis said, *through his Mercy he saved us*, the Divine Pity and Compassion was the first Step to our Salvation. Concerning the Third Person (for he is mentioned in the next Place) 'tis said, *this Salvation is by the renewing of the Holy Ghost.* And then with respect to the Second Person 'tis said that this Renewing or Regeneration is *through Jesus Christ our Saviour.*

This Three-fold Operation and Concurrence is thus express'd in 2 Cor. 13. 14. *The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the Love of God, and the Communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all.* There is the Father's *Love*, the Son's *Grace*, and the Holy Spirit's *Communion.* To the Father more especially is attributed *Love*, because that was the Basis of our Salvation. His Care, his Concern, his Pity, his *Love* to Mankind procur'd our Happiness, *God so loved the World, that he gave his only begotten Son*, John 3. 16. This was the only Motive that prevail'd with him. *Grace* is ascribed more peculiarly to the *Son*, because he *graciously* provided for our Redemption and Welfare, he express'd his Grace and Favour by undertaking the Salvation of lost Men. *Ye know the Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for our sakes he became poor, that through his Poverty we might be rich*, 2 Cor. 8. 9. *Communion* is the Spirit's Work because he communicates and imparts the Benefits of this Salvation to us, by *applying* all that is done in an effectual Manner. Thus it is abundantly clear, that the Three Persons have their *distinct* Work in the Salvation of Man, and they do it in a Way and Method different from one another.

And now I appeal to any considering and thinking Man whether it be not absolutely necessary that we believe, own, and acknowledge these Three distinct Persons, seeing all our Salvation, and the whole Method of it depends upon them. If the Trinity be not an Article of our Faith, we plainly discover that we are ignorant of the Way and Order of our being saved. For the Three Great Parts of our Salvation, are severally accomplish'd by the Three Persons in the Trinity, by the *Father*'s gracious Will and Bounty in electing, by the Redemption wrought by the *Son*, and by Sanctification, which is the peculiar Work of the *Holy Ghost.* There is a distinct Concurrence of the Three Persons to the Work of Redemption: The First hath Compassion on lost Sinners, and offers Grace and Pardon to them. The Second undertakes to make Satisfaction for them, and therefore for his Sake alone they are accepted. By the Third it is, That they are renewed and regenerated, assisted and strengthen'd. And this Harmony of the Trinity is to be discover'd in all the Parts of the Evangelical Dispensation. Wherefore it follows hence, That a true sincere Christian well versed in the Nature of the Gospel, and in the right Methods and Dispensations of it, cannot but have a firm Persuasion concerning this Grand Truth, I mean the Doctrine of the Trinity: And the rather, because it influences on his Practice, and must needs be discern'd in the Acts of Holiness and Christianity, which absolutely depend upon the Operations of the Trinity.

Wherefore now we know how to return an Answer to the late Queries of a bold *Socinian*, [* *Let us ask ourselves*, saith he, *this Question, Will the Belief of the Doctrine of the Trinity make me a more merciful and righteous Man than I shall be if I did profess the contrary? Will it make me love and honour God better? Will it make the Service which I render to his Divine Majesty a more reasonable Service?*]

* J. Smith's *designed End to the Socinian Controversy*, p. 53.

Service?] Yes, it will do all this, if it be a firm and well rooted Belief; and I will add further, it cannot do otherwise, because it hath an immediate Connection with our Practice, as our Practice hath with this Belief. If we have right Apprehensions and solid Convictions concerning the Distinct and Peculiar Operations of the Persons of the Sacred Trinity, we shall certainly be more Holy and Righteous in our Lives, we shall be constrained to love and honour God more, and our Worship and Service will be render'd more reasonable and accountable: Because all these Things naturally flow from our intimate acquainting ourselves with those different Operations of the Divine Persons, whereupon all our Christianity and Religious Practice depend.

Hence we gather, That *Socinus*'s Followers, notwithstanding their Pretences to greater *Reason* than other Men, and to a greater understanding of the Christian Institution, and notwithstanding some of them have pretended to greater *Holiness* than others, yet they are but shallow and empty People, and have no Ground for their Pretences; for it is evident from what hath been said, that they deny and reject the very Foundations of all Christianity: They shew that they have no Knowledge of Divine Things, they discover plainly their ignorance of the New Testament and of the Religion of *Jesus*, and they reject the very Author of all Holiness, as well as of Salvation. The Belief of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, is so inlay'd into the Body of Christianity, that it is impossible to preserve this, if that be destroy'd. And this indeed is the true Reason, why these Men explode this Doctrine, to wit, Because they have not a true Sense of Christianity. And particularly they deny the Doctrine of *Satisfaction*, because this is more especially grounded on the *Trinity*. For Satisfaction is made not only to the Father, but to the other Persons of the Trinity. God the Father, in respect of Order is the First and Chief that is to be satisfied; and therefore it is generally spoken of him: But as the Father is appeased and propitiated, so also are the Son and Holy Ghost, for the whole Trinity are unanimous, and of one entire Will. Besides, there is but one Individual Essence of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and so the Satisfaction must be directed to the whole Divinity, to the First Person immediately and directly, and in and by him to the Two other Persons. And moreover, it might be added, That Man hath sinned not only against the Father, but against the Son and Holy Ghost, and consequently Satisfaction must be made to the whole Trinity. Which shews that we can't understand the Doctrine of *Satisfaction* without that of the *Trinity*, and that *Christianity itself* can't be understood without it. If we had a right Idea of this, and (which is much more, and very necessary in Christianity) an *Experience* of the great Matters of it, we should not in the least doubt of this Article, because the Truth of it is *felt* as well as *discern'd* by the Faithful. He that talks against the Trinity, shews himself a Stranger to the main Things of that Religion, which he pretends a Knowledge of; He cannot have any competent insight into Christianity; he knows nothing of the Effects and Fruits, of the Privileges or Excellencies of it.

To which Purpose I will recite a memorable Passage of a late * Writer, which is very nervous and solid, *This is that Mystery, the Knowledge whereof is the only Means to have a right Apprehension of all other Sacred Truths; and without it, no one of them can be understood in a due Manner, nor improv'd to a due End. This is that alone, which will give true Rest and Peace to the Soul. And there is not the meanest True-Believer in the World, who is exercised in Faith and Obedience, but he hath the Power of this Truth in, and upon, his Mind; tho' he be not able to speak much of the Notions of it. All Grace and Truth are built hereon, and do center herein, and thence derive their First Power and Efficacy. Not one saving Apprehension can we have of any gracious Dispensation of God towards us, but it is resolved into the Existence of God in Trinity of Persons, and the Oeconomy of their Operations with respect to us.* This is very full, and we may inferr from it, that if we shake the Doctrine of the Trinity, we hazard the Fall and Ruin of the Gospel and Christianity itself. Let us then be encourag'd to assert and maintain this Truth; and chiefly with respect to ourselves, let us remember that this is not a bare speculative Doctrine, designed meerly for the entertaining our Understandings; but it hath a great Influence on our Wills and Affections, and a great and natural Tendency to Religious Practice. Let us then be careful above all Things to partake of those several particular Advantages which flow to us from each individual Per-

* Dr. Owen of the Nature of Apostacy, ch. 1.

son in the Deity. We should be concerned to be Sharers in the *Father*'s eternal Love, the only Spring of all our Happiness: We should admire *the Son*'s voluntary assuming of our Nature, and never rest satisfied till we are real Partakers of the Benefits of that blessed Undertaking: We should be desirous to experience in ourselves, the peculiar Work of the *Holy Ghost* in enlightning and sanctifying our Minds, and purifying our Lives. Let us distinctly apply ourselves to these Three Persons with particular Acknowledgments and Dependencies; let us be thankful to *God the Father* for his Love and Compassion towards us, which is the Source and Original of our Salvation; to *God the Son* for his gracious transacting our Redemption, for purchasing Life and Happiness for us, trusting and relying upon him always? to *God the Holy Ghost* for his Powerful Influence, Guidance, and Assistance; for his sanctifying and his comforting Vertue, giving up ourselves entirely to his Direction and Conduct. And when we come to feel these Things in us, this will be the most Effectual Way to strengthen our Belief of this Doctrine, and to make all that I have said before have a Lasting Impression on our Hearts.

LUKE II. 11.

A Saviour which is Christ the Lord.

HAVING finished the main Design of this *Second Article* of the Creed, which was to assert the *Divinity of Christ*, and to express him as a Divine Person in the Trinity different from the other Two, (which occasion'd a Compleat Discourse of the Trinity) I will now take Notice of the particular, and peculiar Expressions by which this Divine Person is set forth in this part of the Creed: I will briefly explain these Three Names and Titles which are here given him, to wit, *Jesus* or *Saviour*, and *Christ*, and *Lord*: The true Knowledge of which will give us a full Account of the Nature, Offices, the Design and Undertakings of this Divine Person, who is the Subject of this Article, and our Belief. The *only Son* of God is comprehended here under a triple Title, *Jesus Christ our Lord*. which is the more to be taken Notice of, because these Three Names are not only us'd in the foresaid Text, (for *Saviour* and *Jesus* are the same, as we shall afterwards shew) but are frequently found together in the New Testament: Nay, St. *Paul* took so great delight in them that in a few Epistles he uses them above Two Hundred Times. Which cannot but commend them to us, and invite us to the Explication of them.

I begin with the first of these Titles, namely *Jesus*. Some of the ancient Christians thought it a *Greek* Name, deriving it from ἰάσεις, as * *Eusebius*, † *Clemens Alexandrinus*, and ‖ *Cyril*. But though this convey'd a good and useful Notion, *i. e.* of Christ's being a *Healer* and *Spiritual Physician*; yet it is certain this Derivation proceeded from their ignorance of the *Hebrew* Tongue: For *Jesus* is the same Name with that of the Chief Captain of *Israel*, who led them into *Canaan*. He is called *Jehosua*, or by Contraction *Joshua*, and *Jeshua*. The Old *Talmudists* pronounc'd it *Jeshu*, as *Hose* for *Hosea*: And the Apostles imitated them, and added the common *Greek* Termination (of which many like Instances might be given) and so made it Ἰησοῦς, *Jesus*. This *Joshua* is meant by *Jesus* in two Places in the New Testament, *Acts* 7. 45. *Heb.* 4. 8. And besides this Leader of *Israel*, there was another * *Joshua*, who was the Son of *Josedech*, and returned with others from *Babylon*, and was the First High-Priest in the Second Temple. † *Ezra* and ‖ *Nehemiah* call him *Josua* or *Jeshuang*. Both these were Types of Christ the true *Joshua*, *Jesus*, or *Saviour*. The Name in this Form became a Name of ordinary Use, as appears from *Col.* 4. 11. where *Jesus called Justus*, is *Paul*'s Fellow-worker. And in *Acts* 13. 16. we read of *Bar-Jesus* a *Jew* and Sorcerer: There was *Jesus* the Son of *Sirach*, who writ the Book of *Ecclesiasticus*. And *Josephus* saith, many of the Priests were of that Name.

As to the Signification of this *Hebrew* Name, 'tis agreed by all that it is the same with *Saviour*; for *Jashang*, which is the Verb from whence it comes, is *to save*. But here likewise there are *many Jesuses* and *many Saviours* that we read of.

*Demonstr Evang. l. 4.
† Pædag. l. 3. c. 12.
‖ Hierof. Catech.

*Zech. 3. 1.
† Chap. 2. Ver. 2.— 3. 2.
‖ Chap. 7. Ver. 7.

The

The Lord raised them (i.e. the Israelites) up a Saviour, Judg. 3. 15. for though it is not the same Word, yet it is of the same Derivation. King *Jehoahaz* is call'd a *Saviour*, 2 King. 13. 5. *Moshiang* is the Word that is used here as well as in the former Place. And you find it in the Plural in *Nehem.* 9. 27. *God gave the the Israelites Saviours, who saved them out of the Hand of their Enemies. And Saviours shall come upon Mount Sion*, Obadiah, *v.* 21. a very fit Name for Princes and Magistrates, who *deliver* the People from the Distresses and Calamities they labour under. And in this respect, though in a most peculiar and eminent Manner, God himself is called a *Saviour*, 2 Sam. 22. 3. because *he saveth from Violence, and saveth from the Enemy*, *v.* 4. And indeed, we may observe that these Terms *to save*, and *Salvation*, and *Saviour* in the Old Testament signifie temporal and outward Safety and Deliverance. Tho' 'tis true, That God accomplisheth This in that Sovereign and Uncontroulable Way that no Man can pretend to, and thence he saith *Isa.* 43. 11. *Besides me there is no Saviour.*

But in the New Testament the Word *Saviour* is always to be understood in a Spiritual Sense; thus this Title is attributed to the Godhead in general, 1 *Tim.* 4. 10. But now we are to speak of it as it is applied to the Second Person in the Trinity God incarnate, the Blessed Messias. The Angel gave the Notation of the Word, *Matth.* 1. 21. *Thou shalt call his Name Jesus, for he shall save his People from their Sins*, and consequently from the Misery they are in by Reason of their Sins. *Salvation* supposes and implies a miserable and lost State, as we learn from *Mat.* 18. 11. *The Son of Man is come to save that which is lost*: And Luke 19. 10. *The Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which is lost.* To *save*, is to deliver a Person out of Distress, to rescue and free him from the Misery he lies under. This then we are to know and consider that all the Sons of *Adam* are lost, they are undone of themselves: They are in a wretched and miserable Condition. And the Apostle acquaints us how they came into it, *Rom.* 5. 19. *By one Man's Disobedience many were made Sinners*, even all the Race of *Adam* were made so by his Original Sin and Transgression, and by Sin Death and a Curse and all Misery entred into the World. Thus *by Nature*, by our natural Descent from our First Parents *we are Children of Wrath*, and obnoxious to everlasting Punishment. But *Jesus* came to raise us out of the State of Sin and Death, into which we were plunged, unto the State of Grace and Life.

And this he did in a peculiar Way (and not communicable even to God the Father, or the Holy Ghost) and therefore the Name *Jesus* is appropriated to him. The blessed Way and Method which he pitch'd upon was to assume our Nature, and therein to suffer, and this he actually did, and by suffering in our stead, and by laying down his Life for us, rescued us from the everlasting Pains and Sufferings which were due to us, and deliver'd us from Death Eternal, which was the desery'd Recompence of our Guilt. Which was thus foretold, and briefly, but excellently express'd in *Isa.* 53. 5. *by his Stripes we are healed*, by his Wounds we are made whole, by his dying we live. Thus if we respect the Manner of our Salvation, Christ is a *Saviour* by Way of Eminency: There is no such Deliverer, Preserver, and Saviour as he. He is *Jesus*, and there is no *other*.

Again, he is a Complete Saviour, which can't be said of any that have had that Denomination among Men. They have been Instrumental in delivering Persons or Nations from some Dangers, but could not secure from others; they have been serviceable in freeing them from one Sort of Hardships, but they pretend not to Skreen them from others of a worse Nature. Consult all History, and you will find no Complete Deliverer. But such was *Jesus*, he perfected our Deliverance, he shields us from Miseries of all Kinds, he saves both our Bodies and Souls, he bestows on us Temporal Blessings, he much more confers upon us those that are Spiritual, and to consummate and Crown our Happiness, he gives us those which are Eternal. Thus he is a Total Deliverer, thus he is an Entire and Complete Saviour, and therefore the Name of *Jesus* is justly appropriated to him.

Let us then highly prize and value this *First Title* given here to the Son of God: For it conveys to our Minds the Representation of those Blessings which surpass all others, and of that Person which ought to be most dear to us, and who is worthy of the most eminent Respect and Reverence that can be paid by rational Creatures. Behold! we are saved, let us offer up our Σωτήριον, our Sacrifice of Salvation: Let us with thankful Hearts recount this singular Favour, that though he

was not pleased to *take upon him the Nature of Angels* (as the Apostle speaks) yet he condescended *to take on him the Seed of Abraham*, to pity the Condition of lost Man, and to undertake his Recovery: And let us shew how Sensible we are of his Mercy, by consecrating ourselves to our Deliver and Redeemer. And that he may be our *Jesus*, our *Saviour*, let us behave ourselves towards him as our *Sovereign*, and our *Lord*, of which I shall speak under the Third Title.

The next which is given here to the Son of God is *Christ*. Which is of *Greek* Original, and answers to the *Hebrew* Name מָשִׁיחַ Masiah, *unctus*, and the *Syriack* מְשִׁיחָא Mesiha, *unctus*. So that these Three are the same, *Christ*, *Messias*, *Anointed*. Now, to understand the true Import and Extent of this Title, we must know, that *Anointing* was used in *Consecration* and setting apart of Persons, and those Persons were of Three Ranks, viz. *Kings*, *Priests*, and *Prophets*. Thus King *Saul* was anointed by *Samuel*, and the like was done to other Kings. Prophets also were anointed, thus we read that *Elijah* set apart *Elisha* by this Ceremony. And that this was the Way of consecrating Priests we may inform ourselves from *Lev.* 8. 12. These Three Offices never met together in any *One* Person before our Saviour. *David* was King and Prophet, *Melchisedech* King and Priest, *Samuel* Priest and Prophet, but all these were united in our Blessed Lord; and accordly this Name *Messias* or *Christ*, speaks the *Inauguration* and *Deligation* to all these Dignities and Offices, whether of a Priest, Prophet or King. Therefore he is emphatically and eminently call'd *the Anointed*, because he was solemnly set apart to these Offices, as *Kings*, *Priests*, and *Prophets* were, who are call'd *Anointed*. Of this Anointment we frequently read, *Luk.* 4. 18. *the Lord hath anointed me to Preach.* Acts 2. 36. *God hath made him Lord and Christ.* Acts 4. 27. *Thy holy Child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed. God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost, and with Power*, Acts 10. 38. *i. e.* He both set him apart and enabled him to perform his Offices. And several other Texts mention his being thus *constituted* and *anointed* by his Father, to discharge the Work which he had taken upon him. Hereby he became in a peculiar Manner, and different from all others, the *Lord's Anointed*; hereby he was so *designed* and *appointed* to be a Redeemer and Saviour, that none can usurp that Prerogative.

This is the true and only *Messias*, who was the desire of all Nations, whom all the Prophets foretold, whom the *Jewish* Nation expected at that Time, and with whom all their Descriptions agree; this is he who wrought Miracles, cured Diseases, cast out Devils, and silenc'd the Heathen Oracles. Which is an Establishment to us of the Doctrine of the Gospel and of the whole Undertaking of the Blessed Jesus.

To conclude, Let it be remember'd, That as *Christ* was anointed, so are all the Saints and Servants of God in their Proportion and Measure. As he was anointed to save them, so they are anointed to serve him, and to perform Obedience to him. *Touch not mine Anointed*, i. e. the *Israelites*, God's People, Ps. 105. 15. *He that hath anointed us, is God*, 2 Cor. 1. 21. And of this *Divine Unction* St. *John* speaks in his First Epistle. It remains that our Behaviour be agreeable to so great and transcendent a Privilege.

The Third Name or Title given here to the Son of God, is *Lord*, which expresses his *Dominion and Sovereignty*, his *Absolute Power and Command* over all Things and Persons; which (by the Way) is as Cogent an Argument for Christ's Divinity, as any that I have before-mentioned: For none but He, that is True God, hath this Absolute Power and Dominon. Which *Philo*, that excellent Writer, was sensible of, when he thus spoke, * Verily no created Thing is a *Lord* properly: But he only can truly be said to be a *Prince* and a *Lord* who had no Beginning. Accordingly the *Greek* Word †κύριος answers to *Jehovah*, the Root of which signifies *Essence* and *Existence*. Absolute and Independent Being is the proper Notion of a *Lord* or *Sovereign*. And for this Reason it is probable, the Primitive Christians were unwilling to give the Title of *Dominus* to the *Roman Emperor*, and were of Opinion that it was *God's peculiar Attribute* in Scripture. They believed that it imply'd Divine Honour, and therefore they desired to be excused from using that Name; yet they did not ‖*wholly* balk it. This is certain, That the Son of God being *Lord*, is thereby the *true God*: For he hath that Dominion which is not communicable to any Creature, *He is Lord of all*, Acts 10. 36. he is invested with Universal Power. And we have it from his own

* Κύριος δὲ γὰρ οὐδὲν γενητὸς ἀληθῶς ἂν εἴη· μόνος δὲ ὁ ἀρχὴν οὐκ ἔχων ἀληθῶς ἡγεμών, De Nominum Mutatione.

† From Κύειν, i. e. ἐξ αἰῶνος ὑπάρχειν.

‖ Tertul. Apol. c. 34.

own infallible Lips, that *all Power is given to him in Heaven and Earth*, Mat. 28. 18. There is a *Dominion Indirect and Imperfect*, (as the *Civilians* call it) which consists only in the Use and Profit of a Thing; this is that *which belongs to Men*. But there is also a *Direct and Plenary Dominion*, properly and strictly so call'd, which includes not only the Use and Service of the Thing, but the Propriety of it. Thus God is *Lord* only, and thus perhaps the *Hebrews* make a difference in the Word *Adonai*; when 'tis spoken of *Men*, 'tis written with a *Patach*, but when 'tis applied to *God*, 'tis with a *Kametz*. They would by this signifie to us, that God is *Lord*, in a higher and more eminent Sense than the greatest among Men can be said to be Lords. Thus Christ is *God and Lord*; He is absolute Owner and Proprietor of us, and all other things, and they are made entirely for his Service. But I shall confine my self to that Dominion which he hath over *us*, and shall shew how he is *our Lord*, (as 'tis in this Article) or how his *Dominion over us*, (express'd in this Title) is acquired.

First, Then He is our Lord *by Creating us*; he made us, and so became our Lord and Owner, by giving us our Being, he made us entirely Subject to him.

Secondly, As *Creation gave* him this Right and Title first of all, so *Preservation* or *Providence* continues it. By him, no less than by God the Father, we are cloath'd, and fed, maintain'd, and provided for; we constantly depend upon him, and live wholly at his Charge. Which is sufficient to give him a Right and Title to us.

Thirdly, Dominion is acquir'd by *Purchase*, and *so* Christ is *our Lord*. He hath bought us with the Price of his own most Precious Blood; and therefore the Apostle gives this as the Reason of this Title, in *Rom.* 14. 9. *To this end Christ both died and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and living.* One follows on the other, if He be a *Redeemer*, He is a *Lord*. They are his by Purchase, and therefore he may justly claim this Title.

Fourthly, Another way of acquiring Dominion, is by *Obligation and Compact*, and thus likewise Christ Jesus is *Lord*. By Virtue of the New Covenant made with Man, he hath been pleas'd to *oblige himself* to be our Lord, and we have Covenanted to be his Servants. This Obligation was confirmed by the Solemn Vow and Promise in Baptism, and is renew'd, and again Ratified by the Sacred Tyes and Engagements in the Sacrament of the *Lord*'s Supper.

Fifthly, *Inheritance* is another way of acquiring *Dominion*, and by that also the Son of God is *Lord*. *He hath by Inheritance obtained this excellent Name*, Heb. 1. 4. and *v.* 2. We are told, that he is *appointed Heir of all Things*, which gives him an undoubted Right to all Things and Persons, and an uncontroulable Sovereignty over them.

Sixthly, This Dominion is obtain'd by *Conquest*, *when we were Enemies*, he brought us over to his Father, and vanquish'd all our Hostilities and Oppositions; yea, *He spoil'd Principalities and Powers, and made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them*, Col. 2. 15. That is, by his Death he disarm'd the Devil, and all the Powers of Hell, and expos'd them to Scorn and Contempt.

Seventhly, Dominion is by *Gift*, and on this account likewise Christ hath Command over us; for by the *Donation* of the Father we are become his, *John* 5. 6.

Eighthly, Another firm Title to convey Dominion is *Possession*; and by this likewise Christ hath made us his; for he *abideth, and dwelleth in us*, John 6. 56. the 14. 23. He maketh his Residence in his Saints, and so they are his *Demesnes*, the Inheritance wherein he hath proper *Dominion*. Thus his Dominion over us is founded on all these Titles; thus you see what *Right* he hath in us, how he is our *Lord*.

The proper *Inferences*, from which are these; 1. Let us own his Dominion and Sovereignty which he hath over us, let us acknowledge his Absolute Right and Title to us. Seeing he is our *Lord and Master*, let us not be asham'd of our Relation to him, but reckon it an Honour and a Privilege. 2. Seeing He is our Great Master, let us remember to deport our selves as his Servants. We are Feudataries, we are Vassals, we hold all in Courtesie from our Great Lord; therefore let us do Fealty and Service to him. We are Redeem'd Captives, therefore let us be Obedient to our Deliverer and Redeemer. *Being deliver'd out of the Hands of our Enemies, we ought to Serve him without Fear*, without any distrust of his

his Goodness and Faithfulness, *Luke* 1. 68. *Redemption* is a Claim to *Service* and *Obedience*. Being *bought with a price, henceforth we are not our own*, 1 Cor. 6. 19, 20. we are wholly at the disposal of him that bought us. If Earthly Lords and Rulers will by no means suffer their lawful Commands to be disputed, or in the least *Circumstances* or Punctilio's to be Disobey'd, surely Christ, who is our Supreme Commander and Sovereign, will not brook any such thing, he expects exact Obedience, and complete Obedience from us. *Glorifie God in your Body, and in the Spirit, which are God's*, 1 Cor. 6. 20. They and we are God's, therefore let us by our universal Reverence and Obedience, manifest this to the World; and let us think our selves obliged to employ and improve all our Talents, (which are his Gift) to his Honour; as 'tis rightly said of Servants, *whatever they gain, it must accrue to their Masters. Thus I have given a brief Account of these Three *Great Names*, *Jesus*, *Christ*, *our Lord*, with the proper Influences that they severally ought to have upon us. They give us a general Survey of the Fulness of Christ, before we come to a particular View of his Undertaking in the following Articles.

* Dominis aequirunt quicquid acquirunt. *Inst. l.* 1. *Tit.* 8.

ARTI-

ARTICLE III.

Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary.

A Discourse on JOHN I. 14.

The Word was made Flesh.

WHEREIN

Are shew'd the *Method*, the *Designs*, the *Benefits* of the *Incarnation* of the Eternal Son of God: With all the *Great Mysteries* contained in it.

CONcerning the *Second Person* in the Blessed Trinity, we are to believe, 1. His *Conception* and *Nativity*. 2. His *Passion*. 3. His *Resurrection*. 4. His *Ascension*. 5. His *coming to Judgment*: And therefore the Five next Articles in the Creed express our Belief of these. The first, is this, That (*He was Conceived by the Holy Ghost, Born of the Virgin Mary.*) His wonderful *Conception*, and Glorious *Nativity*, are the two parts of this Article. The main part is the *Birth*, or *Incarnation* of our Saviour, and his *Conception* is in order to that. Wherefore I will but briefly speak of this latter, and then pass to that which is the most considerable thing in this Article.

The wonderful *Conception* and *Formation* of *Jesus* in the Virgin's Womb, is thus express'd by the Evangelist St. *Matthew*, *She was found with Child of the Holy Ghost*, Mat. 1. 18. And by the Angel, *Mat.* 1. 20. *That which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost.* And, *Luke* 1. 35. *The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the Power of the Highest shall overshadow thee.* Where the *Supervention* signifies it to be an Extraordinary and Divine Act, as *Acts* 1. 8. And the *Obumbration* denotes it to be a Mysterious, Recondite, ineffable Operation, 2 *Chron.* 5. 8. And by both these Terms, we are to understand the Supernatural Sanctifying of the Virgins Womb; and we are particularly acquainted, that Christ was Conceived by the Power of the Holy Ghost; yea, the Holy Ghost was the sole Author of that Miraculous Conception. This was absolutely necessary, that Christ's Body might be a Divine Structure in the truest manner, and that by this Mysterious and Extraordinary Operation, God and Man might be joyn'd, the Divine and Humane Nature might be hypostatically United. In order to this, I say, there was requisite this *Conception*; that is, the humane Nature, or fleshly Mass, was to be form'd out of the Substance of the Virgin *Mary*, without the Help of Man; but by the wonderful and miraculous Power of the Holy Ghost. It was his Work to prepare the Matter for this Formation, and then actually to Form and Organize it, and after that to Animate it; that is, to infuse the Spiritual Part, the Soul. All which is comprehended under *Conception*; and from this extraordinary Operation, Christ's Soul became Holy, and free from all Sin and Pollution: And by this means the fleshly Substance became Pure and Spotless, fit to be joyn'd with the Godhead. Therefore the Holy Ghost immediately Operated in this Conception, by Sanctifying and Preparing the Seed of the Virgin; so that the Man Christ should be thence produced.

This is the sublime Mystery which the Evangelick Writings propound to us. How strange soever it may seem to us, we are assured of the Truth and Reality of it; we are certain, that Christ's Flesh was produc'd of the Flesh and Blood of the Virgin *Mary*; that he was not Born (as others are) from the Conjunction of Man and Woman, but by the Virtue of the Holy Ghost, miraculously impregnating the Body of the Virgin *Mary*. We are certain, that the humane Soul, as well as the Body

Body of our Saviour, was produced in an extraordinary manner; we are certain, that both of them were united to the Eternal Word, and so *the Word was made Flesh.*

Which is the next, and the chief Thing I am to Treat of, *viz.* The Wonderful *Nativity* and *Incarnation* of our Saviour. This is the leading Mystery of Christianity, and upon which depend all the other *Articles* in the *Creed* relating to our Saviour; and therefore we are very much concern'd in this singular and matchless Blessing. Our Evangelist is very brief in declaring this Mystery, and yet withal is very perspicuous; for he evidently propounds a *Distinction* of *Two Natures* in Christ, and the *Union* of them. Here is the Person Assuming, *the Word*, and the Nature Assumed *Flesh*; and the Union of these in One Person, *the Word was made Flesh.* These are the three parts of which these Words consist.

I begin with the First, namely, The Person Assuming, *the word*, ὁ λόγος, the Eternal Word, which was *in the Beginning*, and *was with God, and was God*, the Son of God, of the same Substance with the Father, but Personally distinguished from him; which is clearly intimated, in that 'tis said, *he was with God.* This is the Title which was given to the *Messias* by the Evangelist, He is *the Word.* Yea, some think that he is call'd so in the *Old Testament.* Some have been of the Opinion, that in these following places the Second Person in the ever Glorious Trinity is meant, *Psalm* 103. 20. *Hearkning unto the Voice of his Word*, And *Isa.* 40. 8. *The Word of our God shall stand for ever.* And so likewise, *Isa.* 50. 4. Christ is thought to be called *the Word*, according to the particular reading of that place.

Then for the New Testament, it is thought by some, that the *Messias* hath that Title, not only in St. *John*'s Writings, but in those of other Inspir'd Persons. Some strain those Words of St. *Stephen*, in *Acts* 7. 38. and tells us, that the λόγια ζῶντα, which our Translators render *the lively Oracles*, are no other than the *living Word*, and that living Word is *Christ.* But I find that Text in *Heb.* 4. 12. urged with more Probability and Reason, by that Learned and Sagacious Writer, Doctor *Jackson*, *The Word of God is quick and powerful*; and presently after, 'tis said, that this Word is a *Discerner of the Thoughts, and Intents of the Heart.* This is the Character of *God*, who knows and searches the Hearts. And this *Word* hath Eyes attributed to it in the next Verse; *neither is there any Creature that is not manifest in his Sight, but all things are naked and open unto the Eyes of him with whom we have to do.* And immediately after, *Having therefore such a Great High-priest that is pass'd into the Heavens, Jesus the Son of God*; as if these Words were Explicatory of what went before. *Theophylact* interprets it thus, in his Comment on this Text. *The Apostle*, saith he, * *sets forth here the Divinity of the Word.* And St. *Ambrose* expounds it after this manner, † *The Word of God is the Son of God*, are his plain and positive Words. I might add another place of the Author of this Epistle to the *Hebrews*, *Chapter* 11. 3. *Through Faith we are to understand that the Worlds were framed by the Word of God.* Whereby *the Word of God* may rightly be understood the Son of God, Christ Jesus, especially if you compare this with what the same Writer saith in another place concerning Christ, *viz.* That God the Father had *spoken to us by this his Son, by whom also he made the Worlds*, Heb. 1. 2. This is given as one Character of the Second Person in the Trinity. And I leave it to the Reader to judge, whether 1 *Pet.* 1. 23, and 25. may not be directly applied to this Divine Person, *The Word of God which liveth and abideth for ever.* And again, *The Word of the Lord which endureth for ever. And this is the Word which by the Gospel is Preached unto you.* As if St. *Peter* spoke there of *Christ's* being Preach'd, and set forth in the Gospel. Thus there is a *Probability* at least, that the Title of ὁ λόγος, *the Word*, is conferr'd upon *Christ*, both in the Old and New Testament; but we are *certain*, that this Epistle is given him in the Text before us.

* Τὴν Θεότητα ἐστηθέσα ἀκλεῶς τοῦ Λόγου.

† Sermo Dei filius est Dei.

Moreover, some have thought, that the Second Person in the Sacred Trinity, the Son of God, was styl'd, ὁ λόγος, *the Word*, even by some *Gentile* Philosophers, though they had not attain'd to any knowledge of him in the manner which we *Christians* have. *Zeno* is quoted to this purpose by *Tertullian*, *Apologet.* cap. 36. and the Poet *Orpheus* is cited by *Justin Martyr* in his *Apology* to the *Gentiles*, and by *Clement* of *Alexandria*, *Strom.* l. 5. We read in *Cyril* (against *Julian*, *Book* 8.) that *Numenius* and *Porphyrius* use this Term for a Divine Person. It is probable, (as I have observ'd in my Discourse on the foregoing Article of the Creed) that *Mercurius Trismegist*, and *Plato* used the Word λόγος for the Eternal Issue of an Eternal

ternal Father or Mind. And accordingly I took notice, that St. ‖ *Augustin* tells us of a *Platonist*, who reading the beginning of the First Chapter of St. *John*'s Gospel, express'd a wonderful regard to it, saying, it deserv'd to be Written in Letters of Gold, and to be embraced with a singular Respect and Veneration, for he found that there was an Agreement between this Evangelist's Style, and that of his Master *Plato*, because they both speak of an *Eternal* λόγος, or *Word*.

‖ De Civ. Dei. *lib.* 10. *cap.* 29.

This very Expression hath been used also by some who Wrote since St. *John*, and were no Friends to the Christian Religion. Those that have occasion to consult *Philo* the *Jew*, will find that in his *Book of Questions*, and in * other places he lights upon this very Word. Mr. † *Selden* observes, that among the *Jews*, *the Word of God*, and *the Son of God*, (which is as much as God himself, he notes) were of the same signification. And that this way of speaking was known to the *Jews*, is plain, because the *Chaldee Paraphrase* makes frequent mention of *the Word*, with reference to the *Messias*. And *Elohim* and *Jehovah*, which are Names of the *Messias*, are sometimes interpreted by it, as in *Psalm* 110. 1. *The Lord said unto my Lord*, according to the *Hebrew*, *the Lord said unto his Word*, according to the *Chaldee*. That this Text speaks of *Christ*, is evident from his quoting it in *Mat.* 22. 44. where he applies it to himself. Instead of [*these are the Statutes, and Judgments, and Laws which the Lord made between him and the Children of Israel*] Lev. 26. 46. *Onkelos* reads it, *These are the Statutes*, &c. *which the Lord made between his Word and the Children of Israel. The Lord*, that is, the First Person in the Trinity; *the Word*, that is, the Second Person, the Son of God. So in *Gen.* 17. 2. *My Covenant between me and thee*, saith the *Hebrew*; *My Covenant between my Word and thee*, saith the *Chaldee*. And so the *Hebrew* Text, *Isa.* 45. 17. and *Hos.* 1. 7. *by the Lord*, is rendred in the *Targum*, *by the Word*. And the Reason is, because *the Lord*, and *the Word*, were held by the *Jews* to be the same God. Instead of *the Lord God said*, Gen. 3. 22. the *Jerusalem Targum* hath it thus, *The Word of the Lord said*. It might be added, that this is not only the Style of some *Pagan Philosophers*, and of some *Jews*, but also of some *Mahometans*; for even in the *Alcoran*, our Saviour is styled *the Word of God*. Thus you see the use of this Term, which our Evangelist hath not only here, but in other places, applied to *Christ*, as in the 1st Verse of this Chapter, where the Son of God is thrice call'd *the Word*; and in his First Epistle, Chap. 1. v. 1. and Chap. 5. v. 7.

* Leg. Allegor. *lib.* 2. De Somniis. De Agricultura.
† De jure Nat. & Gent. *l.* 2. *c.* 12.

I will in the next place enquire, *why* this Title is attributed to him. What *Reasons* may be alledged for this?

First, Some have asserted, that our Saviour is call'd *the Word*, because he is the chief Subject of God's *Word*, the Holy Scriptures; he is that Person of whom God *spake* in all Ages by the Prophets and Patriarchs. *To him give all the Prophets witness*, saith St. *Peter*, *Acts* 10. 43. All the Inspired Penmen of the Scripture *speak* of the *Messias*, therefore he is said to be *the Word* or *Speech*.

Secondly, There may be another Reason given of this Name, and it is that which *Theophylact* assigns, (and with him most of the Ancient Fathers.) The Second Person in the Sacred Trinity, is deservedly call'd, ὁ λόγος, *the Word*, because he declareth the Will of his Father unto us, as a *Word* doth the meaning of the Mind. It is said therefore, *v.* 18. of this Chapter of St. *John*'s Gospel, *No Man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.* As the Patriarchs and Prophets, (which was said before) *spake* concerning him, so he *spake* to them, Convers'd with his Church, Communicated his Father's Pleasure to them in the way of Visions, Dreams, Apparitions, and all those other Methods of Revelation, mention'd in the Holy Writ. The Apostle referrs to this *Word*, and this *Speaker*, when he gives that Warning, *Heb.* 12. 25. *See that ye refuse not him that speaketh*, i. e. Christ Jesus, who in the Old Testament spoke to the Fathers, and now in the New, speaks to all Nations and People. For it is the Design of his Office to reveal God's Will, as it is the end of *Speech* and *Words* to reveal and discover Mens Minds. *God hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son*, Heb. 1. 2. He hath imparted his Will to Mankind by this Eternal *Word*, as Men by Speech communicate and make known the Thoughts of their Hearts.

It might be added in the Third Place, that this Epithet intimates unto us, what the Apostle saith concerning Christ, *viz.* That he is *the express Image of his Father's*

ther's Person, Heb. 1. 2. Speech is the Image of the Mind, as *Seneca*, and other Wise Moralists acknowledge; and that Learned Writer, *Philo*, hath this admirable Passage, * We call the Mind, (*saith he*) the Father or Parent of Speech; as the Son proceeds from the Father, and bears the Resemblance of him, so the Speech doth proceed from the Mind, and is a Representation of it. Which Words, as soon as I met with, I presently in my Thoughts applied them to the Purpose to which I do now. *Speech* is the natural Issue and Off-spring of the *Mind*, it is the Genuine Child of that Parent, and as a True Son, is like its Father. So the Son of God, (who is here call'd *the Word*) is the lively Representation and Image, the express Character of his Father, and is exactly like him in all Excellencies and Perfections. St. *Chrysostom* approves of this Interpretation, and saith, He is call'd † the *Word*, because he was Begotten of the Father; for as the Word which I speak is Generated by the Mind; so the Son was Begotten of the Father, the Infinite and Eternal Mind. These are the Reasons or Illustrations which may be given of this Title in the Text. We had best to take them *together*, and so they will be the more serviceable to express to us the Nature and Office of the Eternal Son of God, who is here the *Person Assuming*; which is the first thing observable.

* Τάχα (sc. λόγον) πατέρα τὸν νοῦν φαμὲν, &c. De nominum mutatione.

† Λόγος, ὅτι ἐκ τοῦ Πατρὸς ἐτέχθη· ὥσπερ γὰρ ὁ λόγος ὁ ἡμέτερος ἐκ τῆς Ψυχῆς μου γεννᾶται, οὕτω καὶ ὁ υἱὸς ἐκ τοῦ Πατρὸς ἐτέχθη. Homil. 18. Tom. 5.

Secondly, The Nature Assumed, Flesh. Where there is a *Synecdoche*, an usual Mode of Speaking in Sacred Writ, whereby a part is put for the whole. Thus, in *Gen.* 46. 26. we read of the *Souls* that came with *Jacob* into *Egypt*, i. e. the *Persons* consisting of Souls and Bodies. So in *Psal.* 56. 4. *I will not fear what flesh can do unto me*; that is, what *Man* can do to me. Thus in *Isa.* 40. 5. *All flesh shall see the Glory of the Lord*, i. e. *all Men* shall see it. The *Hebrew* Noun *basher*, *Flesh*, comprehends here the whole Man, Body and Soul. And so in the New Testament, σὰρξ, is as much as *Homo*, *Mat.* 24. 22. *There should no flesh be saved*, Rom. 3. 20. *No flesh shall be justified*, i. e. no Man whosoever. So when the Evangelist saith, *The Word was made Flesh*, by *Flesh* we must understand *Man*, Soul and Body. *Apollinaris* of old, not considering this manner of Speech, grounded his Heretical Assertion on these Words of St. *John*, viz. That Christ Assumed a Body only, without a Soul, and that his Godhead was to the former instead of the latter. A very gross and dangerous Error! for if our Saviour took not a Soul as well as a Body, he could not cleanse and cure the Pollutions and Depravations of one as well as of the other, according to the Argumentation of the Ancient Fathers, *Quod non assumpsit non sanavit.* But if this place of the Evangelist be expounded according to the Idiom and Use of Scripture, (as certainly it ought to be) it affords no Ground for such an Error, for *Flesh* here is to be understood of the whole entire Nature of Man, and consequently we are ascertain'd, that Christ assumed both Body and Soul.

But if it be demanded, why St. *John* chuses to express it thus, and to make mention of *Flesh*, the ignoble and baser part of Man, and that which is remote from the Divine Nature, and not to mention the *Soul*, which is nearly allied to it; I answer, first, this way of expression may, I conceive, be made use of to distinguish Christ's *Incarnation* in the fulness of Time, from those Discoveries which he made of himself in former Ages. Long before his Assuming the Flesh of the Virgin *Mary*, he appear'd to the Patriarchs in the form of an Angel; as to *Abraham*, *Gen.* 18. 13, 17, 22, 23. where one of the Angels that appear'd to him is call'd *Jehovah*. Whence many of the * Ancient Fathers gather'd, that the Second Person in the Trinity appeared then. So in *Gen.* 28. 13, 16. the Name *Jehovah* is given to the Angel. And in Chap. 31. v. 13. the Angel is call'd *the God of Bethel*. So Christ is meant by one of the *Angels* that came to *Lot*, *Gen.* 19. 1. and to *Jacob*, *Gen.* 48. 15, 16. So to *Moses* in the burning Bush, *Exod.* 3. 6. to *Manoah*, *Judg.* 13. 22, 23. He is the *Angel* that brought the *Israelites* out of *Egypt*, led them thro' the Wilderness, descended on Mount *Sinai*, resided in the Tabernacle, and afterwards in the Temple. The *Angel* that appear'd to *Balaam*, *Numb.* 22. 31. was the Second Person in the Trinity; so was that *Captain of the Host of the Lord*, Jos. 5. 14. He is call'd the *Angel of his Presence*, Isa. 63. 9. *and the Angel of the Covenant*, Mal. 3. 1. Seeing then Christ appear'd in the World before his Nativity in the Shape of *an Angel*, it is here emphatically said by the Evangelist St. *John*, that *he was made Flesh*, to shew the difference between this and the other Appearance. The one was Angelical, but the other Humane. The Word was made *visible* before, but not *Incarnate* till this particular Season. There-

* Justin Martyr, Irenæus, Tertullian, Origen, Athanasius, Ambrose, Basil, *Third Council of* Antioch.

Therefore this may be one Reason why 'tis said Christ was made *Flesh*, because of the remarkable Distinction between the one and the other.

Secondly, This Term *Flesh* is here used, because it excellently sets forth Christ's *Condescention* to our frail Nature, his humbling himself in submitting to Humane Weaknesses and Infirmities. So that to say, *the Word was made Flesh*, is more emphatical and expressive than to say, *he was made Man*, for that tells us to what a low and despicable Condition the Son of God descended from the Heighth of his Glory, and that for our Sakes. It tells us how Humble and Meek, how Loving and Obliging he was, in that he assumed the Entireness of our Humane Nature, and condescended to the meanest Circumstances of it. *He made himself of no Reputation, and took upon him the Form of a Servant, and became poor, that we might be rich*, Phil. 2. 7. We might here, on this Occasion, take a View of the Holy Babe *Jesus* as he came into the World, without Pomp and Splendour (unless it were that of a goodly *Star* hovering over him, and pointing to him with its glorious Rays) of which afterwards. The poor Infant as to outward shew was Mean and Contemptible, thrust into a Stable, laid in a sordid Manger: He was shiftless and forlorn: He was dandled a while on the weak Mother's Knee, and then being hunted by *Herod*, was forced to quit his Country. And when he returned, he no sooner made his Appearance in the World but he was abused, reviled and persecuted, and all along from his Birth to his Cross was subject to all the adverse Accidents that infest Humane Nature, and was in all Things made like unto his Brethren; yet still was he void of Sin, and all the Pollutions of it: though he assumed our Nature, yet he was not stained with the Defilements of it. And therefore by *Flesh* here, we must not understand the corrupt Nature of Man, as it is sometimes in the Sacred Writings opposed to *the Spirit*. He came indeed *in the likeness of sinful Flesh*, (as saith the Apostle *Rom.* 8. 3.) but in this, was the Resemblance that he bore the same Frailties, sustain'd the same Sorrows, and was liable to the same Bodily Pains, Distresses, and Calamities, that the sinful Race of *Adam* labour under. But though he was Flesh of our Flesh, and Bone of our Bone, yet being conceived in a miraculous Manner by the Holy Ghost, and so varying from the rest of *Adam*'s Children, he was wholly free from the Sinfulness which adheres unto all that are born after the ordinary and usual Manner, *He was in all Points tempted like as we are, yet without Sin*, Heb. 4. 15. And certainly it was not fit and congruous that any Thing polluted with Sin, should be united to the Son of God: Wherefore in his very Birth he was Holy, as saith the Angel to the Blessed Virgin, *That Holy Thing that shall be born of thee*, Luke 1. 35.

I might also adjoyn a Third Reason why the Word *Flesh* is here made use of by the Evangelist; namely, not only to set forth the Frailty of that Nature which Christ assumed, (of which I have spoken already) but likewise to express the Verity and Reality of his Humane Nature. Which was a Thing that some * *Hereticks* in St *John*'s Time, and † others in the Second Century denied, for they held that Christ had not a real, but a phantastick Body; and therefore were called by the Orthodox Writers δοκητὰ and φαντασιαστί. And afterwards, the *Manichees* took up this Conceit, and were not ashamed to profess that our Saviour assumed not Flesh really, but seemingly only. But this Term which St. *John* uses confutes this Erroneous Perswasion, and establishes the Truth of Christ's Humanity: He was *Flesh*, as we are, he was True and Real *Flesh*, and not in Appearance only.

* 1 John 4. 2, 3.
† Cerdon, Marcion, Valentinus.

I pass to the Third Thing remarkable in the Words, and that is the *Union* of these Two Natures (the Divine and Humane) in One Person, expressed to us by that Verb ἐγένετο, *was made*. *Socinus* would have it to be no more than *fuit*, *he was*: But First, we see the Style itself of the Evangelist confutes this, for ἦν was used before, *v.* 1, 2. *the Word was*: And now he uses another Word, to express another Thing. Secondly, The Evengelist here designedly *distinguishes* between these Two, *the Word and Flesh*, what Christ was from Eternity, and what he was in Time, and therefore more than *Existence* must be understood by this Word. *When the Fulness of Time was come*, saith the Apostle, *God sent forth his Son made of a Woman*, γενόμενον, *Gal.* 4. 4. it is the same with ἐγένετο in the Text, and signifies the *Assumption* of the Humane Nature, and *the uniting* of it to the Divine. The Meaning then of [the Word *was made* Flesh,] is no other than this, That the Second Person in the Ever Blessed Trinity, took the Nature of Man into the Unity of his Person, so that though Christ be God and Man, yet he is but One Christ;

One not by Conversion of the Godhead into Flesh, but by taking the Manhood into God; One altogether, not by Confusion of Substance, but by Unity of Person, as *Athanasius*'s Creed hath it. *Manendo quod erat, cœpit esse quod non erat*, was the ancient Divinity. Though he remained what he ever was, because his Godhead is unchangeable; yet he became what he was not, by investing himself with Humanity. Thus the Unity of the Person takes not away the Distinction of the Natures, but the Godhead and Manhood retain their own Properties severally. Neither doth the Distinction of Natures hinder the Unity of the Person, but one and the same Christ is perfect God and perfect Man. This is the Mystery which we *Christians* believe, the *Hypostatical* or *Personal Union* between *the Word* and *the Flesh*, the Son of God and the Seed of the Woman.

But the real Conjunction of these Two Natures is dark and inexplicable, the Manner of it cannot be told, only a Resemblance of it is given us in the *Athanasian Creed*, [as the reasonable Soul and Flesh are One Man, so God and Man are One Christ.] Now though we have no just and satisfactory Idea of the Union of our Souls and Bodies, yet we most firmly believe the Thing itself; so we have Reason to believe that God and Man are united, although we have not a full and adequate Conception of it, although we are not in this present State capable of knowing and apprehending how it is. But this Comparison taken from the Humane Soul and Body is sufficient to express the Truth and Reality of this Union: The Godhead and Manhood of Christ are as truly and properly united, as the Two distinct Ingredients of Man, Soul and Body. But it must be confessed, That this Similitude falls short of that Transcendent Mystery, and holds but little Proportion with it, *this* being a Natural and Finite Union, but the *other* Preter-natural and Infinite. Wherefore we must give our Suffrage to what an ancient Writer of the Church saith of this great Secret, *The Manner of it verily is deep and unutterable and not to be comprehended by our shallow Thoughts and Conceptions. Let us then adore what we can't reach and fathom, and let us (notwithstanding the Mysteries and Difficulties which surround this Truth) be persuaded of, and fully believe this Proposition, That the Eternal Son of God, the Second Person in the Trinity, was made Man in the Fullness of Time, uniting the Humane Nature to the Divine, and hereby the Son of God was made the Son of Man. This is the Sense of the Evangelist when he saith, *The Word was made Flesh*.

* Βαθὺς μὲν ἔστιν καὶ ἀπόρρητος καὶ ἀλήθειαν, καὶ τοῖς ἡμέτεροις διανοίαις οὐκ ἀλωπήτος ὁ τῆς ἐνανθρωπήσεως τρόπος. Cyril Alex. περὶ τῆς ὀρθῆς πίστεως.

Satan, the Father of Lyes and Falshoods, hath endeavoured to overthrow this Grand Article of our Faith by the busie Disputes of Hereticks, who have set on Foot these Two Errors in the Church; First, That Christ's Natures (Divine and Humane) are so mixed and confounded one with another, that neither his Godhead nor Manhood remain distinct and entire. Secondly, On the contrary, it hath been taught by another Sort of Men, that Christ is so the Son of God and Man, that he is really a Double Christ, consisting of Two Persons.

The *Former* Opinion was spread by *Eutyches*, and those who took from him the Denomination of *Eutychians*: They acknowledged Christ to be the Son of God, and to have been really a Man, but they so blended these Natures, that they left him neither of them. At least they thought the Humane Nature was swallow'd up of the Divine. Or (as some of them intimate) they fancied a Third Substance to be compounded out of the Union of the Two Natures. But this absurd Notion is clearly baffled by the Evangelist, when he makes a Distinction between the *Word* and *Flesh*, and thereby lets us know that the Two Natures remain distinct. Christ being made Man ceaseth not to be what he was before; there is nothing changed in that Divine Person who assumed our Nature. The Son of God is so become Man in the Process of Time, that still he is the Eternal Word of God without any Beginning of Time. The Divine and Humane Nature are linked together in so firm a League, That neither Glorification doth consume the Inferior of them, nor his Assumption and Incarnation the Superior: Baseness is undergone by Majesty, Infirmity by Power, and Mortality by Eternity, and yet the Properties of each Nature are preserved, and meet in One Person.

The *Latter* Doctrine was maintained by *Nestorius*, and his Partisans, who confess'd both Natures in Christ, but divided them so, that they made Two Christ's, One God, and the other Man. The Text is a sufficient Confutation of this Error also, for here is the Union of both Natures in One Person. For this Proposition

[*the*

[*the Word was made Flesh*] sounds directly to this Purpose and Meaning; namely, That he who is true God, the very same that was from Everlasting, is now made Man, and so the Godhead and Manhood are joined, never to be divided. Can it be thought that any *Christian* Man, and professing the *Protestant* Religion, is so blind and hardened as to deny this? Yet so it is; yea, he absolutely *contradicts* the Text I have been treating of, and tells us in plain Terms, That * *the Word is not made Flesh, and to say the contrary is Erroneous and False.* And again, † *The Union of the Two Natures in Christ is such an arrant Fable as the like is not to be heard of.* And in another Place he calls it, *The most monstrous Opinion in the Christian Religion.* We see from this one Instance, (and there are a Hundred more besides) what horrid Blasphemy the *Socinian* Tribe are guilty of. They have the Face to give the inspired Writers the Lye, and to maintain as True what is directly contrary to their Assertions. St. *John* saith, *the Word was made Flesh*; they say *the Word was not made Flesh*, and that the contrary Opinion is Erroneous, Fabulous and Monstrous. Yet this is the very same which is thus set forth by the Evangelical Prophet, *Unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given*, Isa. 9. 6. Where are represented to us the Humanity and Divinity of Christ. *A Child is born*, that denotes the Former: *A Son is given*, that expresses the Latter. This Mystery is meant, when the Apostle saith of Christ, that *being in the Form of God, he took upon him the Form of a Servant*, Phil. 2. 6. And more briefly, *God was manifest in the Flesh*, 1 Tim. 3. 16. The only begotten Son of God, and God himself, became the Son of a Woman, yea (which renders it an unparallelled *Miracle*) the Son of a *Virgin*. For no Man of rational and sober Thoughts will attend to what some have foolishly dream'd, that some others were born after this wondrous Manner; as that ‖ *Plato* was the Off-spring of a Virgin, and that * *Alexander* the Great was of the like Original. So the *Indians* thought that *Budda*, a great Philosopher among them, was taken out of the Side of a Virgin. And some of the *Arabian* Physicians have supported such foolish Conceits by holding that the Thing is naturally possible. But these are groundless Delusions: And as for *Simon Magus*'s feigning himself to be born of a Virgin, and *Domitian*'s pretending to be the Issue of *Minerva*, these are to be look'd upon as a meer aping of our Blessed Saviour's Nativity: And so by this fond Imitation they do but attest the Truth of what the Evangelists say concerning Christ's Birth, for they would not have pretended to such a strange Birth, unless our Saviour had been really born after that Manner.

* Smalc. Exam. 100. Error.
† Exam. 157. Errorum.
‖ Laert. in Plat.
* Cœl. Rodigin.

Now it is not to be doubted of, That it was not on any *mean Account* that Things were thus, that the Son of God came down from Heaven to visit us sinful Creatures, and that in a Miraculous Way he assumed our Flesh. This being so Great and Wonderful, so Stupendious and Amazing an Enterprize, there must be *Great* and *Extraordinary Reasons* for it. It must be upon the most Important Account in the World that there was ever such an Undertaking. Here therefore, to give ourselves full Satisfaction as to this Great Point, I will shew that the Incarnation of Christ was serviceable to these Three Great Ends and Purposes. 1. To Instruct and Confirm us in the Chief Heads of the Christian Religion. 2. To Comfort and Encourage us in the greatest Troubles, and Distresses that we are obnoxious to. 3. To regulate our Lives, and promote the Practice of all Holiness. And I cannot discern that we can expect a greater Usefulness of any Doctrine whatsoever. If it serves to confirm our Faith, to chear us in our Sorrows and Calamities, and to Amend our whole Lives and Conversations, I do not see how we can desire any more.

I. First, The Manifestation of Christ in the Flesh, conducts us to a *firm Knowledge of the Principles of Christianity*, and strengthens us in the Belief of the *whole Christian Religion*: And this it doth First by assuring us of *God's Veracity*, or *Faithfulness*; for upon that the Truth of our Religion is founded. Now This Attribute of God is manifestly proved, 1. By the fulfilling of the Prophecies, and Predictions concerning Christ's Coming. 2. By the Miracles and Prodigies that attended his Birth, and followed after it.

I begin with the Former of these. Our Blessed Saviour's being made Man, assures us of God's *Truth* and *Faithfulness*, by the Accomplishment of the many Prophecies, and Promises concerning it in the Old Testament. The First that we meet

meet with is in Gen. 3. 15. *The Seed of the Woman*, that is, Christ born of a Woman, *shall break the Serpent's Head*; that is, destroy the Works of the Devil: For it is plain, from that Reference which this hath to Satan's tempting and deceiving our First Parents, That by the *Serpent* is meant the Apostate Spirit, who with his Infernal Complices was baffled by our Saviour's Undertaking for us in the Flesh. And therefore this eminent and illustrious Verifying of so ancient a Prediction, on which the whole Issue of Christianity, and consequently of our Salvation and Happiness depends, is a signal Ratification of the Truth and Faithfulness of God, and at the same Time of the Reality of our most Holy Religion. The next Promise you read of is made to *Abraham*, Gen. 12. 3. *In thy Seed shall all the Families of the Earth be blessed*, that is, of thy Lineage shall one *be born*, who shall be a Catholick Blessing to the World: And that *Abraham's Seed is Christ*, are the very Words of the Apostle, *Gal.* 3. 16. so that at our Saviour's Incarnation this Promise was actually fulfilled. And it might be observed, that to render it more famous and remarkable, it was not only once made to the Father of the Faithful, but repeated no less than Seven Times afterwards. It was delivered down to *Isaac*, and from *Isaac* to *Jacob*, and from him to his Sons, as part of his Last Will and Testament. And the following Prophecy is also concerning the Coming of Christ in the Flesh, *Deut.* 18. 18. *I will raise them up a Prophet from among their Brethren, like unto thee*, (that is to *Moses*) *and will put my Words in his Mouth.* Now it is certain, That there has been no *Prophet like unto Moses* but *Christ Jesus*. How many Passages are there in the *Psalmist*, which it is impossible to apply litterally to *David*, and therefore must of Necessity be understood of the *Messias*, the Son of *David*?

Hither must be referred that remarkable Prediction in *Isa.* 7. 14. *Behold a Virgin shall conceive, and bear a Son, and shall call his Name Emmanuel.* And that other eminent Prophecy in *Isa.* 9. 6. which I have before cited, relates to the same Matter, for though it seems to speak of something Past, yet it foretells something to Come: For 'tis the usual Way of the *Prophets* to Antedate the Time, and to speak of future Matters as if they were come to pass already. And there are innumerable other Places in that Prophet's Book, besides, those of *Micah*, and *Haggai*, *Malachi*, and *Zechariah*, which are all a plain Description of the *Advent* and *Offices* of the *Messiah*, and give us such a particular Character of *Christ*, that the blindest *Jew* cannot but espy it, and (if his Heart were not hardened) must needs acknowledge the *Truth* and *Faithfulness* of God in the Accomplishment of those Predictions. And if some of them seem Doubtful and Obscure, yet there is so great a Number of them in the Holy Volume, that the rest at least are Clear and Perspicuous, and beyond the Cavils of the subtillest Opposers of Christianity.

We may observe, That there was not one particular *Circumstance* of any Moment, which was to fall out about the *Messias*, but it was expresly set down before-hand by some of the Pen-men of Holy Writ. The Time of his Coming was plainly signified in *Gen.* 49. 10. *The Scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor a Law-giver from between his Feet till Shiloh come.* Then the Scepter departed from *Judah* when *Herod* (a Stranger and of another Nation) was invested in the Government, and then it was that *Shiloh* (the Saviour that was *sent* for the Redemption of Sinners) came into the World. And that Prophecy of *Daniel* concerning the *Seventy Weeks* or Seventy Weeks of Years (as the Judicious interpret it) that is, Seventy Times Seven, or Four Hundred and thirty Years, gives a precise Account of the Period of Time, from that notable Transaction there spoken of, to the coming of the *Messiah*. I have not now Time to clear this, but I have explained this Point of Chronology in another Place. I proceed to other Circumstances of Christ's Birth: As to the Place of it, *viz.* the Town of *Bethlehem*, *That* no less than the Time of his appearing was fortold by the Prophet *Micah*, Ch. 5. Ver. 2. *Thou Bethlehem Ephrata, though thou be little among the Thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall come forth unto me, he that is to be Ruler in Israel, whose Goings have been from of Old, from Everlasting.* That *John Baptist* should go before him, and proclaim him in the Desart, is predicted by *Isaiah* 40. 3. and that his Mother should be a *Virgin*, is likewise deliver'd in express Terms. That the Infants of *Bethlehem* should be murder'd, and that he himself should be carried into *Ægypt*, and many other Passages of History which appertain to his Coming, are manifestly

festly accomplish'd, and so the *Truth* of God's Word doth evidently shine thorough them.

Some of these fore-named Particulars were foretold Three Thousand Years, some Two Thousand, and some a Thousand Years before our Saviour was born. Those who are Curious and Cabalistical, think there is some great Secret treasur'd in that *Mem Clausum*, or *Final* in the midst of that * Word which relates to the *Messiah*, in *Isai. 9. 7.* The inserting of that Sort of Letter is extraordinary and unusual, and therefore they conjecture that the Letter *Mem* being a *Numerical* Letter, and denoting the Number Six Hundred, so many Years, *viz.*, from the Time of that Prophecy of *Isaiah* to the Birth of Christ (which was just Six Hundred Years, they tells us) are obscurely intimated to us. I might mention here the *Sibylline Verses*, so famous amongst the Ancients, which foretell the Coming of Christ as the Son of God, and the Off-spring of a Virgin. *Virgil*, who got the Sight of those Books, makes his Fourth *Eclogue* a Translation of some Part of those Prophecies, wherein they speak of that great Happiness which the World should have by *Christ*, (although the Poet applies it to another Purpose.)

* לְמַרְבֵּה

But to wave these Writings, because all Persons do not agree in the Authenticknes of them, we have a *more sure Word of Prophecy*, the undoubted Oracles of the Old Testament: These distinctly speak of the appearing of Christ in the Flesh, and they were as distinctly fulfilled, as Saint *Matthew* in his Narrative of Christ's Birth observes, *Mat. 1. 22. Now all was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken.* Not a Word hath fallen to the Ground of all that God hath delivered by his Prophets concerning the Coming of his Son. Which is sufficient to confirm us in the *Truth* and *Certainty* of the Christian Religion; for amongst all the Arguments, and Evidences that are produc'd to defend it, I know none more close and prevalent than this, That all these Prophecies and Promises concerning the *Messias*, so many Hundred Years before he came, and which the *Jews* themselves did understand to speak of Him, that all these (I say) are so fully and remarkably accomplish'd in *Christ Jesus*. It is an undeniable Proof, That we are in Possession of a real Truth, and that we have a sure footing for our Faith. The Veracity of God, and the Reasonablenes of our Religion are both establish'd at once, and that in the Way of an undeniable *Demonstration*: whence the proving of *Christ* to be spoken of in the *Old Testament*, and that these several Places in those Writings were fulfill'd at *Christ's Coming*, is the entire Subject of the whole Book of *Eusebius*, entituled *The Evangelical Demonstration.*

Secondly, God's *Faithfulnes*, and consequently the Truth of Christianity, is confirmed by the *mighty Wonders* and *Prodigies* which attended Christ's Nativity. There was the *Apparition of Angels*, those glorious Ministers of Heaven, whom we cannot imagine to have been sent to attest a Lye, and to bear Witnes to a Falshood: but on the contrary, we must conclude, that they were dispatched on Purpose to confirm this Great Mystery of Godlines, *viz. God manifest in the Flesh*, and to proclaim aloud to the World the Excellency and Divinity of Christ.

Again, a new irregular *Star* shewed it self openly at our Saviour's Birth, to tell Men that that was but the Fore-runner of the *Son of Righteousnes*, to point out him to the World who is called † *the bright and Morning Star*, that glorious Star which was to arise out of *Jacob*. *Some of the Ancients would have this Star to be an Angel, or some Divine Power; but I don't see any Reason to induce us to this Perswasion, seeing this Apparition is plainly and expresly call'd a Star Four several Times by the Evangelist St. *Matthew*, *Matth.* 2. 2,7,9,10. But an extraordinary and unusual Star it was, (as ‖ some of the Acutest and most observing of the Christian Fathers have taken Notice) not soon wasting it self, for it accompanied the *Magi* in their Travels from the East, and conducted them to *Jerusalem*. This Heavenly Lamp of Fire which shone at our Saviour's Birth, was no flirting Globe of inflam'd Exhalations, but was high and large, and was advanced above the Region of Meteors, and shone to the People afar off, for those Wise-Men *saw this Star in the East*, Mat. 2. 2. *i. e.* in that Country from whence they came. And yet it was low, else it could not *stand over where the young Child was*, v. 9. That is, as I conceive, some Parts or Rays of it were low, and shot themselves downwards, even directly towards that House where the Blessed Babe was. And on other Accounts, it might be shewed, That this was a New and Extraordinary Star, and set up in the

† Rev. 22. 16.

* Cæsarius, quæst. 45. Chrysost. hom. 6. in Matth. Theophylact. in Mat. 2.

‖ Ignat. Epist. an Ephes. Euseb. Dem. Evang Origen. cont. Cels. l. 1.

the Heavens, on purpose to grace the Miraculous Birth of that Divine Infant, and therefore it is emphatically and signally called *his Star*, Mat. 2. 2.

Some think the Feast of *Epiphany* observ'd in our Church, refers to the Appearance of this Star, and is a Commemoration of it. And truly it is plain, from the Writings of the *Fathers*, that though sometimes ἐπιφάνεια signifies Christ's *Birth-day*, and sometimes his *Baptism*, yet at other times it denotes the Appearing of that Star, which they Commemorated on the 6th of *January*, and they call'd that Day ἐπιφάνεια, and ἐπιφάνια in the Plural. And because Christ at his *Baptism* publickly *appear'd*, and shew'd himself to the World, (after he had lain hid so long) the Ancients joyn'd this, and the Appearance of his Star together, and Celebrated them on the same Day. Nay, Christ is said by the Church of *Rome* to have been Baptized on this Day, the 6th of *January*, commonly called *Twelfth-day*. And so the *Abyssines*, *Ethiopians*, and other *Eastern* Churches, believe it to be the Day of Christ's Baptism. And our own Church retains the Service appointed for that Day; accordingly the Second Lesson is the Third Chapter of St. *Luke*, the History of *Christ's Baptism*. That which is to our present Purpose, is only to observe, that the Glorious and Wonderful Appearance of this *Star* at our Saviour's Birth, was such, that it was solemnly Commemorated by the Ancient Christians, who also at the same time Solemnized the coming of the *Wise Men* of the *East*, who were brought to *Judea* by the Guidance of this Star, and came *and fell down* there before the Holy Babe, Jesus, and *Worshipp'd him, and when they had open'd their Treasures, they presented unto him Gifts, Gold, and Frankincense, and Myrrh*, Mat. 2. 11.

Tho' we are not certain of their *Number*, yet they are commonly reckoned Three, it may be, from the triple Offering which they made. Their particular *Names*, (viz. *Gaspar*, *Baltazar*, *Melchior*) are assign'd by some, and so are their *Ages*, viz. the first was Sixty Years Old, the Second Forty, the Third Twenty, when they came to Christ; but there is little or no Foundation for these Reports, and therefore I dismiss them. They are commonly said to be *Kings*, and accordingly *Epiphany*, or *Twelfth-day*, is by the *Spaniards* call'd *the Feast of Kings*; yea, some of the *Ancient* Christian * Writers agree, that they were of this high Rank and Quality. The occasion of which Opinion, hath been thought by some Learned Men to be the *Office* which was used on *Epiphany-day*; they Sung *Psalm* 72. 10. *The Kings of Sheba, and Seba shall offer Gifts*; and they read the 60th Chapter of *Isaiah*, which speaks of the Glory of the *Christian Church* by the Access of the *Gentile Kings* to it, *v.* 3. And particularly, 'tis said, that *they from Sheba shall come, and bring Gold and Incense*, v. 6. But, perhaps, the true, and plain Reason of this Denomination given to the *Eastern Wise Men*, is because they were *Great*, and *Rich Men*, (as appears from their Presents) who were styl'd *Kings* in those Times, according to the ancient way of speaking, as is evident from sundry places of Scripture.

* Tertullian, Cyprian, Athanasius, Jerom, Augustine, Chrysostom, Theophylact.

It is disputed, which is the particular Country from whence these Eastern Sages came; † St. *Chrysostom*, and ‖ *Basil the Great*, conclude them to be *Persians*, these being *East* from *Judea*; and the Word μάγοι properly belonging to the chief Men of that Country, for amongst the *Persians* the *Magi* were the same that the *Grecians* call'd *Philosophers*, i. e. *Wise Men*, or Lovers of Wisdom. On this account they were always wont to be near the Kings of *Persia*, without whose Advice nothing was done; nay, from among this Rank of Men the *Persian King* always was chosen; for we learn from ‡ *Tully*, that none could be a King of *Persia*, who was not skill'd in the Sciences of the *Magi*. Others think they came from *Chaldea*, which was *North-East* of *Judea*. But the most probable Opinion is, that they were Inhabitants of *Arabia*, which it is true was *South* of the Holy Land; and thence the *Queen* of *Sheba*, (which is in *Arabia*) is call'd the *Queen of the South*; but yet it is as true, that it was Situated *South-East* of that Country, and so the Wise Men might rightly be said to come from the *East*. Or though *Arabia* was not directly *Eastward* from *Judea*, yet it was known to be a famous *Eastern-Country*, and therefore those Persons were truly said to come from that Quarter. The Presents and Gifts which they brought with them, shew as much, for some part of *Arabia* was famous for *Gold*, and 'tis well known how celebrated it was for *Myrrh*, and *Frankincense*, and such like Aromatick Drugs and Spices. On this account the

† Homil. 6. & 7. in Mat.

‖ De hum. Christi generat.

‡ Lib. de divinatione.

Magi

Magi have been Voted by several of the Ancients to be *Arabians*. So * *Gregory Nyssen*, and † *Theophylact* were perswaded; and from that ancient Recital of the fore-mentioned *Psalm*, and Chapter, which mention the *Kings of Sheba*, i. e. of *Arabia*, we may gather what was their Opinion of old. A ‖ Learned Modern of our own giving an Account of these Wise Men that Travell'd to *Judea* by Direction of that Star, pronounces them to be of *Arabia*, from whence about 300 Years after, by the express Command of *Helena*, their Bodies were translated to *Constantinople*, from thence by *Eustathius* to *Milan*, at last by *Renatus* (then Bishop) to *Cologne*, where they remain, and their Monuments are shewed to Strangers, and they are commonly Entitled, the *Three Kings of* Cologne. Our * Learned *English Rabbi*, joyns with the fore-mention'd Author, and declares it his Opinion, that these famous Pilgrims came from *Arabia*.

* In diem Natalem Christi.
† In *cap.* 2. Matth.
‖ *Dr.* (*afterwards Sir* (Thomas) Brown.
* *Dr.* Lightfoot, Hor. Heb. ad *cap.* 2. Matt.

But whether they came thence, or from *Persia*, or from *Chaldea*, (all three *East* of *Jerusalem* more or less) 'tis no great Concern, no Point worth the contending about. It is sufficient for our present Purpose, that they came to Christ by the Conduct of that extraordinary *Star* which appear'd at our Saviour's Nativity. Some of the † *Greek Fathers* (not to speak of the *Latin* Ones) and that *English* Writer whom I mention'd last, reckon these *Eastern* Travellers to have been great Magicians, and Sorcerers, Noted Wizards, and Enchanters; but at least we are to think that they were great Astrologers, and well skill'd in the Knowledge of the Heavenly Bodies, and accordingly they observ'd the Course of this strange Luminary, and followed it to make Remarks upon it, and to learn what it Prognosticated, and to enquire into our Saviour's *Horoscope*. But behold! their Curiosity, and Art were instrumental to their Conversion; and by a more powerful Hand they were forc'd to fall down and Adore our Saviour, and returning into their Country again, became some of the First-fruits of the Called *Gentiles*; and, (if we may give Credit to some Ecclesiastical Writers) were Baptized by *Thomas* the Apostle, when he travell'd into *Arabia* to Preach the Gospel.

† Ignat. Epist. ad Ephes. Justin Mart. Dialog. cum Tryph. Theophylact.

Thus as I shew'd before, that Christ's Birth was *Extraordinary*, on the account of his being so long before *Prophesied of*, so it appears to be of that Quality from that strange and extraordinary *Star* which shew'd it self at that time. It was so remarkable, and Marvellous an Occurrence, that the Ancient Churches called it to mind on *Epiphany-day*, and the *Collect* of our Church for that Day mentions particularly, *God's manifesting his only begotten Son to the Gentiles by the leading of a Star*. It is usual among some Men, from the odd, and strange Circumstances, and Accidents, which happen about the *Birth* of Children, to make a Presage of their future Condition and Fortunes, (as they call them) to promise something Good and Auspicious, or the contrary concerning them. These Bodings may be founded on Mistakes and false Surmises; but it is certain, that the marvellous things which happen'd at *Christ's Birth*, were real Prognosticks of the Wonders of his Life and Death. Besides, these Signs and Wonders were to establish our Belief of the Reality of our Saviour's Incarnation, and to attest his Greatness and Authority. The Rising of the Sun of Righteousness was attended with such wonderful and prodigious Circumstances, to let us understand that the whole Course of this great Luminary, it's Motion, Operation, and Influence, should be no less Notable, and Remarkable, and should be of the greatest Concernment to Mankind.

But as the Appearing of Christ in the Flesh, is an infallible Argument of God's *Veracity*, (and consequently the whole Christian Verity) so I will shew in the next place, that it gives us a true, and plain Account of those other admirable Divine *Attributes* of God, his *Justice* and *Mercy*, the most Resplendent and Glorious Perfections of the Deity. To this purpose I offer these following Propositions, which will bring us to the great Thing I aim at by so many Steps and Degrees.

First, To begin with the Original and Foundation of all, our first Parents Sinned by their wilful Transgression of the Divine Command, and thereby justly incurr'd the Wrath and Displeasure of God.

Secondly, All Mankind upon this Fall, could not but receive an inevitable Contagion and Corruption, affix'd to the Temper of the Body, and consequently to the Complexion of the Soul, whereby they had strong Propensions to Sin, and contracted a Guilt, and became Obnoxious to Punishment.

Thirdly, Mankind being thus Obnoxious, nothing could be more necessary, and more desirable, than to be freed from this Obligation to Punishment; for no

Creature, especially no Rational one, delights in Misery, but strives to free it self from it, or looks out for another to do it for him.

Fourthly, Seeing this Misery befel Mankind, for the wilful Transgression of the Divine Laws, there could no Help and Remedy be expected but from meer Grace, and Divine Mercy. Sin calls aloud for Punishment, therefore the Sword of Justice, and Vengeance can be kept off only by the Hand of Mercy and Clemency. Yet,

Fifthly, The *Justice* of God must be maintain'd as well as his *Mercy*; whence it follows, that that which restores Man to Happiness and Life, must consist with both. One Attribute must not be made to fall out with another, but they must all Conspire and Unite into a Glorious, and Divine Harmony.

Sixthly, Then, since Divine *Justice* as well as *Mercy* must be entire, it follows, that this Mercy and Grace could not be shewed, unless first there did intervene an Expiation for Sin, and a Covenant of new Obedience. For these are the things which God may, and ought in Justice to exact of Offenders; otherwise breaking of the Divine Laws, and affronting our Maker, would be encourag'd in the World, and at last Men would scarcely acknowledge a Deity. It is reasonable therefore, that before God be reconcil'd to us, and pleas'd with us, after our wilful Offending Him, Sin should be Expiated, and Justice satisfied. And this very Accepting of an Expiation is the Result of Free Grace and Bounty. Now,

Seventhly, To effect this Restauration of Mankind, and to satisfie the Justice of God, a fit Person was to be chosen, by whom there might be made Expiation and Atonement for Sinners, and by whose Holy Doctrine and Example, the Way of new Obedience might be perfected.

Again, None but One, who was both *God* and *Man*, could be that Person who could Redeem us. For it was necessary that he should be the Eternal God, that he might infinitely merit for us. There was no Angel, or other Creature could have undergone the Wrath of God due unto Mankind for their Sins. This was beyond the Strength and Power of a Created Being. And it is very rational to think so, if we remember how uneasie our Saviour himself was upon the Cross; His Doleful and Expiring Language was, that He was *forsaken*; and how then could any other Person have undergone that severe Task, and born that pressing Burden? Further, it was requisite that the *Deity it self* should be thus concern'd in Man's Redemption, because none else could be a sufficient Ranson for Sinners. There was an utter Impossibility of any other Atonement and Propitiation; Finite, and Sinful Men being altogether uncapable of satisfying the Infinite Majesty that was Offended and Provoked. The Sufferings of none but the Son of God could Merit for the lapsed Race of *Adam*. Wherefore it was necessary he should be God, that the Work of our Redemption might be absolutely perfected, and effectually applyed to Believers; and, in a word, that whereas we were separated from God by Sin, by Christ's undertaking for us, we might again be United unto God. It was as necessary also that he should be *Man*, that he might be fit for this Work which was to end with the Death of him who undertook it. It was requisite he should be Man, that he might be in a capacity of Suffering, and Shedding his precious Blood for us, without which there could be no Redemption; and likewise that the same Nature which had Sinn'd might suffer, and the Devil might be foil'd, but that which he had before overcome, and so that that Evil Spirit might lose that Power and Dominion which once he had over Mankind.

Lastly, Then this Person was *Christ the Lord*; in him all the foregoing Circumstances meet; and more especially 'tis true of him alone that he was both God and Man. He was *God*, the only Begotten Son of the Father, Begotten by an Eternal and unspeakable Generation, who is so the Son of God, that he is also God himself, really, and truly God. He was *Man*, who though he was partaker of Flesh and Blood with us, yet was Holy, Harmless, and separate from Sinners, a Lamb without Spot, Innocent and Righteous; for he could not expiate for other Men's Sins, who had Sins of his own to answer for. The short is, the Nature which is Inviolable was united into a Nature Passible: True God, and True Man, concenter'd in One Person, that he might in One Nature Suffer, and by the other Rise again. He was Man, that he might Die, he was God, that he might satisfie; he was both God and Man, that he might save. On this account the Son of God came down from Heaven, and took our Nature upon him, was made Flesh, and

Born

Born of a Woman, thereby to appease God's Wrath, which was due to us by reason of our Sins. Thus the Birth of Christ, and his Assuming of, and appearing in our Flesh, gives us the most exact Account of the Impartial *Justice*, and Infinite *Mercy* of God, and the happy *Conjunction* of them both.

If you more particularly enquire into the *Reason*, why the *Second Person*, and not the *First*, or *Third* in the Sacred Trinity, was chosen out for this great Undertaking; this may be answer'd, That it is enough that the Thing is so? 'Tis not necessary that this great Mystery should be submitted to the meaner level of our Conceptions, and be made to stoop to our ordinary Apprehensions. *Stat pro Ratione Voluntas*, sounds ill in Government and Policy, (as it was first spoken) but no Man can deny it to be good Divinity; the Will and Appointment of Heaven is the best Reason; and he that curiously and nicely disputes it, proclaims himself to be Absurd, and Irrational.

But some ways to satisfie the Inquisitive, this may justly be offer'd, That the *Messias* was to be a *Mediator between God and Man*, 1 Tim. 2. 5. Heb. 8. 6.—12. 24.—9. 15. And what is more accountable, than that the Son of God, the Second Person in the Trinity, should be the *Mediator* and *Messias*, he being the *middle Person* in the Holy Trinity, between God the Father and the Holy Ghost? Is it not Congruous that this Person should interpose between us and his Father, and Reconcile us unto Him? Thus his Office is correspondent to his Person, which is the Language of the *Ancient Fathers*, *Medius in Personâ*, *Medius in Officio*. This, so far as our shallow Reasons can reach, is one Account that may be given, why the Second Person in the Trinity appear'd in the Flesh, and Cloathed himself with Humanity.

The Ancients suggest this too, That he that was to be the *Messias*, was to make us the *Sons of God*: Now, the Natural, and only Begotten Son of God, was the fittest Person for this Work, *i. e.* to make us Sons by Adoption, and Grace. And this is it which the Great Apostle referrs to in *Gal.* 4. 4. *When the fulness of time was come, God sent forth his Son made of a Woman, that we might receive the Adoption of Sons.* None who acknowledge the Evangelical Dispensation, ought to despise the Reasoning of this profound Apostle.

Besides, we are told in the Sacred Records, that by the Son of God, not only Man, but all things were made; *by whom also he made the Worlds*, Heb. 1. 2. he being in a more *signal* manner destin'd to that Work. Now, it was fit and congruous, that this should be the Person who was to be Incarnate, that so we might be Restor'd, and Redeem'd by the same Person that made us. This is the Tenor of the Evangelist St. *John*'s Reasoning in the beginning of the First Chapter of his Gospel, *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. All things were made by him, and without him was not any thing made that was made.* And afterwards, *He was in the World, and the World was made by him*, v. 10. And then immediately he proceeds to the Mystery of his Incarnation, *The Word was made Flesh, and dwelt amongst us.* And that you may not think this is an ungrounded Fancy, St. *Paul* uses the same Argumentation, *Col.* 1. 15. 16, 17. *In whom we have redemption through his Blood, even the forgiveness of sins; for by him were all things created that are in heaven, and that are in earth; all things were created by him, and for him.* As much as to say, He Created the World at first, and who so fit afterwards to restore it? Thus the Pious Logick of the Inspir'd Writers, and of the Christian Fathers, condescends even to the Demands of the Curious. It is evident, from what hath been suggested, that it was fitting and convenient, decorous and reasonable, that the *Second Person* in the Trinity, (rather than either of the two other) should be made Man, and take our Nature upon him. And thus this Doctrine confirms our Belief, and strengthens our Perswasions concerning the greatest Matters of our Religion, *viz.* the *Veracity*, the *Justice*, and *Mercy* of God, and the *Truth of all the Christian Religion.*

I am to shew in the Second Place, that it not only *instructs* us, but *comforts* us. And indeed, I have done this partly already, for there must needs be a great and unutterable Solace Administred to us, from a firm and stable Belief of the main things of our Religion. When our Minds are settled and grounded in the principal Points of Christianity, and we have real and undoubted Evidences and Demonstrations of the Truth and Reality of it; how chearfully may we discharge our Duty, how joyfully may we act in our several Stations and Capacities, how com-

fortably may we walk with God, how zealous hold fast the Faith, how undauntedly adhere to the Principles and Practice of Religion, and persevere in it, even to Death? This in the General, but more particularly,

First, Christ's Manifestation in the Flesh, *comforts* and *encourages* us, by assuring us of God's infinite and unparallell'd Love to lost Sinners. * *God so loved the World, that he gave his only begotten Son.* This was the highest Demonstration of Love, this was the greatest Instance of Divine Philanthropy. Here are all the Dimensions of Love; O the Height and Depth, the Length and Breadth of God's Grace and Mercy! O taste, and see here that God is Good: Let our Meditations dwell on this great Proof of the Heavenly Goodness, and in our greatest Troubles of Mind, and Anxieties of Heart, support our selves with this, That there could be no surer Testimony of God's Good-will and Kindness to the Sons of Men. The Divine Favour could not have display'd its self in a more convincing manner. So highly was Man valued by God, that God was made Man. This is not so much a Proof, as a Prodigy of unspeakable Love. Let us then chear our selves with the Consideration of the infinite Love, Goodness, and Mercy of God the Father, and of *Christ Jesus*'s Undertakings for us in the Flesh. His coming was a perfect Design of Love and Grace.

*John 3. 16.

Secondly, The Consideration of Christ's taking our Nature on him, is a mighty Solace and Comfort to us on this account, that hereby we are encourag'd to have Recourse to him, and to pour out our Prayers before him, with assured hopes of being heard. Seeing Christ is Flesh of our Flesh, and Bone of our Bone, and is *touched with the feeling of our infirmities, let us come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need*, Heb. 4. 16. We may now make our Addresses with Confidence, since our humane Nature is united to the Deity; we may boldly draw near to our merciful High-Priest, and ask whatsoever we want, and lay open all our Necessities before him, and beg Favours, both for our selves and others. Our Flesh and Blood are now in Heaven, and therefore our Petitions and Complaints will be heard there, and our Condition pitied, and our Grievances redressed, and all kinds of Mercy conferr'd upon us. Christ assumed our Nature, and with it a *Sense* of all humane Infirmities; on which Ground, we may hope that he will sympathize with our Sufferings, and relieve us in our Distresses. Let us support our Minds with this amidst all our Tryals and Afflictions, that Christ is no stranger to our Nature, he is not unacquainted with our Frailties, he knows whereof we are made, and he will compassionate our State, and succour us in our greatest Extremities. This is the Sense of the Author to the *Hebrews*, in *Chap.* 2. 16, 17, 18. *Verily he took not on him the nature of Angels, but he took on him the seed of Abraham. Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high-priest; for in that he himself hath suffered, being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted.* The Language of Christ to his Servants that labour under Afflictions, is of this sort; I was a Man of Sorrow, and acquainted with Grief, and the Experience of them hath taught me to pity your Miseries, and to be Tender-hearted towards you. I was partaker of your Nature, and of the Infirmities you are subject to, and I have thereby learnt to have a deep Sense of them. I remember that you are but frail Dust and Ashes, I will consider your Souls in Adversity, I will help you to bear the Burden, I will be every ways kind to you, and in due time I will ease you.

Thirdly, Christ's Incarnation Administers solid *Joy* and *Comfort* to us, in that we are thereby assur'd, that the great Work of our Salvation and Redemption is compleated; and that whatever Obstacles and Impediments were in the way to it, they are removed. For what Blessing is there which is not bestowed upon us by Christ's coming, and what Evil is there which is not effectually provided against by it? By his excellent Doctrines and Precepts, he hath put us into the right way, wherein we may walk with safety. Mankind was so corrupted and debauched in their Knowledge and Practice, that it became necessary that fresh Discoveries of their Duty should be made to them, and that a greater Light and Conviction should be darted into their Minds, to lead them into the Way of Truth and Holiness. He therefore that was *the Way*, and *the Truth* it self, came to give us perfect and compleat Laws, and to confute the fond and erroneous Dictates of the depraved World. He came with a design to vanquish and subdue the evil Spirit, that implacable Enemy

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my of our Souls, and to restore us to a State of Righteousness, and to implant the Divine Nature into our Hearts, and to Sanctifie us by his Holy Spirit. Moreover, his design was, to commend Holiness to us by his Example; and accordingly the Holy Life of Christ was added to his Holy Laws and Precepts. As no Man spake, so no Man ever lived like him. Also He came down amongst Men to set them into a way of Happiness; and accordingly he discours'd of *Mansions* which he had prepar'd for Holy Souls. He tells them that they shall be Glorified with Him, and that their Glory shall never have an end. Thus, if *Precepts*, *Examples*, and *Rewards* will work upon Men, Christ's coming hath sufficiently furnished them with all these. In short, he came to satisfie Divine Justice, (as we have heard) to make Atonement for our Sins, and by his Meritorious Death and Passion to Redeem us from the Devil and Hell. This the Apostle tells us, was the End of his being Incarnate, *Heb.* 2. 14. *He himself too part of flesh and blood, that through Death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the Devil.* The design of Christ's being Born, was that he might Die, and Die an accursed and shameful Death, that he might be a Sacrifice and Propitiation for us, that we who were his Enemies, and had rebell'd against him, might live, and be for ever happy. Wherefore comfort one another with these words.

Lastly, *All Persons*, (of what Quality soever) receive some Comfort and Encouragement from *Christ's Birth*, and from the *manner* of his appearing in the World; He was Born of a *Woman*: Behold, there is some Proportion between the Fall of Man and his Reparation. A Woman was Instrumental in the former, and so she is in the latter; *Eve* there, and *Mary* here. That Sex had the honour to convey this matchless Blessing to the World. Now there is, (as 'twere) some Amends made for their being *first in the Transgression.*

Again, He was Born of *Poor* and *Mean Parents*, his reputed Father was but a Country Carpenter, and his Mother was at that time but in a very low Condition, tho' descended of the Royal Family of *David*. *Bethlehem*, a little mean City, was the Place of his Nativity, and he was Born there, not in a great and goodly Mansion, but in a common Inn, and not in the best Room, but in the Stable. All things look'd poor and despicable, mean and obscure, without Retinue and Attendance, without any Lustre and Pomp.

And who were the *Persons* to whom his Birth was first made known? They were not the Great and Learned, but the Mean and Illiterate. They were not *Herod* and his Courtiers, nor the Priests and Doctors in the Temple, but they were silly ignorant Shepherds, and Country-Swains. For though the Owners and Masters of Flocks, were the richest and ablest Men in those *Eastern* Countries, yet the Task of looking to them was devolv'd on poor and inferior People. Yet not so, but that some of the better sort submitted to this Employment, sometimes at least; and then we may particularly observe with St. *Chrysostom*, and other ancient *Fathers*, (who have devoutly descanted on this Circumstance that accompanied our Saviour's coming into the World) that as these Men retain'd the ancient Trade and Profession of the Primitive *Patriarchs*, so they retain'd their Innocence too, and were not so generally Corrupted as the rest of the *Jewish* Nation were; and therefore God was pleas'd to honour them with the Communication of Divine Mysteries, and the Apparitions of Holy Angels. These plain Men, and their plainer and meaner Servants, were the first that were blest with the News of Christ's Arrival in the World, that no Man might be so fond as to imagine, that Meanness, and Poverty were despised by Christ Jesus; or that any by reason of their low Condition, are excluded from the Knowledge of Sacred Mysteries, and the Kingdom of God.

It is observ'd by the foresaid pious Father, that this Grace was done to the *Shepherds* when they were watching their Sheep by Night, and carefully employed in their honest Calling. He that serves God in his lawful Profession, may expect the Favour of Heaven, and his Care and Industry shall be taken notice of and rewarded. In brief, hence we are taught, that God favours honest Simplicity, that poor Parentage, or a mean Calling and Occupation, are no bar to God's Grace, and the Discoveries of the greatest Mysteries. Christ, who debased himself when he was on Earth, who disdained not the meanest Condition, who at his Birth preferr'd *Bethlehem* before *Jerusalem*, and a Stable before a Chamber of State; and who afterwards honour'd the meanest Callings and Professions, by chusing his Apostles and Disciples out of such, will not despise any Person of the meanest and most abject Quality.

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Say then that you are poor, and despised in the World, remember [illegible] is no Badge of Disgrace in God's Account, and therefore it ought not to [illegible] thers, nor in your own. Be not ashamed of your Calling or Parentage, [illegible] never so mean, if they be attended with nothing of Sin and Vice. [illegible] and not Greatness that commends us in the Eyes of God. Let [illegible] dom, and adore the Sacred Method of the Supream Disposer of all things, [illegible] is pleas'd to make choice of poor and contemptible Instruments [illegible] Glory, and to promote Matters of the highest Moment. *He puts down the mighty from their seats, and exalts the humble and meek*, [illegible] *foolish things of the world to confound the wise, and weak things to* [illegible] 1 Cor. 1. 27. *That no flesh should glory in his presence*, [illegible] of that Chapter. Be not displeased with thy low and mean [illegible] God may make it an occasion to exalt thee.

The devout Fathers observ'd, that our Saviour was born about [illegible] *stice*, when the Cold is usually sharpest, and the Nights [illegible] but yet is upon his return to us; whence they would [illegible] ner to apply this to our Souls, that our dark and dreadful [illegible] and thear'd when we see this *Sun* in its *Tropick*, [illegible] warming and refreshing Beams. Behold this [illegible] *and more unto a perfect Day*, gradually advancing [illegible] last overwhelm us with all Blessings. Sit not down [illegible] befall thee for the Appearing of Christ in the [illegible] Mercies whatsoever. *He that spare his own Son, [illegible] give us all things?* This was the Apostle's way of Arguing, and it was very [illegible]

* Rom. 8. 32. and convincing; for he that gives the greater Blessing will not deny the less. He cannot deny us any thing after this great Gratuity bestowed upon us. And thus I have given abundant Proof of the Second Thing which I propounded to speak of, namely, to shew how the Manifestation of Christ in the Flesh, doth Administer *Joy* and *Comfort* to the Minds of Christians.

The Third Head of my Discourse is [illegible] Doctrine of Christ's Conception and Incarnation [illegible] *Life*, and leads us to the Exercise of all [illegible] first, by setting before us, and commending to us [illegible] by setting us to *Spiritualize* Christ's Birth. And, Thirdly, [illegible] *ity* of so great a Blessing.

First, We are called to the Imitation of Christ, who is the exact Pattern of all Virtue and Holiness; especially by his Birth, he teaches us, First, *Humility*. Secondly, *Love*. Thirdly, *Chastity* and *Purity*. First, I say, He taking on him our Nature, and manifesting himself in the Flesh, bids us follow him in his Humility, his Self-denial, and Condescension. How hath He shamed and slurr'd all the Pomp and Glory of this World? How hath He disgraced, and baffled all the vain Gaity, and Ostentations of Mankind? He could have chosen some great and famous City to be Born in, but he rather made choice of *Bethlehem*, obscure *Bethlehem*; yea, some of the ancient † Fathers relate, that he was pleas'd to stoop to the Meanness of a *Cave* or *Den*, without the Town of *Bethlem*, a Place where poor Folks were put when the Inns were full; this being *near* the Town, is reckon'd *in Bethlem*. It was infinite Condescension, to vouchsafe to be inclosed nine Months in the Virgin's Womb, and after that to hang at the Breast, to be wrapped in Swadling-cloths, to undergo the Weaknesses and Infirmities which are incident to the rest of Mankind; and to condescend to the Meanness and Vileness of the Sons of Man. God himself was pleased to Vail his Glorious Majesty, and to stoop to mortal Man, and to invest himself with weak and frail Flesh. The Son of God disdain'd not humane Nature, *when he took upon him to deliver Man, he did not abhor the Virgin's Womb*, as we say in that devout Anthem of the Church. These are undeniable Demonstrations, these are unparallell'd Proofs of his *Humility*. Need I then be very urgent with the Christian Reader to study and practise this Grace? Is not the Apostle's Advice very reasonable? * *Let the same Mind be in you, which was in Christ Jesus?* Should not his voluntary Humiliation be imitated by all his Followers and Disciples? Should they not learn of him to be Meek and Lowly in Spirit, to condescend to the meanest Employment, to stoop to any servile Office for the good of others, not to stand on nice Terms, not to magnifie themselves, and despise others

† Origen. Cont. Cels. *lib.* 1. Euseb. Demonstr. Evang. Justin Martyr Dialog. cum Tryph. Hieronym. Epist. ad Marcel.

* *Phil.* 2. 5.

others that are under them, not eagerly to purſue the great Things of this World? Was Chriſt Humble, and ſhall we be Proud? Did he empty himſelf, and ſhall we be full of our own Self-Conceit? Shall Honour, and great Revenues, Wealth and outward Splendor dazzle our Eyes? Shall the Bravery and Grandeur of the World attract our Minds, and detain our Affections, when he generouſly contemned all theſe? Did he become of no Reputation, and ſhall we hunt after Applauſe and Vain-Glory? Did he debaſe himſelf, and ſhall we be aſhamed to ſubmit to a mean and poor Condition if it be our Lot? Did he freely undergo all the Frailties of the Fleſh, and ſhall we be diſcontented and caſt down when Sickneſs, Scarcity, Reproach, or any Thing of the like Nature become our Portion? So rare and ſo ſingular a Pattern of Humility as Chriſt was in his Appearing in the World, ſhould make us reſign ourſelves wholly to God, and ſubmit to his Providence, and in whatſoever State we are, therewith to be content.

Secondly, Chriſt being Incarnate, is an Example to us of *Good-will*, *Kindneſs* and *Compaſſion*. There can be no higher Inſtance (as we have heard) of God's Love to Man than his being made Man. There is not a Parallel of it in the whole World beſides. *If God* then *ſo loved us, we ought to love one another*, as the great Maſter of Divine Love argues, 1 *John* 4. 11. Seeing God hath been ſo gracious and bountiful in ſending his Son, and offering Life and Happineſs to thoſe that believe in him; ſeeing the Bleſſed Jeſus appear'd with the happy Tidings of Salvation, and gave Himſelf a welcome Preſent to the World, and hath ſubmitted to take their Nature upon him, That he might be in a Capacity to accompliſh their Redemption, and diſcharge the Office of a Mediator, this ought to be made uſe of to this Holy Purpoſe, that we addict ourſelves to the Service of our Brethren, and demonſtrate our outmoſt Care and Love to them, by ſtudying and promoting their Eternal Good and Welfare. Let Brotherly Love and Kindneſs, let tender Affection, and Bowels of Pity, and Compaſſion be diſcovered in all the Undertakings of our Life. If we love Chriſt, we cannot hate our Brethren, but we ſhall be ſtir'd up to ſhew ourſelves Tender-hearted to them, and expreſs our Love in all Acts of Kindneſs, and Friendſhip. Let this Love be the conſtant Tenor and Principle of our Minds, and let it perpetually influence on our Practices. This is the true Image of God Incarnate; let us endeavour therefore to have it deeply impreſſed upon us, that it may be ſaid of us, as of the Primitive Chriſtians; ſee how they love one another. Chriſt came not only to take away the Antipathies and Hoſtilities that were between the *Jew* and the *Gentile*, but he came likewiſe to unite *all Men* in the Bands of mutual Love, and that even where there is a Diſſent in Judgment and Perſwaſion, might be ſeen an Unity and Harmony of Affection.

Thirdly, Chriſt's Incarnation teaches us Purity and Chaſtity. When we find in the Evangelical Hiſtory, that he was Born of a Virgin, a Pure and Spotleſs Virgin, we are to Apprehend the true Influence this ought to have upon us. The followers of this Son of the Virgin, muſt baniſh from their Breaſts all Lewdneſs, and Uncleanneſs, and with Chaſte and Pure Minds Worſhip Him, who is the Pattern of all Innocency and Purity. He was *a Lamb without Spot*, to check our Uncleanneſs, and to make us pure and ſpotleſs. He was Born of a Virgin, to reprove our Impurities, and that we may learn to avoid all Filthineſs, both of Fleſh and Spirit. There are ſeveral Topicks in the Goſpel, whence we may derive Arguments to urge this duty upon us, but this is one of the firſt Rank, and without doubt was deſigned to make us, firſt ſenſible of our Natural Pollution and defilement, and then to remind us, to have an Eye to the great Example of Purity, and to imitate that, according to our capacity.

Again, the Doctrine of Chriſt's Birth is ſerviceable to a *Holy Life*, in as much as it teaches us to *Spiritualize that great Myſtery*. We are hereby invited to emulate Chriſt's Incarnation in our Spiritual Birth, and Regeneration. We may obſerve then, that there are three Births, or Generations of Chriſt mentioned in Scripture, 1. His Eternal Generation, whereby he was begotten of his Father before all Worlds. But *who can declare this Generation*? Secondly, There is his Temporal Birth, and that was when the fulneſs of Time was come, and when the Days were Accompliſhed that the Virgin ſhould be delivered, then ſhe brought forth her Firſt Born Son. Thirdly, there is the Spiritual Birth of Chriſt. Of this the Apoſtle ſpeaks in *Gal.* 4. 10. *My little Children, of whom I travail in Birth again, until Chriſt be formed*

formed in you. We are to know that though the Incarnation, and likewise the Passion and Resurrection of Christ, were understood Allegorically by the *Family of Love*, and are so by some of the Sect of the *Quakers*, who say that these things are *only* to be fulfilled *in us*, and are no true History, or matter of Fact; yet 'tis certain that these great Undertakings of Christ, are in some measure to be Accomplished within us; for all our Saviour's Actions (as well as his * *Words*) *are Spirit and Life*, and this of his *Birth* in a particular manner. The Holy Child Jesus, is form'd in the Soul of every true Believer. This honour have all his Saints, to *bear Christ*. To this purpose let me apply that of our Saviour, *Mark* 3. 34, 35. When his Mother and Brethren came to speak with him, his reply to them that told him of them was, *Who is my Mother or my Brethren? And he looks round about on his Disciples and said, Behold my Mother and my Brethren; for whosoever shall do the will of God, the same is my Brother, and Sister, and Mother.* Every believing and obedient Soul, is the *Mother* of Christ, hath him fashioned and formed in it. As the Apostle tells the *Galatians*, that *Christ was Crucified in them* (so 'tis in the Greek) *Gal.* 3 1. So Christ must be *Born in those* who receive any real Advantage by Him. There must be a Christ within us, as well as without us. *Know ye not that Christ Jesus is in you, except ye be Reprobates?* 2 *Cor.* 13. 5. and in *Col.* 1. 28. *Christ in you, the hope of Glory.* The Spiritual Birth of Christ in the Souls of Believers, whereby they are Born again, and made like unto Christ, is chiefly to be minded and regarded by us.

* Joh. 6. 3.

That Christ was fashion'd in the Virgin's Womb, was a great and High Privilege, a signal Grace and Favour vouchsaf'd to her, but if He had not been form'd Spiritually in her Soul by Faith, She would have had but little Benefit by that other bearing of Christ. For the mere Bearing of Christ, and bringing forth the Saviour of the World, would not have saved her. To this purpose St. *Augustine* † *The Virgin Mary was more happy*, saith he, *in embracing the Faith of Christ, than in conceiving the Flesh of Christ.* She rejoyced not so much that Christ was her Son, as that he was become her Saviour; that she not only bore him in her Virgin Womb, but that he was lodg'd in her very Heart, and that he was there *form'd* in her, as the Apostle speaks. We read that among the *Jews* Barrenness was matter of Reproach: Certain it is that Barrenness in this kind, is matter of Damnation. Therefore let this effectually excite us to take care that Christ be conceived, Born, and brought forth in us.

† Beatior Maria fuit percipiendo fidem Christi, quam concipiendo carnem Christi. *De S. Virgin.* c. 3.

In the last place, we are concerned to make it our chief and principal Care, to *walk worthy* of this Transcendent Blessing, to behave our selves some ways answerably to so stupendous a Mercy, as the Birth of Christ. First, let us solemnly *Acknowledge* this infinite Favour of Heaven, and be sensible how Free and Undeserved it is. We could never have thought of, and therefore never desir'd and wish'd for so great a Blessing as this; we could never have expected so unconceivable a Privilege as the Son of God to be sent to us from above. Much less could we have merited such a Favour as this; for if we had all been left in that forlorn and wretched State which our Wickedness had plunged us into, we could not have justly objected against the Dealings of Heaven. What are we then, That God should contrive so unexpected a Way of Recovery for us? What are we, that we should receive so unthought of a Mercy? What are we, that God should give us his only Son to be Incarnate for us? What are we, That he should not only not exact of us the Punishment most deservedly due to us for our Sins, but on the contrary graciously restore us to the Hope of Eternal Life?

In the next Place we are obliged to *admire* and *revere* the Strangeness and Wonderfulness of this Mystery, whereby so great a Happiness is wrought for us. To set it forth to you according to the devout and pious Rhetorick of the ancient *Fathers*, "He was shut up in the narrow Confines of the Virgin's Womb, "who was in himself boundless and immense. For him, who filled all *Places* both "in Heaven and Earth, there was *no Room in the Inn.* He that was *the Word* "was an Infant, and could not speak. He was upheld in his Mother's Arms, "who sustains the World. He was a poor weak Babe, that was Omnipotent, and "made the Universe. He that was from Eternity, was born in Time. The Ancient of Days, became a Young Child. The Son of the living God, became the "Son of Man; and this Son of Man, who was the true *Melchisedeck*, was without Father, without Mother, in the usual Way, and without Descent." Here is nothing but mighty Wonder, and Mystery. Let us then heartily believe, but at the same Time stand amazed and astonished at the Greatness aud Rarety of this profound

profound Mystery, whereby Finite and Infinite, Mortal and Immortal, Earth and Heaven, Man and God are united.

Thirdly, Let us *Praise* and *Extol* this Blessed Jesus, let us *Adore* this Incarnate Saviour. *When he bringeth the First-begotten into the World, he saith, Let all the Angels of God worship him,* Heb. 1. 6. And shall not we who have greater Reason to do it, joyn with the Angelick Spirits in this Adoration? *God hath given him a Name, which is above every Name, that at the Name of Jesus every Knee should bow, of Things in Heaven, and Things in Earth, and Things under the Earth, And that every Tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the Glory of the Father,* Phil 2. 9, 10. All intelligent Creatures, the Devils as well as Angels and Men, shall at last do Homage to Christ, and acknowledge his Universal Dominion and Sovereignty. But *our* bending the Knee, and worshipping this King of Saints must be free and voluntary, and be the result of great Joy and Thankfulness, as well as mighty Reverence.

Which reminds me of the next Part of our Duty, which is *Rejoycing.* For if *Abraham,* the Father of the Faithful, rejoyced to *see Christ's Day, and saw it, and was glad* (as our Saviour himself acquaints us, *John* 8. 56.) if he was ravished with the Sight of the dawning of that Day; (for Christ the *Day-Star* was not then risen,) if he rejoyced to see this Blessed Light at a Distance, then what great Reason have we to be filled with Gladness, who see this glorious Luminary fully risen, and displaying its Brightness in a most astonishing Manner? Though still it is to be acknowledged, That his redundant Splendour dazles our Eyes; yea, his glorious Nature and Majesty surpass the Comprehension of Angels as well as Men. It may be observed out of the History of the Gospel, That the Incarnation of Christ gave Occasion of *Rejoycing* and *Thanksgiving* to all Sorts of Persons. *Elizabeth* who had but a Fore-sight of it, broke out into Praises. *Zachary* prophetically extolled the Redeemer. *Mary* expresses her joyful Resentments in her *Magnificat.* The Rural Company of humble *Shepherds* innocently warbled and sung forth the Praises of the Highest; and they learn'd it of the more skillful Quire, That of *Angels,* who were filled with unexpressible Joy on this Occasion. How joyful was old *Simeon* at the Sight of a Saviour? As soon as he saw he was come into the World, he was impatient of staying any longer in it himself. *Anna,* That good Prophetess, seem'd to overflow with Joy and Comfort at the Arrival of the Messias. Thus the Tidings of Christ's coming in the *Flesh are* **good Tidings* indeed, *Tidings of great Joy,* and that to *all* People. Having so great and good Examples set before us, let them excite our thankful Resentments for so ample, so pregnant a Mercy as the Incarnation of the Son of God, so miraculous a Transaction, and a Contrivance of such Infinite Wisdom, and Infinite Love; and let us with the greatest Joy and Thankfulness mention this transcendent Blessing. Let us be induced by such Variety of Instances to Laud and Praise the God of Heaven for this matchless Mercy. Let us in good Earnest recount the many Blessings conferred on us by this One Grand Mystery of the Incarnation. † I wish, O Lord, saith a devout Writer, That as the Word was made Flesh, so my Heart might be made a Heart of Flesh, soft and penetrable, yielding and flexible, That I might sufficiently resent, extol and magnifie so rich a Favour vouchsafed to lost Man; and let us resolve to make some suitable Returns of Love, and grateful Affection for so ineffable a Kindness of the God of Heaven.

* Heb. *basser,* εὐαγγελίζεσθαι, rem bonam nuntiare, à *basar,* carne.

† Utinam Domine, sicut verbum caro factum est, ita cor meum fiat carneum. *Barnard.*

But Admiration, Joy, Love, and Thankfulness, are short of the Duty which is required of us. To these we must add the Conformity of ourselves to Christ's holy Rules and Laws; for this (as hath been already suggested) was one of the greatest Ends and Designs of his Coming into the World. The Messias's Office is *to take away Sin, to bring in universal Righteousness,* Dan. 9. 24. *For this Purpose the Son of God was manifested,* (manifested in the Flesh) *that he might destroy the Works of the Devil,* That he might defeat that Evil Spirit, whose main Business is to corrupt the Hearts and Lives of Men. For this End Christ came to visit Mankind, that they might live soberly, righteously and godlily in this present World. And therefore 'tis observable, that generally wheresoever in Sacred Scripture there is mention of Christ's Coming in the Flesh, there is something added of Holiness and Righteousness of Life, as might be shewed us by a large Induction of Places out of the Old and New Testament. The whole is briefly couched in that Song of Holy *Zachary* (which gives us a full Account of Christ's Birth and Manifestation;) namely, *That we being delivered out of the Hands of our Ene-*

mies, might serve this our Deliverer *without Fear* (that is, a slavish and servile Fear) *in Holiness and Righteousness all the Days of our Life.*

We read of *the Power of Christ's Resurrection*, which the Apostle desires *to know*, Phil. 3. 10. There is likewise the *Power* of his *Death*, of his *Ascension*, of his *Intercession*, and of all the Undertakings of Christ for us, and particularly there is the *Power* of his *Birth* and *Incarnation*. He that only knows the Letter and History of Christ's Nativity, hath found only the Cradle of the Child, (as I may so say) but he that is acquainted with the Power and Energy (which is the Mystery and Spirit) of his Birth, hath found the Child himself, and takes him in his Arms, and carries him about with him, and is inwardly acquainted with him, and receives a constant Influence from him. This then is that which we must chiefly urge upon ourselves, that above all Things we be sollicitous to feel the Force and Virtue, the Operation and Power of Christ's Incarnation, that so we may be really concerned in this Saviour, and that he may make us new Creatures. But this may seem rather to relate to the former Particular, the *spiritualizing* of Christ's Incarnation, and therefore I add no more of it here.

I will now towards the Close of all suggest only from one Consideration, how Congruous and Equitable it is that we should thus behave ourselves. As God could not have shewn more Love to the World, so he could not have more *dignified Man's Nature*, than in sending down his only Son to redeem it in our Flesh. Wherefore we are obliged to value so great a Prerogative and Honour, and labour to act worthy of our deify'd Nature, *i. e.* not to defile and pollute it, not to debase and abuse it with Vice. *Hail thou that art highly favour'd*, was the Angel's Salutation to the Blessed Virgin *Mary*, intimating, that she was abundantly Graced and Honoured in the being the Mother of the Messias, and all her Sex proportionably receive from thence some Degree of Honour. But even all Mankind, and the whole Race of *Adam* are herein much Honoured, that the Second Person in the ever Blessed Trinity was pleased to assume their Nature, and thereby to *Enoble* it by the Uniting it to the Divinity. By this Means we are nearly allied unto God, and akin to the Divinity. *Thou hast made Man a little lower than the Angels*, saith the Psalmist; but now the Strain may be higher, for Man is exalted above Angels, yea, above the highest Rank and Order of them, for *Christ took not on him the Nature of Angels*, Heb. 2. 16. but that of Men. And shall not we take Notice of this peculiar Advancement and Honour? shall we not acknowledge our Worth? And (which is the Thing I now offer) shall we not act proportionably to so great a Dignity? Let us reckon ourselves under an indispensible Engagement, never to disgrace and dishonour that Nature which is so highly advanced, which is even associated with the Godhead. May we never prophane that which God hath hallowed and consecrated. Degenerate not into the vile and brutish Nature, since ours is joyn'd to the Divine. It becomes not him whose Nature is translated to Heaven, and hypostatically united to the Divinity, to commit any vile and base Act. Take heed of defiling that by Sin which God hath assumed. Make not the Members of Christ, the Members of an Harlot. Consider that thou art exalted above thy Original Dignity; aspire then after that which is Great and Worthy.

And thus I have shewed what great and excellent Things are contained in the *Doctrine of Christ's Nativity* and *Incarnation*. This Article of our Christian Belief is pregnant with most admirable and useful Matter. It instructs and confirms us in the greatest Principles of our Religion. It supports and cheers our Spirits in all Conditions whatsoever. It affords Matter for our Imitation, and it effectually calls us to live holy and blameless Lives. All this is contained in this great and important Article of Christianity, the Birth of Christ. But more especially, let that which was mention'd *last*, be urged and pressed by us; let us remember that the Incarnation of our Saviour preaches *exemplary Holiness* and *Piety*, that therefore the Son of God took our Flesh to make us Partakers of his Spirit; therefore assumed he our Humane Nature, to communicate unto us his Divine and Heavenly One. Seeing it is thus, we are under an absolute Obligigation of ordering our Conversations aright, and of doing and suffering any Thing for this *Jesus*, who became the Son of Man, that we might be made the Children of God; who came down from Heaven, to fit us for that Place and State, and to carry us up thither.

ARTICLE

ARTICLE IV.

Suffered under Pontius Pilate, was Crucified, Dead, and Buried: He descended into Hell.

AN

Historical Account of the *Sufferings* of our Saviour: Where that Question is handled, Whether he Suffered the Torments of the Damned?

The Doctrine of the *Satisfaction* of Christ is fully prov'd, against the contrary assertion of the *Socinians*.

Of *Reconciliation*, *Redemption* and *Sacrifice*, as they relate to Christ's Sufferings.

Of the Serviceableness of these to a *Strict* and *HOLY LIFE*.

LUKE XXIV. 26.

Ought not Christ to have Suffered?

OUR Blessed Saviour's *Birth*, was in order to his *Passion* and *Death*, and therefore of these latter, I am now to treat. And here, 1. I will give the whole *History* of his Sufferings and Crucifixion. 2. I will set before the Reader the Reasons of them. 3dly and Lastly, shew what profitable *Inferences* may be made from so Important a Doctrine.

First, I will set down exactly the Historical part of Christ's Sufferings. And here, because *every* thing relating to this great matter is very Observable, I will take notice First, of those Sufferings, which were the *Forerunners of Christ's Crucifixion*. Secondly, I will speak of the *Crucifixion it self*; and Thirdly, relate what Accompanied it, and *Ensued* upon it.

1. Let us speak of those Sufferings which were Remarkable before Christ's Crucifixion. When he had Eat the *Passover* with his Apostles, and at the same time Instituted the Sacrament of his Body and Blood, under the species of Bread and Wine, bidding them celebrate this Ordinance ever after, in His Remembrance; and when he had finish'd that Divine and Heavenly Discourse, which we read in the 14, 15, 16, and 17 Chapters of St. *John*'s Gospel (which may be call'd his *Farewell*, or if you please, his *Funeral Sermon* before he left the World) he immediately went forth with his Apostles, and passing over the Brook *Kidron* or *Cedron* (for between *Jerusalem* and Mount *Olivet* lay the Valley of this Brook, which parted the Mount from the City) they came to that Mount; and there our Saviour was pleased to inform them, what was to happen to Him, and to them that Night, *Mat.* 26. 30, 31. *Mark* 14. 27. thereby to prepare them for Suffering with him. About Midnight he came to *Gethsemane*, a Village situate at the Foot of the Mount of Olives, and he entred into a Garden there, which he had used to resort to, to pray in *Mat.* 26. 36. *Mark* 14. 32. *Luke* 22. 39. *John* 18. 1. In this Garden, where he was only with *Peter*, and the Sons of *Zebedee*, that is, *James* and *John*, his *Passion* began, for now he was in an *Agony*, *Luke* 22. 44. St. *Matthew* gives us this brief Account of it, that *his Soul was exceeding Sorrowful, even unto Death*, *Mat.* 26. 38. St. *Mark* expresses this excessive Sorrow, by *Amazement*

Amazement and *Heavinesſ*, *Mark* 14. 33. St. *John* by *trouble of Spirit*, *John* 13. 21. St. *Paul* by *ſtrong Crying and Tears*, *and Fear*, *Heb.* 5. 7. under this extremity of Horrour he pray'd that *this Cup*, *if it were poſſible*, *might paſs from him*, that is, that he might be excuſed from Suffering: *Nevertheleſs*, ſaith he, *not as I Will*, *but as thou Wilt*, *Mat.* 26. 39. or according to St. *Luke*, *not my Will*, *but thine be done*, *Luke* 22. 42. which Words of our Bleſſed Saviour, becauſe they may be liable to miſinterpretation, as if God's *Will* and his (tho' he was True God) did claſh and contradict each other, I will briefly explain, and ſo paſs on. Here then we muſt be careful to diſtinguiſh between a *Natural* Will, a *Rational* and *Sanctified* Will, and a *Corrupt* and *Sinful* Will. In Chriſt there was no ſuch thing as the laſt of theſe, for *he knew no Sin*, but the two former were found in him; 1. A Natural Will, as he was a Man, and had a Soul of the ſame make and frame with other Men. By this Natural Will he was deſirous to avoid Suffering, becauſe it is againſt Nature. 2. A Rational, Sanctified and Divine Will, whereby he ſuppreſſed the Inclinations of Humane Nature, and entirely ſubmitted himſelf to the Will and diſpoſal of his Father. Thus there was a ſtrong conflict in our Saviour: His Inferiour faculty, or Paſſion was reluctant to the ſuperior part of his Soul. By this latter he was ready to obey his Father's Will: By reaſon of the former, which was not a Sinful Principle in him, but only an Infirmity of his Humane Nature, he was afraid of Death, and pray'd againſt it. But his Sufferings and Death were Free and Voluntary, becauſe the Superior and Divine Spirit in him got the conqueſt of the lower and ſenſitive Appetite: As none can deny that St. *Peter*'s Death was Voluntary (for Martyrdom that is not with willingneſs is not Acceptable) tho' *he was carried whither he would not*, *John* 21. 18. that is, whither his Natural Inclination did not lead him, for he had no Natural Principle in him to make him deſire to be Crucified. So it was with our Lord, he was backward to Die becauſe of his Natural, but Innocent, propenſion which accompanied his Humane Nature that he had taken upon him: But by Vertue of the Higher Principle in him, he did, with the greateſt willingneſs, ſubmit to his Father's Pleaſure. Whence we have thoſe fore-cited Words, *If it be poſſible, let this Cup paſs from me: Nevertheleſs not my Will, but thy Will be done.*

From which place alone the opinion of the *Monothelites* (a ſort of Heretical People that appeared Firſt in the Sixth Century, and were bred from the *Monophyſita* and *Eutychians*) is confuted. They denied that there were Two Wills in Chriſt, one Divine, the other Humane, it being their perſwaſion that the Humane Nature was ſwallowed up of the Divine, (as a drop of Honey or Vinegar caſt into the Ocean is not ſeen, and ſubſiſts no more) and that there is but one Nature, one Operation, one Will in Chriſt. This Opinion was condemned by the Sixth General Council at *Conſtantinople* held in the Year, 680. and with good reaſon, for the forementioned Text expreſſes Chriſt's *Natural Will*, or the Inclination of his infirm Fleſh, which abhorred Death; and alſo his *Divine Will*, whereby he contentedly yielded to Death. The former of theſe Wills was not Sinful and Vitious, becauſe it was no other than what God himſelf had implanted in his Nature as he was Man. And truly he had not been real Man, if he had not had this Body of Humane Nature, that is, a deſire to ſhun the horrors of Death: But withal we muſt Acknowledge that there is ſomething *more than Natural* in this Will of his, in this his mighty Averſation to Death, and an Impetuous Deſire to be exempted from it. This (as I have prov'd in another place) muſt be reſolv'd into his taking our Sins upon him, and being legally reputed a guilty Perſon in the ſight of God.

And ſee what extraordinary Averſation produced in him; namely, a violent evacuation and expulſion of Blood, through the pores of his Body. *His ſweat was as it were great drops of Blood, falling down to the Ground*, *Luke* 22. 44. *Theophylact* ſaith, it is ſpoken Proverbially, the greatneſs and grievouſneſs of his Sweat, is expreſſed after the Vulgar way; namely, that drops of Blood fell from him. But there is no ground that I can ſee for this Opinion, for there is no ſuch Vulgar Proverb extant that I know of. And whereas ſome think it is an Hyperbolical expreſſion, and is the ſame with what *Plato* calls * ἱδρῶτα θαυμαστὸν ὅσον, a wonderful great and exceſſive Sweat, but not a *Bloody one*, there is no foundation for this Surmiſe, ſeeing *great Drops of Blood* are expreſsly mention'd. And as for the Adverb ὡσεὶ prefix'd to θρόμβοι αἱματῶδες, we cannot argue thence againſt their Reality, for the particle

* Politic. lib. 1.

particle ὡσεὶ, and so ὡς, is sometimes a Note not of Similitude, but of Truth and Certainty, as in *Luke* 24. 11. *John* 1. 11, 14. 2 *Cor.* 2. 17. *Jam.* 1. 19. And such it is here without doubt. *As it were great drops of Blood* doth not signify drops of Sweat, *like* those of Blood, that is, of an unusual thickness and viscosity, and as big as Drops of Blood; but the downright meaning is, that a great quantity of Blood issued through our Saviour's pores, as Sweat is wont to do.

I embrace this as the true import of the Words, because very credible Writers have assured us of such a *Symptom* that hath happned in some Bodies; which hath been caused by the weakness of the party, by the thinness of the Skin, and the tenuity of the Blood. This Bloody Sweat is mention'd not only by * *Aristotle*, but by some ‖ Modern Physicians, Philosophers and Historians, as a real thing in some Bodies. And therefore seeing it is attested by good Authors, and by some of them from their own Eye sight, we have reason to interpret the Words in the fullest sense that they will bear, that is, concerning the *excretion of Blood* through our Saviour's pores, caused by a preternatural attenuation of this humour, which made it impetuously flow thro' the passages of the Skin. But especially (which makes it infinitely differ from this Symptom in any other Persons) it was caus'd by that inward conflict which was in his Soul, by reason of that violent Grief, Fear and Horrour which he laboured under, from the sense of that cursed Death, which he was to undergo, and the Divine Wrath which he was to sustain for our sakes. For he took upon him all our Sins and Transgressions, and though he was loved by God the Father as his Son, yet he was as it were hated by him in this respect, that he appeared in the Person and place of the greatest Offenders: For he stood charg'd with the Guilt of all their Sins. This made him afterwards Cry out, upon the Cross, in that dismal language, *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?* Though he was the *Beloved Son in whom God was well pleased*, yet the Father was displeased with him on the Account of those Sins, which were laid upon him. The dreadful consideration of this, and that he was *to tread the Wine-press of this Fierceness and Wrath of the Almighty*, *Rev.* 19. 15. produced this *Agony*, and fetch'd *great Drops of Blood* from him. For in grappling with his excessive Pains, he thrust forth that Blood, which before had run to his Heart, as 'tis in great Agonies: And it was so fiercely pressed back, that it vehemently gush'd out at the pores, and fell off of his Body in Drops.

*De partib. Animal. *l.* 3. *c.* 5. De Histor. animal *cap.* 19.

‖ Rondolet. de dignosc. morb. *cap.* 11. & 18. Horff. Observat. *p.* 2. Lycosthenes de Prodigiis. Zacut. prax. mirand. *l.* 3. Thuan. Hist. *l.* 11. Fernel. *l.* 6. de part. morb. Sennert. Institut. *l.* 2. *p.* 3. Johnston Thaumatograph.

After his Agony was over, he left the *Garden*, and in his way found his Apostles *Sleeping*, whom he rouz'd and rebuked. And now his Hour being come, he went on, and met the Traitor *Judas*, and his Company, who were come to seek him: whom (after he had shew'd his Divine Power, in beating those *Ruffians* back, and striking them to the Ground, *John* 18. 6.) he suffered to apprehend him, and bind him. Having thus made sure of him, they presently carried him (though it was about Midnight) to *Annas*, who had been High-Priest before, *Luke* 3. 2. and was still much respected, and valued by the *Jews*, as a Wise and sage Person. And besides, he was Father-in-Law to *Caiaphas*, who was the High Priest that same Year, *John* 18. 13. These were the Reasons why our Saviour was first of all brought before *Annas*: But he soon dismiss'd him (whatever was the cause,) and Christ was next of all led to *Caiaphas*, who actually exercised the Pontifical Office that Year, *Mat.* 26. 57. at whose House a Council was held of chief Priests, Scribes and Pharisees, and false Witnesses were there produced against Christ. *Mat.* 26. 60. *Mark* 4. 55. Then being ask'd by the great Pontiff, what he had to reply to the matters alledg'd against him, *he held his Peace, and answered nothing*, *Mat.* 26. 63. *Mark* 14. 61. And so he behaved himself before Pilate, as you read.

Which ought not to seem strange to any one, that considers our Saviour's circumstances, for he knew all things, and this in particular, that his Accusers and those that set them on Work, were maliciously prejudiced against him, and were resolved to take away his Life, whatever defence he should make for himself. He knew they would not attend to what he said, which made him use those Words afterwards, *If I tell you, you will not believe*, *Luke* 22. 67. As much as to say, It is to no end to undertake to clear my self, * seeing you will not give credit to what I speak. Whether *Socrates* did well in not Answering, when he was accused in the *Areopagitick* Court, is matter of one of *Maximus Tyrius*'s *Dissertations*, and he brings off the Philosopher with credit for not doing it. † He might well hold his Peace, saith he, when he knew 'twould not be permitted him to speak to the purpose,

* Non habet causam loquendi cui non possit credi. Quintil. Declam. 19.

† Τοιγαροῦν ἐσιώπησεν ὁ Σωκράτης εἰδὼς, ὅτι λέγειν οὐκ ἐξὴν καλῶς. Dissertat. 39.

purpose, and give a fair Account of himself. And he shews that it was not only in vain, but below him to return an Answer to the Accusations, that were brought against him. But a greater than *Socrates* is here, who was openly accused and defamed, and yet thought it not fitting to make any Reply.

Yet was he not wholly silent, for when *Caiaphas* demanded of him whether he was the Messias, the Son of God, he answered, *Thou hast said, Mat.* 26. 64. which is an Hebrew Paraphrase, and is as much as *so it is.* It was a Form of Speech in use among the *Jews*, and imported a concession of what was ask'd, *Thou hast said*, is equivalent with, *Thou hast said that which is True.* Christ is the Searcher of Hearts, knew that *Caiaphas* was convinced, in part at least, of the Truth of that which he by his Question, seem'd to be ignorant of; he knew that his Conscience answer'd affirmatively to his Demand, and therefore there was no need of saying much. But that which he did say, administer'd matter to their spite and Ill Will, and occasioned his being given up by the Judge and others to the rude Officers and Soldiers, who thereupon were set as a Guard over him, the remaining part of that Night. *Then did they spit in his Face, and Buffeted Him: And others smote Him with the Palms of their Hands, Mat.* 26. 67. Whereas the *Mimicks* and *Buffoons* in those times used to *Strike* and * *Buffet* one another, to make Sport for the Spectators; these Jesters here exercis'd this Sport on our Saviour. *And when they had Blindfolded Him, they Struck Him on the Face, and in mockery said to Him, Prophesie who it is that smote Thee. And many other things blasphemously spake they against him, Luke* 14. 63, *&c.*

* Thence the *French* Word *Bouffon.*

Here, before I proceed, I will take notice of one passage which occurrs in this part of the History of Christ's Passion: Perhaps some may wonder at what is Recorded in *John* 18. 18. that the Servants and Officers who waited at the High Priest's Palace, when Christ was brought thither to be Arraigned, *made a Fire of Coals (for it was Cold) and warmed themselves*, seeing this was the time of *the Passover*, which was always about Harvest time, and consequently the Weather was Warm. But the wonder will cease, if we consider that this Trial of our Saviour before the High Priest was about Midnight: For tho' it was generally warm Weather with them at that time of the Year before mentioned, yet it was not so always; and besides, in those Countries the Midnights and Mornings were usually Cold. And Travellers attest that great Dews oftentimes fall about that time, which make the Season Cold, especially at Night. And besides, it might be said with Respect to this particular passage here, that it being Night, they kindled a Fire, not only to Warm, but to give them sufficient Light as was usual.

Now I go on, as soon as it was Day, Christ was again brought before the Council, the great *Sanhedrim*, that was convened at the High Priest's Palace, and he was charg'd with the same Crimes that they loaded him with before, and he was condemned for acknowledging that he was *the Christ, the Son of God. Mat.* 27. 1. *Mark* 15. 1. *Luke* 22. 66.

Being thus Condemn'd, he was carried Bound, and delivered to *Pilate*, that he might be executed by his Order. *Mat.* 27. 2. *Mark* 15. 1. *Luke* 23. 1. *John* 18. 28. For here we are to Observe, that the *Jewish* Courts had not Power of Life and Death at that Time: Which we find acknowledged by themselves, and therefore we may give credit to it. *It is not lawful for us*, say they, *to put any Man to Death, John* 18. 31. Though some will not have this to be the Sense of the Words, but the meaning to be, that *at that holy Time*, the preparation of the Sabbath, it was not lawful to put any to Death. But I must needs say, I do not approve of this Evasion, but am of Opinion, that the true import of the Words is, that it was not in the Power of the *Sanhedrim* to condemn Malefactors, *i.e.* so as to Assign them over Authoritatively to Death: For otherwise they might be said to condemn Criminals, that is, after an examining of them, pronounce them Guilty, and declare them worthy of Death. Thus they condemn'd our Saviour, but could not give Order for the putting Him to Death. A † Learned Writer of good Note opposes this with some vigour, and tells us that the meaning of that place is not that the *Romans* had deprived the *Jews* of that Power, but Thieves and Murderers and other Malefactors were grown so numerous and strong, that they were too hard for the *Jewish Sanhedrim*, and it durst not excute capital Punishments on such Persons. This thing may be true, but yet I can't think that this is the fair and genuine Interpretation of these Words, for if Malefactors were too numerous and

† Dr. *Lightfoot.*

and strong for them, they might have said, *they could not put them to Death*, but there was no reason to pronounce it *unlawful* to do so.

Wherefore I take the Words in the plain and obvious Sense, to wit, that the Power of Life and Death was taken from the *Jews* by the *Romans*. This several *Jewish* Doctors and others, assert with good Reason on their Side. The Criminal Courts, that is, of Life and Death were taken away and ceas'd among the *Jews* Forty Years before the laying waste of the Second Temple, saith * *Maimonides*, and before him, the † *Talmud* of *Jerusalem*; and also that of *Babylon*, in *Sanhedrim*. And I think it is worth the considering, that if the *Jews* at that time when our Saviour Suffered, had had the Power of putting to Death, he had Died of some other Death than *Crucifying*, for this manner of Death was used only by the *Romans*. It is true, the *Jews* said *they had a Law by which he ought to Die*, *John* 19. 7. and *Pilate* gave them leave *to judge Him according to their Law*, *John* 18. 31. yet, for all this, 'tis likely they could not inflict a capital Punishment on Christ, they could *Try* and *Judge* him according to a Law of their own, but they had not Power to Sign his *Execution*.

* In Sanhedrim. *cap.* 11.

† In lib. Sanhedrim *cap.* 7.

And here too I would not be misunderstood, as if I asserted that the *Jews* had *no Power* at all of putting any to Death, for *Stephen* was condemned by them to be Stoned, and they Stoned him without asking leave of the *Roman* Magistrates. But this I take to be the true *decision* of the Controversy, that the *Romans* had taken from the *Sanhedrim* the Power of Capital Punishments, as to those Crimes which concerned the *Roman Laws*, as Robbery, Murder, and all causes Politick, and such as concerned the Empire; in these the *Jews* could do nothing. But as to the Breach of *Moses*'s Law, as Blasphemy, Disobedience to Parents, *&c.* they had Power to condemn, and to punish with Death. Now therefore when they accused Christ both of High Treason (as the Title of the Cross Witnesses) and likewise of Blasphemy and Breach of their Law, they were forc'd to crave the assistance of the Secular Powers, and accordingly repair'd to *Pilate*, who had the Right of inflicting Capital Punishment in such a Complex Case as that was.

As to the Trial, and the particular Accusations brought against our Saviour before *Pilate*, some of them were of the same Nature with those that were alledg'd against Him, when He appeared before *Caipahas*, as that *He made himself the Son of God*, *John* 19. 7. But the main Articles of Impeachment (and which they knew were most proper for this Tribunal) were, that *He perverted the Nation, and forbad to give Tribute to Cæsar, and that He himself was a King*, *Luke* 23. 2. Whereupon *Jesus* being ask'd by *Pilate* whether He was King of the *Jews*, he confess'd He was, yet not such a King, as the Kings of *this World* are. *Mat.* 27. 11. *Mark* 15. 2. *Luke* 23. 3. *John* 18. 33, *&c.* This Answer of our Saviour inclin'd *Pilate* to acquit Christ, *Luke* 23. 4. but the *Jews* cried out, that He was an Incendiary and a disturber of the Peace, *and stirred up the People, teaching from Galilee to Judea*, *Luke* 23. 5. And when *Pilate* heard that Jesus was a *Galilean*, and so of *Herod*'s Jurisdiction, he took that occasion to dismiss Him, and sent him to *Herod Antipas* Tetrarch of *Galilee*, who was then at *Jerusalem* at the Feast, *Luke* 23. 6, 7. It seems that Day *Herod* was reconcil'd to *Pilate*, and now was resolv'd to be pleasant and frolick (though in being so, he was impious and blasphemous) and accordingly after he had heard the *Jews* accusations against Christ, and had himself put several Interrogatories to Him, he and his Men of War made sport with Him, *setting Him at nought, and mocking Him, and arraying Him in a gorgerous Robe*, (or in * a glittering and Shining Vestment, as 'tis in the Greek) such a Splendid Garment as Princes wore, call'd a *Scarlet-Robe*, *Mat.* 27. 28. And like unto this was that other Vestment with which our Saviour was clad, namely, Purple *John* 19. 2. and a *Purple Robe*, *Mark* 15. 17. For Purple and Scarlet were worn by the Roman Kings and Emperours; and the Children of the Greek Emperours were usually styl'd πορφυρογέννησοι, because as soon as they were Born they were wrapt in Purple, the Badge of Royalty. And ever since Purple hath been the Imperial and Regal Colour. It is plain then why *Herod*'s Soldiers (as others afterwards) array'd our Saviour in this splendid Attire; namely, to expose Him to contempt and laughter, because he had said he was a *King*.

* εσθῆτα λαμπρὰν.

Thus

Thus clad, he is sent back to *Pilate*, Luke 23. 11. who, though Jesus was already condemn'd by the *Jewish* Council, was still loth to pass Sentence upon him in his own Court. He knowing Christ to be Innocent, used several Expedients and Methods to bring him off, and to procure his Release. He suggested to the *Jews* that they should Pardon Christ, and give him his Life now at the Passover, according to the laudable Custom at that Feast. But that would not be accepted; but they chose *Barabbas*, a Murderer, before the Blessed Jesus, *John* 18. 39, 40. When that Way of freeing Christ would not succeed, he ordered him to be *scourged*, John 19. 1. out of Favour to him, that thereby he might appease the Fury and Revenge of the People, though it is true it was a Fore-runner of Crucifixion. I conceive also, That it was by *Pilate*'s Order and Command that *the Soldiers platted a Crown of Thorns, and put it upon his Head, and put on him a Purple Robe*, Joh. 19. 2. a Robe unsuitable to his Crown. And I would have it observ'd that 'tis said *Pilate* himself *brought Christ forth to the People* in that Habit, *that they might know he found no Fault in him*, Joh. 19. 4. that is, (as I apprehend) he used this Artifice and Mockery to represent Christ to the *Jews*, as a ridiculous King, with a Crown not answerable to his Robe, thereby to expose him, and withal to stir the *Jews* to Pity and Compassion, and thereby to avert their bloody Designs. *Behold the Man*, saith he, *John*. 19. 5. and again, *behold your King*, v. 14. See what a King this is, a sorry one indeed, not worth your Revenge: Let him go therefore and never be concerned about him. But he could not by this Means divert their Purposes, but rather enrag'd them, insomuch that with united Voices they cried out, *Crucifie him, Crucifie him*, Joh. 19. 6. And when they saw how averse *Pilate* was to the gratifying of their Desires, they started again that Accusation against him, That *he made himself the Son of God*, John 19. 7.

But when they found that *Pilate* overlook'd this, and that he was moved rather to acquit him than to condemn him, they threatned him with *Cæsar*'s Anger, and then he came and sat down again on the Tribunal Seat, and Jesus was set before him, *John* 19. 12, 13. And though his Wife sent to him *to have nothing to do with that just Man*, Mat. 27. 19. and though his own Conscience spake the same Language; yea, and though he Thrice openly testified Christ's Innocence, yet that last Argument which the *Jews* urged, was prevalent with him. *If thou let this Man go*, said they, *thou art not Cæsar's Friend*. This brought him over to them, the fear of losing *Cæsar's* Favour, *i. e.* the fear of being put out of his Place, (for the Emperor *Tiberius* had made him his Deputy over the Province of *Judea*) caused him to give Way to the People's Importunity, and *to deliver Jesus to them to be crucified*, John 19. 16. Therefore 'tis said in the Creed, *he suffered under Pontius Pilate*, to denote to us not only the Time when he suffered, and thereby to shew that the Prophecies concerning Christ were fulfilled, but likewise to signalize the Innocence of our Blessed Saviour by calling to Mind that he suffered under that *Pontius Pilate*, who against his Conscience adjudg'd Christ to Death. Hence his Fault was the greater, and his Crime the blacker, because he professed that he found nothing worthy of Death in him. In vain did he wash his Hands, which was a Ceremony of Purification in those Times; he could not wash away his Guilt, seeing his fear of *Cæsar*'s Displeasure was greater than his Love to Justice, and made him submit to the People's unreasonable Clamours, and sign the Execution of our Lord, and thereby imbrue his Hands (though so formally wash'd) in the Blood of the Lamb of God. But, see the just Recompence of his Guilt! This timorous Judge in a short Time after fell into *Cæsar*'s Displeasure; for (as * *Josephus* reports) he was banish'd by the succeeding Emperor *Caligula*, about Four Years after he had condemned Christ: And a While after that, he dispatched himself, as *Eusebius* relates. I have observed before that *Pilate* delivered up *Jesus* first to be *scourg'd*, and then to be *crucified*, Mat. 27. 26. which happened it seems according to the Custom of the *Romans*, as ‖ St. *Jerom* takes Notice: And the *Jews* afterwards by the just Judgment of God knew this was the *Roman* Usage, when † Five Hundred and more of them at a Time (when *Titus* took *Jerusalem*) were first whipp'd, and then crucified.

And Lastly, I'm to take Notice, That, before Jesus was led to Execution, the *Roman* Soldiers to whose Custody he was committed that Night, most wickedly Affronted and Abused him; for I look upon this as a *different* Action from what you

* Antiq. l. 18. c. 11.

‖ Romanis legibus sancitum erat, ut qui crucifigitur, prius flagellis verberetur. *Comment. in cap.* 27. *Matt.*

† Joseph de Bell. Judaic. l. 2. c. 12.

you read of before in *John* 19. 2. *&c.* or rather, 'tis a repeating of that Abuse and Mockery which is there mentioned, with some Additions to it. For now the Soldiers took him into the Common-Hall, call'd *the Prætorium, and they called together the whole Band, and they clothed him with Purple, and platted a Crown of Thorns, and put it about his Head, and began to salute him, hail King of the Jews, and they smote him on the Head with a Reed,* (which *Reed* they took out of his right Hand, where they had put it instead of a Scepter, *Mat.* 27. 29.) *and did spit upon him, and bowing their Knees worshipp'd him,* Mark 15. 16, *&c.* This was done just before *they led him to be crucified,* v. 20. and so you will find it in *Mat.* 27. 31. wherefore I conclude it not to be the same Mockery which you read of in *Luk.* 23. 11. or in *John* 19. 2. *&c.* And when the Priests and Military Men and Rabble had all joyned in the blasphemous Merriment, and had glutted themselves with this Spectacle, they stript him of all his Ensigns of Royalty, and put on him his own Rayment, and they hurried him away to the Place of Execution, *Mat*: 27. 31.

He according to the Custom in that Case, bore his Cross upon his wounded Shoulders, *John* 19. 17. but he fainting under that Burden, another was compell'd to take it, and bear one End of it, and he bore the other, *Luke* 23. 26. The Crowd follow'd him as he went, *Luke* 23. 27. and it is probable, That many of of them who a little before mocked and abused him, were now compassionate towards him, and heartily relented for what they did. Concerning the Women of *Jerusalem*, 'tis particularly recorded, That they follow'd him *bewailing and lamenting him*, Luke 23. 27. When Jesus was come to *Golgotha*, he prostrate on the Ground, and naked, was fastned to the Cross, praying in the mean Time for his Crucifiers, *Mat.* 27. 35. *Luke* 23. 33. Then the Cross, with Jesus nail'd to it, and having a *Title* put upon it, was erected, *Mat.* 27. 37. *Mark* 15. 26. *Luke* 23. 38. *John* 19. 19.

II. And so I pass from the *Fore-runners* of Christ's *Death and Crucifixion* to these themselves, and the Circumstances of them. That he should suffer on the *Cross*, and that the *Jews*, who never put any to Death in this Manner, should demand *this Punishment* from the *Roman* Governour, is very remarkable. The Four Kinds of inflicting of Death among the *Jews* were these, Burning, Killing with the Sword, Strangling, and Stoning. The First was by melting of Lead, and putting it down their Throats. The Second was by cutting off the Head. The Third by putting a Linnen Towel about the Person's Neck, and drawing him about till he was quite choaked. The Fourth was by throwing the Person down from a Place of a convenient Height, and then one of the Witnesses cast a Stone on him, and if that dispatcht him not, then all the People took up Stones and threw at him till he was kill'd. But as for *Crucifying*, it was a Capital Punishment that was never made use of by the *Jews*: And yet now, no other would content them. All the Cry against our Saviour was, *Crucifie him, Crucifie him.* Wherefore the particular Kind or Manner of his Death, ought to be taken Notice of by us. And it must needs be so, if we consider that it was remarkable for these Three Things.

1. It was a *painful Death.* The Party was stretcht at his full Length: The Parts of his Body were extended to the utmost Dimensions; so that the *Cross* was a *Rack*; and whilst he suffer'd on it, he was disjointed. Which gives an Account of those Words of the Psalmist, who was a Type of Christ, *Psal.* 22. 14. *all my Bones are out of Joint*, which referrs to our Saviour's Passion; and part, if not all that Psalm was repeated by him whilst he hung on the Cross. If we remember that his Hands and his Feet were nail'd to the Cross, we can't but be apprehensive that his Pain and Torment were great, the Incision being in those Parts of the Body where there is a vast Confluence of Nerves and Sinews, which are the Instruments of Sensation. And as for our Saviour, he was then in the Thirty Third Year of his Age, and consequently Spriteful, and in his full and perfect Senses, which contributed to his Pain and Misery. Besides, this was a lingring Death, the Tortures being in those extreme Parts which were fartheſt from his Vitals, and thence the Dolours he sustain'd were of the longer continuance. His Dissolution was after the Manner of those that were put to Death by Tyrants, who used to give order *ut se mori sentiant*, that they might feel themselves die. In brief, all the Time our

our Lord was upon the Cross (which was from the Third to the Ninth Hour) he could not but suffer most exquisite Pain, by Reason of the wide piercing and tearing of his Flesh with the Nails, and because of the whole Burden of his Sacred Body hanging on the Cross. And at last he bled to Death because of his Wounds. Thus it could not but be a *Cruel and Painful Death*: And therefore we must look upon it as a great Oversight in that good * Father, who asserted that Christ's Passion on the Cross was without any Sense of Pain. Accordingly, we are [illegible] wonder that according to this Writer, the buffeting, scourging and other [illegible]ings of our Saviour were not felt by him at all. This is a-kin to that of the Δοκηται, a Sort of *Hereticks*, who held that Christ did † not really suffer, but in Opinion only.

* Hilar. de Trinit. lib. 10.

† Clem. Alex. Strom. l. 7. Euseb. Hist. Eccl. l. 6. c. 12.

2. It was a *shameful Death*. For it was the disgraceful Way of Suffering, appointed *for Slaves*. Thirty Sheckles was the ordinary Rate or Market-price for a Slave; and for so much *Judas* sold Christ: And to express yet further, what a base and low Estimation they had of him, they thrust him out of the World like a *Slave*. No Capital Punishment would content them but this, that he should undergo Crucifixion, which was a ‖ Servile kind of Death. Likewise, it was a shameful Punishment, because he that was to be crucified was stript quite naked, and *so* exposed to Publick View. In this Manner our Saviour hung on the Cross (as the Learned *Usher*, and others have prov'd) not as Painters or Limners represent him, who draw a Cloth over some Part. And to render our Saviour's Death yet more shameful and reproachful, two notorious Malefactors were crucified on either Side of him. Thus on a Triple Account it was a shameful Way of dying. The Apostle (referring to this) tells us that Christ *endured the Cross despising the Shame*, Heb. 12. 2.

‖ Supplicium servilem in modum. *Tacit.*

Thirdly, It was a *cursed Death*. For First, hanging on a Tree or on a Cross, was execrable in the Esteem of the World; therefore Malefactors were hang'd, because they were not thought fit to live upon the *Earth*, and touch it with their Feet. Hence that kind of Death is reckon'd accursed above all others, because the most infamous Wretches were adjudged to it. This ignominious Punishment is accordingly call'd *Lignum infelix* by * *Livy*, and *Stipes infamis* by † *Seneca*. Secondly, This was a kind of Death that was *Legally accursed*, doom'd to be so according to the *Mosaic* Sanction, *Deut.* 21. 23. *Cursed is every one that hangs on a Tree.* The Law reputed all such cursed. For tho' there was no such Way of putting to Death among the *Jews* as *Hanging*: Yet it was a *Consequent* of one of the *Jewish* Punishments. Not that they ever hanged any alive, but after they had by some other Punishment been kill'd, their Bodies were hung up to be seen. And this exposing them on a Gibbet or Tree in an ignominious Manner, was reputed an *accursed* Thing. But this exposing a dead Man to Sight was not all, but it signified the denying him *Burial*, which was reckoned a Thing of great Moment. And therefore, those Malefactors were justly accounted *execrable*, who had not Burial. The Care of the Funeral Rites and Burial attested a Life to come, another State after this, and that the Body and Soul should afterwards be joyn'd. But this lifting up of Men from the Earth, and hanging them in the Air (where they were to perish) and utterly debarring them of the Privilege of being interr'd, seem'd to be a treating them like Beasts, and the cutting off the Hopes of a Future Life, and a baffling the Immortality of their Souls, and the Resurrection of their Bodies; and in a Word, making them equal with the Brutes. Seeing these Things seem'd to follow upon their not being *buried* as others were, this was esteemed a *cursed Death*. Such Persons are particularly said to be thus Anathematized to be *hung up unto the Lord*, 2 Sam. 21. 6.

* Hist. l. 14.

† Epist. 101.

Now all this shews how remarkable the *Kind* of our Saviour's Death was. Not only the *Jews* Malice, but the Divine Decree and Providence are to be taken Notice of here. It was by the Disposal of the All-wise Being, that Christ underwent this Sort of Punishment. For he was to suffer that Death to which the *Malediction* belong'd; and that was *hanging on a Tree*. Accordingly he suffered as a *cursed Person*, as the Apostle applies this to our Saviour, *Gal.* 3. 13. *Christ hath redeemed us*, saith he, *from the Curse of the Law, being made a Curse for us: For it is written, cursed is every one that hangeth on a Tree.* Only here we are to observe and admire the Over-ruling Wisdom and Power of God in not permitting our Saviour to be unburied; and so, tho' he suffered that Death which was by the Law

accursed

accursed, yet it was not in its full Force upon him, and consequently the Assurance of a Future Life and the Re-union of Body and Soul is kept up; yea, and is confirmed by Christ's Resurrection. And thus the *Curse* is turn'd into a Blessing, and by our Saviour's undergoing the Punishment of hanging on the Cross we are freed from all Punishment that is hurtful in this Life, and from everlasting Punishment in the Life to come.

Before I pass from this Head of my Discourse, *viz.* the Crucifixion of Christ, it may be proper to say something of the *Time* of our Saviour's Suffering. First, if it be *ask'd, when he suffered*, that is, in what Year, 'tis answer'd, That the most usual Computations are after this Manner; He suffer'd in the Fourth Year of the One Hundred and second *Olympiad*, and in the Seventy-sixth *Julian* Year, and in the Eighteenth Year of the Emperor *Tiberius*'s Reign. Which hence appears, That he was baptiz'd in the Fifteenth Year of *Tiberius*, at which Time he *began to be about Thirty Years old*, as St. *Luke* testifies, *Chap.* 3. *Vers.* 1. & 23. Now it is evident from the Evangelists, That Christ preached above Three Years after his Baptism, so that his Passion was in the Eighteenth Year of *Tiberius*. If you ask after the Month and Day in which our Saviour suffered, I answer it was in the Month *Nisan* (or *Abib*, for it is so call'd at other Times) which answers to our *March* or *April*, and on the Fifteenth Day of that Month. This is clear from what is recorded by St. *John* 18. 28. and *Chap.* 19. 14. and other Evangelists, That our Saviour suffered at the Time of the *Jewish Passover*, which Feast was always in the Month *Nisan*. It began on the Fourteenth Day, and accordingly in the Evening of this Day (being *Thursday* according to us, and the Fifth Day of the Week according to the *Jews*) Christ did eat the Paschal Lamb with his Disciples, *Mat.* 26. 17, 20. and on the next Day (which is *Friday* according to us, and the Sixth Day of the Week according to the *Jews*) he was crucified.

And here by the Way, we have Occasion to enquire whether Christ celebrated the *Passover* on the *same Day* that the other *Jews* did: For though I have spoken of this under the * *different Dispensations of Religion*, I will now add something to it. There have been some learned Men of Old, as well as of late, who have maintain'd that our Saviour kept the Passover on the Day prescrib'd by the Law, *Ex.* 12. 6. that is, the Fourteenth Day of the Month *Nisan*, and that the *Jews* Practice was the same. Among these is Dr. *Lightfoot*, one very well skill'd in *Jewish* Affairs, and yet I know not how it comes to pass, That in this and in some other Points which have immediate relation to *Jewish* Antiquity, he takes the wrong Side, and here particularly he asserts, That Christ and his Apostles did eat the Passover on the same Day that the *Jews* did. Which is evidently contradictory to those Texts, *John* 18. 28.—19. 14. for the First of them acquaints us, That the *Jews themselves went not into the Judgment Hall, lest they should be defiled, but that they might eat the Passover*: Therefore they had not at that Time eat it, but Christ and his Apostles had: Consequently they and the other *Jews* did not eat it on the same Day. This is very clear and evident, But we are told by one, That † *the Jewish Sanhedrim, or a great Part of them, deferr'd the eating the Passover, till between Two and Four a Clock the next Morning after the Fourteenth Day*, for on *Friday* Morning about Three a Clock they went Home and eat the Passover. Which is a meer Surmise, for the Evangelical History acquaints us, That they had not Leisure at that Time to go to their Houses, and celebrate the Passover every one with their Families. There was no Interval large enough for such a solemn Work, there being no Cessation after they had once begun. Having already tried and condemned Christ in their own Council or Spiritual Court, they were moreover to procure Christ's Arraignment and Condemnation in the Civil-Court before *Pilate* the *Roman* Governor. And accordingly we read, That all the Chief-Priests and Elders of the People, that is, the Sanhedrim, *led Christ away*, and delivered him to *Pontius Pilate*, Mat. 27. 1. and they stay'd to *accuse him*, v. 12. and prosecuted their Accusations with great Application and Vigour, as we read both in this, and all the other Evangelists. St. *Luke* particularly takes Notice, That *they stood and vehemently accused him*, Luke 23. 10. This took up their Time, and they had no Leisure to repair to their Houses, much less to set about such a solemn Work as the Passover.

* Vol. I. chap. 7.

† Whiston's *Short View of the Harmony of the Four Evangelists*. p. 188, 189.

But after all, I would desire the Reader to take notice of the plain Oversight of the foresaid *Harmonizer*, when from those Words of St. *John*, Chap. 18. v. 28. *They themselves went not into the Judgment-hall*; he concludes, that the Priests and Elders *took the opportunity to go home and eat the Passover*, not at all attending to what immediately follows in the next Verse; *Pilate then went out unto them, and said, What accusation bring you against this Man? They answer'd, and said unto him, If he were not a Malefactor*, &c. where it is evident, that tho' the Priests and Elders did not go into the Judgment-hall, yet the Judge was pleas'd to come out to them, and Expostulated with them, and had, as it were, the Cause Tryed in the Place where they were; and from the History, it appears, that they attended all the time, and never stirr'd from the Place. And when *Pilate* left them, and betook himself to the *Prætorium*, and formally placed himself on the Judgment-seat, *John* 18. 33.—19. 9, 13. even then the Members of the *Sanhedrim* plied their Work, and tho' not by themselves, yet by others, whom they delegated to appear for them in the Court, carried on the Charge and Indictment against our Saviour, as we are ascertain'd from *Mat.* 27. 20. and from some of the other Evangelists; which gives an account of that way of speaking; *they themselves went not into the Judgment-hall*, they went not in their own Persons, (and the Reason is given, *lest they should be defiled*; namely, by mixing with *Heathens*) but they appear'd by Proxy, and all the time of the Tryal they stood without the Hall. It might be added, that the Eating of the Passover was to be *between the two Evenings*, Exod. 12. 6. but this Writer fansies that they eat it *at three or four a Clock in the Morning*. Wherefore 'tis manifest, that his Notion of their returning home that Morning to eat the Passover, vanishes *into Air*.

The same is evident from the other Text which I offer'd, *John* 19. 14. *It was the preparation of the Passover*; that is, that *Friday* on which Christ was Crucified, was the forerunner of the Passover; therefore the Passover was not past among the *Jews*, but to come: Whence it is clear, that Christ did not eat the Paschal Lamb the same Night that the *Jews* did eat it, but the Night before; he eat it on *Thursday* Evening, but they on *Friday* Evening, after the Passion of our Saviour.

Something might be said here concerning the *Number* of the *Passovers* which were between Christ's entring on his Ministry, and his Death. The Writer before-mention'd makes *Five* of them, but for his Third he hath no Ground. He attempts to make up his Number from the Parable of the barren Fig-tree, *Luke* 13. 7. *Behold, these three years I come seeking fruit*, &c. But this is clear against him, for it was but in the Third Year of Christ's Publick Ministry that he spoke this, or the Third Year was but lately past, about a quarter of a Year before Christ's Passion. He had Preach'd Three Years to the *Jews*, and that was his Fourth, when he said this to them. Where then is there any Ground for a *Fifth* Passover? Yea, this Writer confutes himself, when he lays down this as one of his Propositions,
* P. 142. * *That the first Passover of our Saviour's Ministry was* A. D. 29. which is as much as to say, in the 29th Year of his Age he began his Ministry; and yet he saith,
† P. 171. † *When our Saviour first Preach'd, and wrought Miracles, he was then above Thirty Years old.* But without any such Shufflings and Contradictions, 'tis easie to shew, that Christ's Acts of his Publick Ministry are divided into Four Passovers, and no more. The first is mention'd in *John* 2. 13. *The Jews Passover was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem.* The Second, in *John* 5. 1. *After this there was a feast of the Jews*, (for so the Passover was signally styled) *and Jesus went up to Jerusalem.* The Third, in *John* 6. 4. *And the Passover, a feast of the Jews was nigh.* The Fourth was when our Saviour Suffer'd, which Passover is expresly mention'd by all the Evangelists.

Now, when we are speaking of the *Time* of our Saviour's Suffering, it may be seasonable to enquire how long he hung on the Cross. For the better understanding of which, we must know how the *Jews* divided the *Night and the Day*; for tho' we are concern'd in the *latter* here chiefly, yet the understanding of the *former* will be serviceable to us for explaining some Passages about the time of our Saviour's Passion. The *Jews* divided their *Night* into Four Quarters, call'd by them the Four *Watches* of the Night, *Mat.* 14. 25. *Luke* 12. 38. and every Watch contain'd Three Hours. The first Three Hours were the first Watch, and it began at Six a Clock in the Evening, and the last of these Three Hours was call'd the Third Hour. The second Three Hours were the second Watch, and began at Nine

Nine a Clock, and lasted till Midnight, and the last of these Three Hours was call'd the Sixth Hour. The third Quarter of the Night, beginning at Twelve a Clock, and lasting till Three, was call'd the third Watch; the last Three Hours, which ended at Six a Clock in the Morning, were the fourth Watch, of which we particularly read in *Mat.* 14. 25. for 'tis said there that Jesus came *in the fourth Watch of the Night*, that is, towards the Morning, *walking on the Sea.*

Sometimes in the History of the Gospel, the Time included in the two last Watches, is call'd the *Cock-crowing*, which takes in those Hours that are between Midnight and Morning. Thus in the History of Christ's Passion, these Words were spoken to *Peter*, *Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice*, Mat. 26. 34. *i. e.* before the second and chief *Cock-crowing*, namely, that time of Night so call'd, which was a little before break of Day. But in another place we are taught to distinguish between a double Crowing of the Cock, *Mark* 14. 30. *Before the cock crow twice, thou shalt deny me thrice.* That is, thou shalt do this before the Cock hath finish'd his *first* and *second Crowing*, the one a little after Midnight, and the other towards the dawning of the Day. And sometimes we find that the *Cock-crowing*, and *the Morning* are mention'd as two distinct Periods of Time, *Mark* 13. 35. By the first is meant all that Time which is between Midnight and break of Day, and by the second, all the time from thence till six in the Morning.

The *Jews* divided their *Day*, not only into Twelve Hours, as is evident from *John* 11. 9. and many other places, but likewise into four Quarters, (as they divided the Night) allowing to every Quarter Three Hours; the first Quarter was from our Six a Clock in the Morning till Nine; and the last of these Three Hours was call'd by them the *Third Hour*. The second Quarter from Nine in the Morning till Twelve, and the last of these Hours was call'd the *Sixth Hour*. The third Quarter reach'd from Mid-day to Three a Clock in the Afternoon, and the last of these Hours was known by the name of the *Ninth Hour*. The Fourth and last Division of the Day was into three more Hours, which began at Three a Clock, and ended at Eventide. Now from this brief Account of the Distribution of the Hours of the Day, 'tis easie to gather the *beginning* and the *end* of our Saviour's Suffering on the Cross; for as to the former, 'tis recorded, that *it was the third hour when they crucified him*, Mark 15. 25. that is, they fasten'd him to the Cross at Nine a Clock in the Morning, according to us. As to the latter, St. *Matthew* relates, that *about the ninth hour, Jesus cried with a loud voice, and yielded up the ghost*, Chap. 27. 46. v. 50. And St. *Mark* agrees with him, that 'twas *at the ninth hour*, Chap. 15. v. 34. that is, at Three a Clock in the Afternoon. So that 'tis manifest from the whole, that Christ was Six Hours on the Cross in all.

I know there are some of no mean Note, that refuse to give Assent to this, imagining that they have Ground for it in *John* 19. 14. where 'tis said, that it was *about the sixth Hour*, when *Pilate* deliver'd him to the *Jews* to be Crucified; therefore he was not put upon the Cross at the Third Hour. This they think is very clear, and truly it could not but be confess'd to be so, if those Words they quote were to be understood of the Sixth Hour of the *Day*; but if they please to consult and weigh that place, they will find that it is meant of the Sixth Hour of the *Night*, i. e. Twelve a Clock, or somewhat after it, according to our Account; for about that time Christ was first of all examin'd before *Pilate*, and then afterwards he was examin'd again, and a great deal of Time was spent in that Tryal. And therefore in *that* also those fore-mention'd Persons are mistaken; for they will not be able to find in that foresaid place, that *Pilate* deliver'd Christ to the *Jews* to be Crucified at that Hour; for the Soldiers took him into the Common-hall, and consum'd the latter part of the Night in Mocking and Ridiculing of him, as I observ'd before from *Mat.* 27. 27. and if you compare the 26 and 31 Verses together, it will appear, that there is a difference between Christ's being *deliver'd to be Crucified*, and his being *led away to be Crucified*, and that there was a great distance of Time between the one and the other. I think then there need be no Disputes about the Time of Christ's continuing on the Cross, seeing I have clear'd the foresaid Objection, drawn from the mentioning of *the Sixth Hour*; and have shew'd, that *about the Sixth Hour*, is as much as after Twelve a Clock at Night. And if any should question, whether the *Nights* were distributed into such Stations and Divisions as the *Days* were, they may satisfie themselves from *Acts* 23. 23. where there is mention of the *third Hour of the Night.*

And

And now I will only take notice here, how highly remarkable the *Time* of our Saviour's Suffering was. It began at Nine a Clock, which was the time of the Morning-Sacrifice, and it ended at Three a Clock, the time of Evening-Sacrifice, to shew the exact Correspondence and Agreement between Christ the *Great Sacrifice*, and the *Jewish* ones, which were Types and Significations of this. At the very time that the Priest was doing his Office in the Temple, our High-priest was offering up himself a Sacrifice. Yea, here likewise may be seen the precise Agreement between the *Paschal Lamb*, and that *Lamb of God who took away the Sins of the World*. The former was to be kill'd *between the two Evenings* ערבים gnarbajim in the Dual Number, *Exod.* 12. 6. i. e. at the time when the Evening-Sacrifice was daily offer'd; for when the Sun began to decline, then was the first Evening, and when the Sun was set, then was the second Evening, and the Paschal Lamb was kill'd between both these; and so was the Spotless Lamb of God, our Lord Jesus.

III. I come to speak of the *Concomitants* and *Consequents* of Christ's Crucifixion, which the Evangelists acquaint us, were such as these. All the People stood *gazing* on Jesus on the Cross, and they, and their Rulers, and the Soldiers *mock'd* and *derided* him, *Mat.* 27. 39. *Mark* 15. 29. *Luke* 23. 35. yea, the *Thief* on the Left-hand of Christ did Mock and Revile him, *Luke* 23. 39. *Spiced Wine* was offer'd to Christ in Derision, and *Vinegar* mix'd with *Gall*, *Mark* 15. 23. *Luke* 23. 36. which I have particularly treated of in an *Exercitation*, to which I refer the Reader. From the infinite Dolours that were in his Breast, he *cried out*, once, and again, with a *loud Voice*, and then yielded up his precious Life. *Mat.* 27. 50. And now see what followed; when he expired, the whole World seem'd to breath its last; the whole Creation groan'd when he gave up the Ghost, and all things were ready to relapse into their first Chaos. The Earth quak'd and trembled, insomuch that it shook several dead Corps out of their Graves, which appear'd in the Holy City. The *Rocks were rent* with this forcible Concussion, and, as it were in imitation of them, *the veil of the temple was rent in twain*, Mat. 27. 57. This is spoken of that *Partition* between the Holy, and the Holy of Holies; for there were Two Veils in the Temple, one at the entring into the holy Place, *Exod.* 26. 37. the other divided the Holy from the most Holy Place, *Exod.* 26. 35. which is call'd the *Second Veil*, *Heb.* 9. 3. Of this latter St. *Matthew* speaks, telling us, That it was *rent from the top to the bottom*, and so the Passage to the *other part* of the Temple lay open, and was expos'd; which signify'd, that the whole *Jewish* Dispensation was at an end, and the Ceremonial Service and Worship were to be laid aside.

And not only the Earth, but the Heavenly Bodies were disturbed, and put out of order at the Death of our Saviour. These became black and gloomy, and bore their part in this fatal Event, and seem'd, as it were, to sympathize with this Tragical Occurrence. To this Disorder of the Luminaries which was at Christ's Passion, St. *Jerom* (on *Mat.* 27.) referrs that Prophecy of *Amos*, Chap. 8. v. 9. *I will make the sun go down at noon-day*; and that other of *Joel*, Chap. 2. v. 31. *The sun shall be turn'd into darkness*, &c. That the Sun was Eclips'd at that particular time, we must own to be *Supernatural*; for it happening on the 15th Day of the Month, (for then Christ was Crucified) which was *Full-moon*, the Moon was then in Opposition to the Sun, the Earth being intercepted; and consequently, 'twas impossible, that in a natural and ordinary way there should be an Eclipse of the Sun; wherefore we must reckon it to be Supernatural. Besides, it being *over all the Earth*, (as the Evangelists testifie) *Mat.* 27. 45. *Mark* 15. 33. *Luke* 23. 44. (and there is no reason or necessity to restrain it to the Land of *Judea* only) this proves it to be an extraordinary Prodigy. Whence 'tis * reported, that *Dionysius* being then at *Heliopolis* in *Egypt*, and taking notice of this strange Defection of the Sun, cried out, Either God himself suffers, or sympathizes with him that doth. And, further, I might add, that the continuance of this Eclipse shews it to be Miraculous, for it lasted *from the sixth hour to the ninth*, Mat. 27. 49. whereas an ordinary or natural Eclipse is never of so long duration; for this can't last above two Hours, as all Astronomers know. But I will not say any thing more of this wonderful Phænomenon, having spoken largely of it in † another place, when I shew'd that the New Testament is attested by Prophane Writers.

* Suidas in verbo Διονύσιος.

† Discourse of the Authority of Scripture.

That

That which we are to take notice of now, is, that it was by the *special Providence* of God, and the miraculous Disposal of Heaven, that these Prodigies happen'd just at our *Saviour's* Suffering. The Sun at such a sight hid his Face, and Nature shrunk back, and became disorder'd, and out of course, the Earth fell into a trembling Fit, and the hard Rocks even relented, to teach *Men* what they were to do, and to make them throughly apprehensive of the Innocence of the Crucify'd Jesus. Thus the *Centurion*, who attended at our Saviour's Crucifixion, when he saw these miraculous Accidents, cried out, *Truly this is the Son of God*, Mat. 27. 54. *Certainly this was a righteous Man*, Luke 23. 47. And *all the people that came together to that sight, beholding the things that were done, smote their breasts*, and return'd home with Convictions of his causeless Sufferings, and of his wonderful Death, *v.* 48.

And thus I have briefly given the *Historical Relation* of the Passion of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. I might have gone through his whole Life, beginning with his Birth and Circumcision. He submitted to a painful and bloody Ceremony, and he fled for his Life before he could go. And not only his Infancy, but his riper Years were attended with innumerable Difficulties, Hazards, and Perils. The Labours which he underwent in Preaching, his Wearinesse in Travelling, his Watchings in Prayers, his Temptations, Fastings, and Tears, the Indignities and Injuries, the Affronts, Ignominies, and Reproaches that he was continually loaded with, are not to be parallell'd. And I might recount, how some of his own Disciples, sometimes his Friends, and his neareſt Kindred, as well as his professed Enemies, treated him very unkindly. But the Sufferings, in order to his *Death* were the *Chief*; and those are our main Concern at present. We have seen how *many and great* they were. Or, rather, it is impossible fully to tell you their Multitudes and Greatness; for he Suffer'd all manner of ways, and he Suffer'd from all Degrees and Ranks of Persons. This Innocent and Spotless Lamb was betray'd by *Judas*, one of his own Apostles; he was injuriously and barbarously treated by his own Country-men, and by Strangers, by *Jews* and *Gentiles*, by *Caiphas* and *Herod*, and by *Pilate*, by Priests and Soldiers, by Princes and People, by Rulers, and the common Rabble, by *Rabbies*, *Scribes* and *Pharisees*, as well as by the Illiterate Vulgar. In a word, he meekly submitted to all these, and patiently surrendred his precious Life into their Hands, and Expir'd on the Cross.

Here, before I pass to the next General Head, it may be expected, that I should return an Answer to this Question; Whether Christ, among all his Sufferings, suffer'd the Pains of Hell, and endured the Torments of the Damned? If we rightly *distinguish*, we shall see what is to be held in this Question, and what is to be rejected. It is agreed by all, that *Hell* is made up of *Penal Loss*, and *Penal Sense*. Now, it is evident, that Christ suffered *both* these whilst he was on *Earth*, (for he never was in *Hell*, as some imagine; but I shall afterwards fully disprove that.) The first is mention'd in *Mat.* 27. 46. *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?* It is plain, that he was forsaken of his Father, he suffered the Loss of God's Favour for a time. This Desertion was not the Father's real separating himself from his Son, but a withdrawing the Sense and Perception of his Love. The second is mention'd in *Mat.* 26. 38. *My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death.* Here is a deadly Sorrow, Anguish, Pain, and Torment; and it may be said, for the present Extremity of it, to be such as the Damned feel in Hell. And also in that fore-named place, the Pain of *Sense*, as well as of *Loss* is implied; for when Christ was *forsaken* by his Father, he sensibly felt his Wrath and Displeasure for Sin, and was for a time destitute of all Help from him, as the Damned are.

But now, it is equally true, that there are other Pains of the Damned which Christ did not undergo, and was not in a capacity of undergoing them. *First*, Christ did not, could not suffer the Sting of Conscience, which is one constant Ingredient in the Torments of Hell. He could have no Remorse, no Regret, no uneasie Reflections of Mind, because he had done nothing amiss. He was free from all Sin, and therefore could not be subject to the Tortures of a wounded Conscience. *Secondly*, He could not endure another part of Hell-torments; that is, despair of God's Mercy, a lying under the Sense of the endless Wrath of God, without a possibility of being ever freed from it. As he was our Mediator, he was not to be always under Sufferings, but to overcome them. Therefore we may observe,

serve, that tho' he cried out under his unspeakable Passion and Torment, *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?* Yet he then declar'd, that he should be that very *Day in Paradise*. Here then was no Sense or Apprehension of God's everlasting Displeasure, which is the main thing that constitutes the State of the Damned. *Thirdly*, Cursing and Blaspheming God, and hating him, are inseparable Attendants of the Torments of Hell; but Christ was liable to nothing of this nature, for he was in the Favour and Love of God amidst all his Sufferings; and we read, that in the close of all, he placidly expir'd with these Words, *Father, into thy Hands I commend my Spirit*. Thus I have briefly shew'd, how our Saviour underwent the Pains of *Hell*, and the Torments of the *Damned*, and how he did *not* undergo them.

And from this short Account, we may judge, whether Mr. *Calvin* deserves that sharp Censure which many have pass'd upon him, because he asserted, (they say) that Christ *despair'd*. But this is not true; he no where saith, *that he despair'd*; yea, if we consult his *Institutions*, Book 2. Chap. 16. Paragraph the 11th, we shall find that he disclaims that Opinion, and with some Indignation, flies at those that impute that Doctrine to him. The most that he saith, is this, *That* * *Christ suffer'd in his Soul the dire Torments of a Damned and lost Man*. Which is no more than what Bishop ‡ *Bilson*, a Learned Father of our Church, saith. They both hold, *that no Sin accompanied Christ's Torments*, and then they could not be those of the Damned in the highest Sense. This lets us know that they meant no harm, when they asserted, that *Christ suffer'd the Pains of the Damned*. Cardinal *Cusanus* held the very same, and it might be shew'd that the ancient *Fathers* spake after this manner. *Damnatus est, ut liberaret damnatos*, saith † *Cyprian*, and ‖ *Tertullian* speaks after the same rate, thereby to express to us the most exquisite Sufferings of our Lord. And truly, tho' it seems somewhat harsh, to say, that he underwent the Pains of damned Souls; yet it must be allowed, if we take it in the right Sense; for this is certain, that *we* were to endure the Torments of *Hell*, and we should have actually undergone them, if Christ, as our Surety had not suffer'd them for us. Therefore, in order to the freeing us from them, it was necessary that he should *in some degree* bear them himself in our stead. And as to the *endless duration* of them, what he suffer'd in Soul and Body, if we respect the Intensiveness and Greatness of the Sufferings, and the transcendent Worth of his Person, was equivalent to *Eternal Sufferings*. The short is this, Christ underwent as much of Hell-torment as was consistent with his Holy and Pure Nature, and as much as he was capable of undergoing.

* Diros in in animâ cruciatus damnati ac perditi hominis pertulit. *Inst. l.* 2. c. 16.

‡ *Of Christ's Descent into Hell.*

† De Passione Christi.

‖ Contr. Marcion. *l.* 3. c. 11.

And, now, can any reasonable Man imagine, that Christ underwent all this to no purpose? Yea, was it not rather to some *very great End and Purpose*, that so Great and Innocent a Person suffer'd? If *precious in the sight of the Lord be the death of his Saints*, Psal. 116. 15. then much more of his only begotten Son, Christ Jesus. And if it be *precious*, it is to Excellent and Noble Purposes; which is the thing I am next to enquire into, under

The *Second General Head* of this Discourse; namely, what *Reasons* may be assign'd of our Saviour's Suffering. Christ inculcated this on his Disciples, that *the Son of Man must suffer, and be kill'd*, Mark 8. 31. *He must, he ought*, it *behoveth him*; (for so the *Greek* Word is rendred in other places) there is *Reason*, and even *Necessity* for it; there are great and weighty Designs to be accomplish'd by it, which I will now enquire into. I cannot agree with a late * Writer, who asserts, That Christ was made a Sacrifice, and offer'd himself on the Cross to comply with the common Apprehension and Notion among *Pagans*, that Sin must be expiated, and God's Wrath appeas'd by Sacrifices. He confesses himself afterwards, that this is an † *unreasonable Apprehension*, and yet he urges it with some Earnestness, as the Reason of God's Devoting his Son to Death. *Because*, * saith he, *this Apprehension*, (viz. of appeasing the offended Deity by Sacrifice) *prevail'd in the Heathen World, and proceeded to the Sacrifices of Men, even of their First-born; wherefore God was pleased to comply so far, as to make a general Atonement for the Sins of Mankind by the Death of his Son*. And he repeats it again, † *In compliance*, saith he, *with this Apprehension of Mankind, and in Condescension to it, God was pleas'd to find out such a Sacrifice as should really and effectually procure for them the great Blessing of Forgiveness of Sins*. I cannot look upon this as a Reason, why Christ was made a Sacrifice on the Cross; for I cannot think that the Only True Eternal God did this

* Dr. Tillotson's *Sermon concerning the Sacrifice and Satisfaction of Christ.*

† P. 22.

* P. 7.

†P. 22. 23.

this *in compliance* with the barbarous and inhumane Usage among the *Gentiles*, of Sacrificing, and Murdering their Sons and Daughters. I can't believe that this bloody way of pacifying the *Pagan Gods*, which was practis'd by the worst of Men, was imitated by the *True God*. This is unsafe Divinity, because it gives us an undue Apprehension concerning God; as if the Divine Being would vouchsafe to follow the Pattern of *Gentile* Idolaters, and order the Sufferings of Christ on the Cross to *comply* with the Homicide of the Savage Pagans, who thought the angry Deity was Aton'd, and their Faults expiated by that means. To wave this groundless, (not to say, impious) Notion, I will pass to what is solid and substantial.

1. Christ Suffer'd, and Died on the Cross, that he might *fulfil the Prophecies* and *Types* concerning him in the Old Testament. When he had utter'd those words, *Luke* 24. 26. *Ought not Christ to have suffer'd?* It is said, that *he began at* Moses, *and expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself*; that is, his Passion and Death. When *Peter* drew his Sword in defence of his Master, and in order to rescue him from the chief Priests, and the Officers that came to take him; our Saviour rebuk'd his too rash Zeal, and told him, that he stood not in need of his Aid, nor of the Assistance of Angels, tho, (if there were occasion) he *had more than twelve Legions of Angels* presently at his Command; *but how then*, said he, *shall the Scriptures be fulfilled, that thus it must be*, i. e. that he must suffer? *Mat.* 26. 53, 54. Whence 'tis clear, that one End of his Sufferings was to accomplish the Prophecies in the Scriptures concerning him. Thus we read in *John* 19. 36, 37. that when the Soldiers brake the legs of those that were Crucified with our Saviour, but brake not his Legs; and when one of them pierced his *Side* with a Spear, the Completion of two Predictions in the Old Testament concerning him, is taken notice of by the Evangelist, *These things*, saith he, *were done that the Scriptures should be fulfilled, a bone of him shall not be broken*, Exod. 12. 46. *And, again, another Scripture saith, They shall look on him whom they have pierced*, Zech. 12. 10. Abundance of these Passages relating to what Christ underwent, we meet with in the Sacred Writings. The whole 53d Chapter of *Isaiah*, sets forth in most expressive Terms the Passion of our Lord, and the Benefits that accrue to us by it. But the Book of *Psalms*, of all the parts of the Bible, is most pregnant and full as to this matter. The two first Verses of the 2d *Psalm*, are plain Predictions of the Outrages *of Herod, and Pilate, and the Gentiles, and the People of Israel, against the Holy Child Jesus*, as we learn from *Acts* 4. 25, &c.

The whole 22d *Psalm* is a lively Description of Christ's Agony, and the other parts of his Passion, his Death and his Burial. In the 1st Verse there occur the very Words which the Evangelist tells us Christ utter'd upon the Cross, *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?* Mat. 27. 46. And the same Evangelist, in *v.* 35. of that Chapter, shews us how the 18th Verse of that *Psalm* was accomplish'd in Christ, *They parted his garments, casting lots, that it might be fulfill'd which was spoken by the Prophet, They parted my garments among them, and upon my vesture did they cast lots.* If we consult the 8th Verse of this *Psalm*, we shall find that the very Scoff which is there mention'd, was us'd against our Saviour, as 'tis recorded in *Mat.* 27. 43. And yet further in the 16th Verse, *the Assembly of the Wicked* apparently referrs to the *Sanhedrim* or *Council* that condemn'd our Saviour to Death; and the next Words, (as I have before noted) relate to what happen'd to him at his Crucifixion. So that, however *some* Passages of the *Psalm* may agree to *David* as a *Type of Christ*, yet *other* places cannot so *properly* be apply'd to *David*, but are to be look'd upon as a Prophecy concerning Christ, who was both the *Son* of *David*, and his *Lord*. I might take notice also of the *Title* of the *Psalm*, which plainly points to the same Person and his Sufferings; *Aijeleth Shachar* is expounded by the *Chaldee*, the *Morning-Sacrifice*, or the *Everlasting Morning-Sacrifice*, which is the Sacrifice of *Christ*, and may not unfitly be styled *Everlasting*, because there is not *after* it any *other* to be offer'd for the Sins of Mankind. Or, it may be said to be in the *Morning*, because it was offer'd in the *beginning* of Christ's Kingdom, *before* this *Sun* of Righteousness arose in his perfect Strength and Glory. Others, I know there are that translate *Aijeleth Shachar*, the *hind of the Morning*, and so we find it in the *Margin* of our Bibles. If *this* Translation be admitted, it doth very well *suit* with *our Saviour in his Passion*, which is decypher'd in *this Psalm*; and if you consult the 16th Verse, you'll read, *Christ* is resembled to the *Morning-hind*, which

the Hunters seek for with an early Zeal, and pursue to Death; *Dogs have compass'd me, the Assembly of the Wicked have inclosed me.* The outrageous Persecutors of our Saviour, *Hunted and Pursued* him in the *Morning*: *Herod* would have worried him in his *Cradle*; and his very *Infancy* did not exempt him from the malicious Designs of his Enemies; and in *another* Sense, even that which is most literal, he was *the Hind of the Morning*; for the *Jews* led Jesus unto the Judgment-hall, and it is added, *it was early*, John 18. 28. Thus you see the Title is suitable to the *Psalm* it self, and both are Prophetical of Christ's Passion, and the most remarkable Circumstances of it.

If we peruse the 55th *Psalm*, we shall soon perceive that it foretells the malicious Attempts of the *Jews* against Christ, and *Judas*'s Betraying him. Who sees not that the 21st Verse of the 69th *Psalm*, is to be understood concerning our Blessed Lord; *They gave me gall for my meat, and in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink*; which very things were done to our Saviour, as St. *Matthew*, St. *Mark*, and St. *John* particularly testifie; yea, the last of these observes, that this happen'd to him according to what was Prophesied of him, and was now accomplish'd, *Jesus, that the Scripture might be fulfill'd, said, I thirst*, John 19. 29. In the beginning of *Psalm* 109. Christ complains of his slanderous Adversaries, and then devotes them to Destruction under the Person of *Judas*; and accordingly you'll find the 8th Verse applyed to this purpose, in *Acts* 1. 20.

And then as to the *Types* and *Prefigurations* concerning Christ's Passion, he suffer'd to *fulfill* them also. It is not to be doubted, that *Isaac*'s being offer'd on the Altar, typifi'd Christ's Sufferings and Death; and therefore we may observe that according to our Church, the Lesson for *Good-Friday* is the 22d Chapter of *Genesis*, which is the History of *Abraham*'s Offering his Son *Isaac*; and from St. * *Augustine*, we learn, that it was used by the Church in his Days. Christ's Passion was prefigured by all the *Legal Obligations*; the Lamb of God was represented by the *Mosaick* and *Jewish* Sacrifices; and 'tis largely prov'd by an ancient † Father, that the legal Priesthood was a Type of Christ's Priesthood, which indeed is the Subject of a great part of the *Epistle* to the *Hebrews*. The killing and eating of the *Paschal Lamb*, was another typical Representation of our Lord's Sufferings; as we gather from the Apostle's Words, *Christ our Passover is Sacrificed for us*; and as is clear from that forecited place, *a bone of him shall not be broken*, which referrs to the Paschal Lamb. Christ's Passion was also typified and foretold by that ancient Symbol, the *Brazen Serpent* in the Wilderness; for so our Saviour himself applies it, *As Moses lifted up the Serpent in the Wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up*, John 3. 14. Which shews how groundless a Notion (among sundry others) a late ‖ Author hath taken up; namely, that there are no such things as *Types*, which is plainly confuted by what I have alledg'd under this Head. This then I give as *one Reason*, why our Saviour suffer'd; namely, because thereby he *fulfill'd the Prophecies* and *Types* which related to his Passion. But this is but a remote Reason, and therefore I will proceed to those that are more immediate.

* Serm. de temp. 71.

† Cyril. Alex. *l.* 11, 12, 13.

* Whiston's *Sermon on* 2 Pet. 1. 19.

Secondly, Then Christ suffer'd to testifie and confirm the Truth of his Doctrine. *To this end was he born, and for this cause came he into the World, that he should bear witness unto the truth*, as he tells us himself, *John* 18. 37. And to this End, and for this Cause he likewise died, and went out of the World, that thereby he might attest these Holy Truths, which he had deliver'd in his Life-time; for 'tis certain, he would not *die* to confirm a *Falshood*, and thereby to make himself miserable, and to make others so too, and deceive Mankind. But this was his Design, to Establish his Doctrine by his Death, and to let the World see that his Principles and Precepts were such as he was not afraid to Seal with his very Blood. Who would not believe that Holy Institution which is thus establish'd.

Thirdly, He suffer'd to set us an *Example*, which is the very Reason that is assign'd by St. *Peter*, 1 Epist. Chap. 2. v. 21. *Christ suffer'd for us, leaving us an example that we should follow his steps*; that, if at any time we shall be call'd to suffer, we may imitate our Lord in his Patience and Submission; for so it follows in the place before-mention'd, *when he was revil'd, he revil'd not again; when he suffer'd, he threatned not, but committed himself to him that judged righteously.* And seeing we are so backward to deny our selves, and to take up our Cross, it was requisite that we should be excited to these hard Services by such an Example as that of our Saviour, who, without Controversie, was the greatest Pattern of Patience, Resigna-

Resignation and Obedience under Suffering that ever was in the World. And certainly it is, and ever will be a great encouragement to Suffer, to look upon the Son of God Reproach'd, Persecuted, Crucified.

4thly, Christ Suffer'd, that, being *touch'd with the feeling of our Infirmities* (as the Apostle speaks) he might be the more ready to Help and Succour us. Therefore it was, that *He was in all points Tempted* (as the same Inspired Writer there adds) that is, he underwent all Sorts of Afflictions, Troubles and Sufferings. For tho' 'tis true he could have Sympathized with our Infirmities without Suffering Himself, yet if we consider that He took part of our Flesh, and had humane Affections and Resentments as well as we, we cannot but thence inferr that His Humane Nature did contribute towards the enhansement of His Compassion, and the increase of His Pity towards us. Thence He is persecuted, when we are persecuted, and bears a part in all our Bodily Grievances: For which reason perhaps our Sufferings are call'd the Sufferings of Christ, 2 *Cor.* 1. 6. See *Heb.* 2. 16, 17, 18.

But none of these that I have mention'd, are the *Chief Reasons* and *Ends* of Christ's Sufferings. I come therefore now to Assign those which really are so: And they are these Three,

1. The satisfaction of Divine Justice.
2. The procuring of God's Favour, upon the expiation of our Sins.
3. The Sanctifying and Reforming of our Lives.

First, I say, the Reason and the End of Christ's Suffering was the *Satisfaction of Divine Justice.* Here two things are to be done, 1. To prove that there must be a *Satisfaction* made to Divine Justice. 2. That *Christ's Death* was this Satisfaction. First I am to shew that there must be a Satisfaction made to God's Justice for Sins committed against him. *Whether God could possibly have freely remitted our Sins without any Satisfaction, is a question to which no Wise Man will take upon him to give a peremptory Answer, whether Negative or Affirmative,* saith the Learned Doctor *Jackson* on the Creed, and too peremptorily, I conceive. For a Wise Man will consider things and Persons in their different Relations and Aspects, and determine accordingly. Now, God is to be consider'd either as an Absolute Soveraign, and one that hath an unlimitted Power and Dominion; or as a Wise, Prudent, Just and Holy Governour, who consults both his own Honour and the good and welfare of his Subjects. If we look upon the Divine Being under this double Aspect, we shall soon be able to assoil the foregoing question, and we cannot rightly do it without this. If we consider God under the *former* Notion; namely as he is an *Omnipotent Soveraign,* we cannot but pronounce it possible that he could forgive the Sins of all Mankind without any Satisfaction; for as he is a Being of Infinite and uncontroulable Power, he can as easily remit the Guilt and Punishment of Sin without Satisfaction, as with it. But, if we look upon Him under the *latter* consideration, that is, as he is a *Holy, Just* and *Wise Governour,* and doth all things for his own Glory, and the good of the Creatures, we must determine otherwise; namely, that it is *not possible* for him to forgive the Sins of Mankind without demanding a Satisfaction. His innate Purity and Hatred of Sin require this, for a severe Animadverting upon Offenders is a natural consequent of hating the Offences: His Justice also calls for Punishment, for this cannot be satisfied without it, and unless there be a Reconciliation made. And as God *cannot* otherwise Pardon Sin without endamaging *His Holiness and Justice*; so *his Wisdom,* as he is the Prudent Governour of the World, is concern'd in this matter. The Divine Majesty would be despised, his Laws would be trampled upon, his Government vilified, if the violation of his commands were attended with Impunity. And as for Sinners themselves, they would be hardned in their Crimes, and encourag'd to offend again, if the Almighty did not shew his dislike of their ways by exacting Punishment. Thus every ways it appears, that there must be a *Satisfaction* made for Sin. If God were only as a Creditor, that sued for his Debt, he might forgive the Debt: But he is a Governour and Ruler, and on that account he cannot pass by the punishing of Sin: And from what hath been suggested it is evident that it is against his Divine Nature to do it. So that it is necessary, absolutely necessary, that he should be avenged on Sinners, and that he should not pardon without a Ransom.

This is stiffly denied by the *Socinians*, who declare to the World, that God might pardon Mens Sins, and doth so, without *Satisfaction*. And some others, that are not profess'd Disciples of *Socinus*, incline this way. God is not necessarily obliged to punish Sin, *Episcopius* saith, and he holds that the contrary assertion *is most unworthy of God*. The two main Reasons that are alledg'd for this Opinion are these, 1. because God can recede from His Right, 2. because Justice is not Essential to the Deity. First, the *Socinians* tell us, that God can part with his own Right of Punishing Sin without any Satisfaction. And for this, they quote that Maxim in the Civil Law, *it is free for every one to renounce his Right*. But they should have attended to the Limitation of that Law, which is own'd by the Civilians themselves; namely, that this Rule prevails then only when by renouncing *our* Right, we injure not our *selves* or *others*. This by Parity of Reason may be applied to God, who, tho' he may recede from what is strictly due to Him, yet He will never do it, in these two Cases, to wit, when it is derogatory to *His* Honour, and when it is hurtful to *others*. And so it would be if He should forgo His Right of Punishing Sin: His own Honour and that of his Laws and Sanctions would be defaced, and an infinite deal of Hurt would accrue to the World. For which Reason we find that Sin and Penalty were ever join'd together by the Divine Decree and Appointment. *In the Day thou Eatest thereof, thou shalt surely Die*, *Gen.* 2. 17. i. e. thou shalt bring thy self into a State of Mortality, and be Subject to Diseases and Death, and at last have a period put to thy Days. Besides that Spiritual and eternal Death are included in this Treatning. *The wrath of God is reveal'd from Heaven against all Ungodliness and Unrighteousness of Men*, *Rom.* 1. 18. *The wages of Sin is Death*, *Rom.* 6. 23. *We are sure that the Judgment of God is according to Truth against them who commit such things*, *Rom.* 2. 2. The inflicting of Judgment on offenders is according to the *true* State of things, and according to those Just Laws, by which God doth govern the World. Yea, and God himself cannot be *True*, if he doth not Judge and Punish those that commit Sin: For He hath declared that He will do this, and we have no reason to think, that He will break His Word, or that he will recede from his right of Punishing, because this would be unagreeable to Him as He is the Rector and Governour of the World, and as He hates all Disorder and Sinfulness. But Impunity would infallibly promote these; and therefore the obligation to Punishment arise from the injury which the Publick sustains by the Impunity of Sin. If then we should grant that God as *Supreme Lord* and *Absolute Soveraign* might remit of his Right, yet as He is *Judge* and *Ruler of the World*, he cannot do this. The Reason is obvious, because if He should, that is, if He should wholly remit the Penalty of Sin, His Laws would be made void, and Sin would be encouraged, and the Majesty of Heaven would be depretiated. It follows hence that Punishment cannot be waved, but we must certainly undergo it for our Sins, unless Satisfaction be made for them.

As to the other pretended Reason, it is false; because *Justice* is essential to God. This is that Property or Attribute, whereby He is moved to Punish Sinners; and it is founded in the Purity and Holiness of his Nature, which are such, that He cannot Suffer Sin to pass unpunish'd. The vehement dislike and abhorrence of it, by reason of it's opposition and contradiction to His Nature, will not admit of this. Justice therefore, which is inseparable from the Divinity, obliges Him to Punish Sin, and even demands the inflicting of some Penalty, and shewing some tokens of displeasure. For the Anger of God against Sin is implacable, His severity inexorable till satisfaction be made. Wherefore Sin cannot be freely forgiven without this. Justice will be satisfied, God will not let Sin go unpunish'd: His *own Son* must Suffer for it, to excuse and exempt *us*.

Which brings me to the Second thing I undertook; namely, to shew that *Christ's Death was designed to be a Satisfaction to Divine Justice*. Mankind was become obnoxious to God's Wrath on the account of Sin and Guilt. All Sinners became Debtors to the vindictive Justice of Heaven. Consequently there was an unavoidable Obligation to Punishment in their own Persons, unless their Guilt was taken off by another's undergoing it. And this was the Wise and Merciful contrivance of Heaven: God was pleas'd to release Sinners from their Punishment by punishing another, by laying their Iniquities on Christ Jesus, *that lamb of God* who came on purpose *to take away the Sins of the World*. It is true, there have

have been different Answers given to these Questions, Whether there was an absolute necessity of Christ's making Satisfaction for Sins by his Sufferings? Whether God could not have reconcil'd Man to himself without Christ's Dying? Whether this could not have been done some other Way? One of the ancient Fathers holds, that it was not impossible for Man to have been redeemed some other Way. * He *could*, saith he, as he was God, have saved Men, by his bare willing of it, as he created all Things at first with only a Word of Command. And another of the Ancients speaks thus, † God might easily have effected the Salvation of Mankind without the Incarnation, and the other Undertakings of Christ, and by his will alone have subdued the Power of Death: But he chose rather to shew the Equity of his Providence, than to give demonstration of his Power. The most celebrated *African Father* blames in one Place, those who say ‖ *'tis impossible* that Man could have been redeemed and saved otherwise than by the Death of Christ: But at another Time, he seems to be positive on the other Side (as 'tis well known he is wont sometimes to alter his Judgment upon After-thoughts) and to assert, That ‡ *Christ's coming down from Heaven was the only Remedy for our Salvation.* With whom agrees St. *Cyril*, peremptorily declaring that * Mankind being fallen into a corrupt State, was to be recover'd by this, and by no other Way. The same was said by *Irenæus* and *Athanasius*, and afterwards by *Fulgentius* and other Writers of the Church. *Anselm* writ a *Dialogue*, the Argument of which is, *Why God became Man?* Where he endeavours to prove, That Man's Redemption could not be accomplished, unless God had been made Man, and satisfied for Men. And truly I am of his Perswasion; I verily believe that there was *no other* Way of recovering of lost Man; and I ground my Belief on this Threefold Bottom.

* Καὶ τὸ θελήματι μόνον, ὡς Θεὸς, σῶσαι διωάμενος ἐπὶ καὶ τὰ πάντα προστάγματι συνεστήσατο. Greg. Naz. Orat. 9.

† Ῥᾷστον μὲν γὰρ ἦν αὐτῷ καὶ δι' ἄλλα τοῦ σαρκικοῦ προκαλύμματος παραγραμμίσασθαι τῶν ἀνθρώπων τὴν σωτηρίαν, καὶ θελήσει μόνῃ καταλῦσαι τοῦ θανάτου τὴν δυνασείαν· ἀλλ' οὐκ ἐθελήθη τὴν ἐξουσίαν, ἀλλὰ τῆς προνοίας ἐπιδεῖξαι τὸ δίκαιον. Theodoret Serm. 6. contr. Græc.

‖ *Sunt stulti qui dicunt, Non poterat aliter sapientia Dei homines liberare, nisi susciperet hominem & nasceretur ex fœminâ, & à peccatoribus omnia illa pateretur. Quibus dicimus, poterat omninò, sed si aliter faceret, similiter vestra stultitia displiceret.* Augustin. de Agone Christiano, c. 11.

‡ *Transgressio illius primi hominis totum deceperat mundum, ut nullum esset salutis remedium nisi Christus adveniret è cœlo.* Serm. 14. de Temp.

** Ἦν γὰρ ὅτου καὶ οὐχ ἑτέρως ἀπολιδῶσαν εἰς φθορὰν ἀνασώσασθαι γένος. Dial. de incarnatione.

1. The Nature of the Thing itself. For (as hath been said) *vindictive Justice* is essential to God, and he is obliged by it to inflict Punishment on those who violate his Laws, or (which is the Equivalent) on some other that shall take the Punishment upon them, and satisfie Divine Justice for them. Now, seeing we cannot satisfie for ourselves, who is there of the whole Race of Finite Beings that is able to discharge this Work? The Blood of Bulls and Goats, or of any other Brute Animals cannot effect this; because, though this was accepted under the Law, on the Account of the all-sufficient Sacrifice of Christ Jesus the Lamb of God, who was typified and represented by them; yet it is of no Value in itself, and therefore is not serviceable to this End and Purpose: For what expiates and atones, must be of more Worth than the Persons for whom the Expiation is made. *Beasts* then are excluded, and for the same Reason *Men*, and on another Account too, *viz.* because it is impossible that one Sinner should expiate for another. Therefore we are to enquire next, Whether *Angels* might not have been taken into this Work? The *bad* ones none will so much as mention: Wherefore they must be *good* ones, if any, that are to be depended upon. But alas! These are Finite Creatures, and therefore cannot satisfie the Infinite Deity. Besides, the Separation of Soul and Body, which is Death, was ordain'd to be the Punishment of Sin, but this the Angels (who have not Bodies as Men) are not capable of undergoing. Thus wheresoever we look, we find no Sort of meer Creatures, that are able to satisfie the Divine Justice for the Offences of Mankind. And consequently if we were to be redeem'd and recover'd, there was an absolute Necessity that it should be done in *this* very Way that it was now effected; namely, That the Evil and Misery which Sinners deserv'd, should be transferr'd by God the Father on his own Son.

2. I argue from the *Thing done* to the *Necessity* of it. For though it is true, this is not a right Way of arguing in most Cases; yet here it is very valid and substantial: Because it is an extraordinary Case, and because upon its being discover'd and reveal'd to us (for we could not have imagin'd any such Thing otherwise) we see it is the only Way that could have been made use of, as appears from

from the last particular I treated of. If it shall be said then, that 'tis derogatory to God's *Power*, to say he *can* do nothing but what he *doth*; let this be the Answer, That 'tis derogatory to God's *Wisdom*, to say he might have not done, or that he might have done otherwise than what we see is done in such a Case as this. When upon Examination, we find that this is the meer result of Divine Wisdom and infinite Contrivance, and yet it is a Remedy that no Humane or Angelick Wit could have found out, and yet being found out and discover'd to us, appears the sole expedient whereby our Salvation could be transacted and accomplished; when, I say, these Things appear to be very plain and evident, we have Reason to draw an Argument from what hath actually happen'd to the impossibility of the contrary. The Event here shews the Thing, for we cannot rationally suppose that Man could be saved by a meer Remission of Sin, or by any other Way before suggested, when we see what strange and prodigious Things have been effected for the Salvation of Sinners; when we see and observe that God himself became Man; That the Divinity was clothed with Flesh; That the Son of God submitted to all kinds of Sufferings, and even to the ignominious Death of the Cross; we may rationally inferr, that if there had been any *other* Course to be taken for Man's Recovery, *this* which is so strange and amazing would never have been chosen. We cannot think it suitable to the *Wisdom* of God to have made Choice of this Method above all, if he could have pardon'd Sin without Christ's dying. I conclude then, That from what hath actually come to pass we may gather the Necessity of it. God punish'd his Son, therefore he could pardon Sin no other Way, is good Logick.

3. I appeal to the Holy Scripture, which is the best Judge and Director in this Matter. This will inform us, That there was a Necessity of expiating Sin in this Way. *O my Father, if it be possible, let this Cup pass from me*, said our Saviour, *Matth.* 26. 42. letting us thereby know, that had there been a *Possibility* of saving Sinners any *other Way*, it should have been done: But it was utterly *impossible*: And that was one Reason why Christ submitted to suffer Death as he did. He knew that it was absolutely necessary in order to our Redemption; he knew that his Death could not have been spared, because this is the only Way of accomplishing Man's Salvation. This is attested and confirm'd by the great Apostle, who tells us, That though *we are justified freely by God's Grace*, yet it is *through the Redemption that is in Jesus Christ*, Rom. 3. 24. This Redemption is purchased for us by the Price that Christ hath paid to God's Justice, to free us from the Penalty of the Law. And this Redemption could not have possibly been dispensed with, as the same Apostle lets us know in the following Words, *whom God hath set forth to be a Propitiation, through Faith in his Blood, to declare his Righteousness for the remission of Sins*, that is, it was necessary that Christ should be set forth and appointed by his Father to be a propitiatory Sacrifice for Sin, and to atone the Wrath of God, because otherwise his *Righteousness* could not be satisfied. *This* would be mightily impaired if Sin should be pardoned without a Recompence being made. For this Reason there must be compleat Satisfaction made to the Law by the Suffering and Death of the Son of God.

And though it is not fit that we should be peremptory in asserting what God *can do*, or *not do*, because his *Power* is above our Apprehensions; yet when we have the Reason of the Thing on our Side, (as we shew'd before,) and moreover when we have the Holy Writ to abet us, I do not think it any Arrogance to determine concerning the possibility or impossibility of a Thing with respect to God's Dispensation. And accordingly, I think it not indecent or rash to pronounce, That there was no possibility of reconciling God and Man but this. Nothing but Christ's Blood could atone for our Transgressions; nothing could wash away the Stain of our Sins but this; nothing could quench the Fire of Hell but this.

And as this was *the only*, so it was *the best* Way of Man's Recovery. Of Christ's Satisfaction saith St. *Augustine*, *There was not a more convenient and agreeable Way for the redressing of our Misery, for healing of our Spiritual Diseases. And though in another Place this good Father is not unwilling to grant that † it might be otherwise, if we respect the Power of the Physician; yet no Medicine could have been so commodiously and skillfully prepar'd for the good of the Patient than this was. Yea, no Remedy could have been thought of that was more for the Honour of the Physician: For by this Way of saving Mankind that of the Psalmist is verified, *Psal.* 85. 10. *Mercy and Truth are met together*

* *Sanandæ nostræ miseriæ convenientior modus alius non fuit, nec esse potuit*, De Trin. l. 13. c. 10.

† *Potuit aliter fieri, quantum ad potentiam Medici, sed non potuit commodius aut doctius præparari, ut esset medicina ægroti.* De Annunt. Domini Serm. 3.

gether, Righteousness and Peace have kissed each other. By this admirable Contrivance of Divine Wisdom, those two Attributes of God, which *seem'd* to clash and contradict each other, are brought to a friendly *Accordance*: *Justice* is satisfied by the Death of our Saviour, and *Mercy* is exalted by accepting of a Reconciliation. God's Wrath and Severity are shew'd in demanding a Punishment, and his Grace and Clemency are fully display'd, in condescending to transferr the Punishment from us to another. This was the best Way to glorifie these Divine Attributes: And, so far as we can apprehend, they could not have been magnified without this expedient. And certainly we cannot but grant, That this is a Demonstration of the absolute Necessity of Christ's Satisfaction, that rather than Sin should go unpunish'd, and not be satisfied for, God punish'd our Sins in his only Begotten Son.

But perverse Minds are not satisfied with what hath been thus plentifully suggested from the Holy Writ. Their *Reason* (so they are pleas'd to call it) rises up against *Scripture*, and such Cavils as these, are heard from their Mouths, and drop from their Pens.

First, They object, That this Suffering and Death of Christ are not, and cannot be a true *Satisfaction* for the Sins of Mankind, because he that satisfies for another Man's Debt, must make the same Payment that the Debtor himself should have made: But it is not so here, for the Law required Eternal Death, and we were to have undergone it: But Christ did not undergo it for us.

To which I Answer, 1. It is a mistaken Notion of *Satisfaction* that the *same Payment* must be made, for if the very same be paid, it is strictly the Debtor's discharging of the Debt in his own Person, and not *Satisfaction*, which is taken for an Act of another Person; namely, of him on whom the Debt is transferr'd. Wherefore it is not requisite that Christ should pay *the very same* which was due from us. 2. In making Satisfaction, though the *same* be not paid, yet it is sufficient that there be an *Equivalent*, for this answers the End and Intention of the Law, as much as the *same* would have done. When Satisfaction is made by *another*, it is done by that other's *doing* or *Suffering* what the Person himself should have done or suffer'd: Or else by doing or Suffering something that is of the *same Value* that the Person himself should do or suffer: Now, Christ hath performed both these, he hath undergone that which we were obliged to undergo; that is, he suffer'd and died in our Stead: And as for *Eternal Death*, it was not possible for him to undergo that; but, if we consider the *Infinite Merit* of his dying on the Cross, it was Equivalent, and of the same Value with it.

Secondly, It is objected, That the Doctrine of the Satisfaction of Christ for our Sins, is inconsistent with the Freeness of God's Grace. How can God freely forgive us our Sins, and yet Christ lay down his Life to satisfie the Divine Justice? Remission of Sins wholly excludes Satisfaction, saith * *Volkelius*, and he is followed by the rest of that Party. But there is no Reason for it; for why, is it more inconsistent with the *Sacrifice of Christ*, for God freely to forgive Sin, than it was presumed to be in all the Sacrifices of the *Jews* (yea, and the *Gentiles*) who all supposed *Sacrifices* necessary in order to *Expiation and Atonement*, and yet thought themselves obliged to the Goodness of God for the Remission of their Sins? This is no Derogation to the Grace of God in his Pardon, no more than *Abraham*'s praying for *Abimelech*, in order to his Pardon, according to God's own Appointment, *Gen.* 20. 7. Again, God pardons not Sinners without Faith and Repentance; and this is acknowledged, I suppose, by our Adversaries; and yet they don't say this is an infringing of Free Grace: Why then is the demanding of Satisfaction for Sin a destroying of Free-Grace? They confute themselves, seeing they deny not that certain *Terms* and *Conditions* are consistent with Free-Grace and Pardon.

* De Vera Religione. lib. 5.

Further, it will appear, That Christ's satisfying for our Sins by his Death, doth not hinder the Forgiveness of them to be free and gratuitous, if we consider, 1. That though God could not, or would not pardon Sin without Satisfaction, yet the *Finding out*, and *Appointing* the *Manner* of Satisfaction, was free and owing to the meer favour of God. That he was pleas'd to choose and constitute such a Sponsor, such a Surety for us, was entirely from his Mercy and free Bounty. 2. Though it were *Justice*, that required Satisfaction, *i. e.* Payment of our Debt or Punishment due to our Sins; yet it was God's *Free-Grace and Mercy* that he would excuse us from paying the Debt, and lay the Punishment upon his Son. God might have exacted it of the Persons that sinn'd, whereas he

He transferred it on Christ. This is a Free and Gracious Act. 3. As God freely Appointed His Son to be our Priest and our Sacrifice; so it was the Free Bounty and Goodness of His Son to condescend to this Appointment; to offer himself up for us, and to satisfy for us, when we were utterly unable to make satisfaction for our selves.

Thus it is plain that *Forgiveness* and *Satisfaction* are consistent. And if any still doubt of it, they may be relieved of all their Scruples from those Words of the Apostle. *Rom.* 3. 24, 25. *Being justified freely by His Grace, through the Redemption that is in Jesus Christ, whom God hath set forth to be a Propitiation.* Here it is evident that *Redemption* and *Propitiation* (which are but other Words for *satisfaction*) do not interfere with Free Grace. To which add another plain Text, *Eph.* 1. 7. *In whom we have Redemption through His Blood, the forgiveness of Sins, according to the Riches of His Grace.* Which must needs prevail with us, to believe that God's Gracious forgiving of our Sins, is not irreconcileable with the Doctrine of Redemption. I might adjoyn that of the same Apostle, *Heb.* 2. 9.—*that He by the Grace of God should taste Death for every Man.* It was by the Favour and good pleasure of God, which are absolutely *Free*, that Christ expiated for us by His Death. Our Redeemer hath satisfied God's Justice in our stead, but, notwithstanding that, our Sins are freely pardon'd for the sake of that satisfaction. God remits our Debts, yet Payment is made by our surety, to this great Creditor. This is the tenour of Scripture, and therefore *Socinus*'s assertion is Groundless, when he saith that God's Free and Gratuitous saving us, opposes Christ's satisfaction, and excludes it wholly.

It is yet further *Objected*, How could it be Just in God to make one bear the Punishment of anothers Sins? The Criminal is to be Punish'd; the Fault makes the Obligation to Penalty: Therefore those that are Faulty are to have the Punishment inflicted on them, and not those that are Innocent. Is it not then great Injustice to Punish Christ, who was Innocent, and to release those that were Guilty? I Answer First, *the Objection* is from this false Ground, that the Sovereign Goodness of God and His condescensions to Man, are to be measured by *Juridical niceties*, and *Laws*, that concern *ordinary Transactions between Man and Man.* It is not denied, but that it is the usual way of Procedure in humane Courts, to inflict the Punishment on those very Persons that commit the Fault, and to absolve the Guiltless. But it can't be proved hence, that in the *Divine Dispensation* of things it may not be otherwise. God, the Infinite and Uncontroulable Sovereign, is not confin'd to the ordinary Transactions of Men, but doth what he pleases, and therefore can appoint that his Justice shall be satisfied without the Punishment of those that are Offenders, and that another shall be substituted in their Room.

But Secondly, this is not wholly discrepant from the usage and Practice that are among Men. Even according to these it is evident that one Person is and may be Punish'd for another's Offence, as we see it is done in case of *Confederacy*; those who do not actually commit the Crime are yet Judg'd Guilty, and Suffer as well as the other, nay they suffer on the account of the other, namely, because they were found actually Guilty. Again, we see that according to our Laws, in the Case of High Treason, those that are nearly ally'd Suffer for the sake of the Traytors; thus the Children are disinherited to Atone for the Father's Crime. So that we see, if we Appeal even to the Practice of Humane Tribunals, it is not thought Unjust to inflict Punishment on innocent Persons in some Cases. Let not therefore the Divine Proceedings, in such an extraordinary Case as we are now speaking of, be call'd in Question and censur'd by us.

Thirdly, Let it not seem strange that God charg'd our Sins on Christ, and Punish'd Him for them, seeing Christ voluntarily took our Sins and Guilt upon Him, and freely submitted to the Punishment. Wherefore there was no Injury, no Injustice done, because the Person was willing. Accordingly *Socinus* himself confesses (tho' His followers have here left Him) that 'twas not unjust that Christ, tho' Innocent, should Suffer and Die. And the thing it self proves it, because *He did Suffer and Die* by God's Appointment, for God can do nothing Unjust. But He denies that 'twas Just, that He *should Suffer for us*: Which I will fully and largely disprove, in my next Undertaking. At present it is sufficient to Observe, that our great Adversary is so far come over to us, as to Acknowledge that an Innocent Person may be in some Cases treated as if he were Guilty, and that He may Suffer Punishment which he doth not deserve. And what greater and more accountable

table ground can be given for this, than that the *Person consented* to be thus treated, and thus to Suffer? This takes off the Injury of the Infliction, and reconciles it to Reason and Justice. Yea, among Men we see this done every Day; there are those that voluntarily take upon them the debts and defaults of others, and engage to discharge them, and undergo the Penalty: And this being done freely and willingly, it is not reckon'd by any Man to be Unjust. Let us apply this to our Saviour's Undertakings, and then we shall find them Reasonable and Just. Tho' He was Innocent, yet by His *own consent* He submitted to Suffer for the Guilty, and so was *Justly Punish'd.* We know 'tis expresly said, that *He gave Himself for our Sins, that He might deliver us,* *Gal.* 1. 4. and again, *He gave Himself for us, that He might Redeem us from all Iniquity.* *Tit.* 2. 13. when 'tis said *He gave Himself,* 'tis the same with willingly yielding up Himself for us, and of His own accord taking our Sins on Him, and undertaking to Suffer for them. He put Himself under an Obligation of Suffering by an Act of His own Free Will. Now 'tis certain, that no Injustice is done to him that thus freely Acts.

Nay, 4thly and Lastly, there was a solemn *Agreement* made between God the Father, and His Son Jesus Christ, that this latter should undertake the Redeeming of lost Mankind by Suffering Death for them, and that the former should thereupon receive them into Favour. This Stipulation or Compact is mentioned in *Psal.* 40. 6. *&c.* and repeated by the Apostle *Heb.* 10. 5. *&c.* *A Body hast thou prepared me,* which is to be an expiatory Sacrifice: Therefore *lo! I come to do thy Will, O God,* I am ready to Suffer what was determin'd and agreed upon, between thee and me, for the Salvation of Sinners. This is call'd *the Pleasure of the Lord, Isaiah* 53. 10. that is, what he was pleas'd, in concurrence with His Son, to appoint concerning this great Work of Redemption to be wrought by Christ, with reference to this 'tis said that Christ was *obedient unto Death, even the Death of the Cross, Phil.* 2. 8. He obediently submitted to that task which His Father had impos'd, and which He himself had solemnly engaged to perform. Upon this (as well as on the other Accounts before-mention'd) it is manifest that the *Objection* before started is of no Force, and that there is no *Injustice* in God the Father's charging and laying the Sins of Men on His Son, and Punishing Him in their stead. It is not unjust, because it is a Free and Voluntary Deed; and even among Men we see something that resembles it. It is no uncommon thing for a Person to contract and promise to take on Him another's Debt or Duty, and to oblige himself to discharge it for Him, and to undergo all hazards in doing so: And this is thought to be very Just and Rational. Christ Jesus was our *Fidejussor,* our Surety, our Security; He contracted to discharge our Debt, and to undergo and suffer what was due to us; and seeing he was pleased to condescend so far, who can charge God the Father or Him with Injury and Injustice; seeing He vouchsaf'd to undertake that Punishment which our Sins deserved; he was *Just* and *Faithful* in executing it; and we are sure it was highly and transcendently *merciful* to do this for us, when we were in a helpless and miserable State. He most graciously yielded to a Commutation of Punishment: He out of infinite kindness, tho' He was Innocent, disdain'd not to set the Guilty Free by Suffering and Dying for them.

Having thus dismiss'd the *Objections* of our Adversaries, we may reasonably adhere to this as a true Doctrine, That Christ by His Sufferings and Death and by the Atonement which he made by them for Mankind did properly *satisfy* for their Sins. For tho' the word *satisfaction* or *to satisfy,* as applied to Christ, is not found in Scripture, yet the thing it self is very plainly express'd. For here it is manifest that Christ hath paid that Debt which we owed to God; He hath Suffer'd that Punishment which was due to us for our Sins; He hath made amends to His Father for the Crimes that have been committed by us against Him. Now, this is a true notion of *Satisfaction,* that it is making amends to the party offended for the injury done to him. We had highly injured God by our Sins, but Christ Jesus hath satisfied and repair'd that Injury by His Meritorious Undertakings for us, he hath made amends to the Divine Justice; whereupon follow pardoning of the Crimes, and absolving the Criminal. *He blotted out the Hand-Writting of Ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to His Cross,* *Col.* 2. 14. That is, whereas the Law Written with God's Hand, obliged all Men to a complete performance of it, and render'd them obnoxious to the Divine Wrath, if they fail'd in the least, and whereas Mankind broke this Law, and thereby became liable to that Wrath, Christ Jesus came to exempt us from this

Punishment, and, by his Suffering what we were to have done, effectually accomplish'd this, and took away that condemning Power of the Law by His Death; this was *the nailing it to His Cross*. We were design'd to, and had deserv'd by our Sins, Death and Damnation: But He mercifully Redeem'd us from them by laying down His own Life for us, by making himself an Offering for Sin in our stead. This is *satisfying* for us, for to do something that another may be freed from that which otherwise He should have undergone, is *solution* and *satisfaction* properly. This is our very Case, and it was the End and Design of Christ's Sufferings to effect this, and thereby to make us capable of being reconciled unto God, and receiving the Pardon of our Sins.

And so I come to the *Second Grand Reason* of Christ's sufferings and dying on the Cross; namely, that *He might shelter us from the Divine Wrath, and purchase for us Pardon and the Favour of God.* It is not to be doubted that our Sins were imputed to Christ: Tho' I know this is a Doctrine that is not suited to the palate of some Divines of this Age. But I have *fully* shew'd in another place, that this is grounded on the Scriptures, and therefore at present, I shall take it as granted, that our Sins are imputed to Christ. And thence it follows, that He underwent the Punishment due to us for our Sins, for these two are inseparable; He could not undero the *Penalty*, unless He had taken upon Him the Fault: Otherwise He had been Punish'd Unjustly. And by undergoing the Punishment, He freed *us* from undergoing it, and procured Pardon and Favour with God for us. Death should have been inflicted *on us*, because *we* were the Offenders, but Christ taking upon Him our *Sins*, underwent also the *Punishment* which they deserv'd, and they reconcil'd us unto His Father.

That there is this real *Substitution* or *Surrogation*, that is, that the Punishment is translated from us to Christ, and that He suffer'd in our stead, is questioned by some: And therefore, before I proceed any further under this Head, I will prove this great Truth from those places of Holy Writ where Christ is said to *Suffer* or *Die for our Sins, and for Sinners*. From both these Sorts of Texts, it will sufficiently appear that Christ underwent the Punishment due to us for our Sins. First, it is to be observ'd that ὑπὲρ *for*, signifies the impulsive or procuring cause when it is prefix'd to *Sin*, or *Offence*, or *Transgression*. *Socinus* and *Crellius* will have it denote the *Final Cause* only; but tho' I am willing to grant, that *this* is not excluded, yet I further contend that the *Impulsive* and *Final* Cause are not to be separated; yea from the Text which I shall alledge, it will be made manifest that the *Impulsive* or *Meritorious* Cause is never excluded, but always signified when *for* is join'd to *Sins*, and relates to Christ's *Death*. That's an eminent place in *Isaiah* 53. 8. *For the transgression of my People was He stricken*, where we have Christ's Passion express'd by that word *Stricken*, and the procuring Cause of it, *our Transgression*. The like is to be seen in *Rom.* 4. 25. *He was deliver'd for our Offences*, 1 *Cor.* 15. 3. *Christ Died for our Sins*, *Gal.* 1. 4. *He gave himself for our Sins*, these being the Impulsive Cause of his suffering. 1 *Pet.* 3. 18. *Christ hath once Suffer'd for Sins*, that is, by reason of Sins: for the preposition περὶ here is synonymous with ὑπὲρ. Our Sins were the proper Meritorious Cause of Christ's Death. And this is express'd, and could not be better and plainer than by this preposition *for*, notwithstanding the Cavils of *Socinus* and others to the contrary. Now, we may easily gather from this *manner* of expression, that Christ suffer'd *in our stead*, for he suffer'd because our Sins were laid upon Him, (there being an absolute Connection (as was said before between Sin and Suffering) which implies that He underwent what *we* were to undergo for our Sins.

Secondly, when *for* is join'd with *us* or *Sinners*, there is not only implied, but plainly signify'd a *Substitution*. Here, as before, I do not exclude the *Final Cause*. When 'tis so often said in the New Testament, that Christ Suffer'd or Dy'd for us, I do not deny that in *some* Texts where this is said, the *End* for which He Suffer'd and Died is implied, *viz.* that he did this *for our Good and Benefit*: But the *Chief thing* denoted by that expression in most places is this, That Christ Suffer'd and Dy'd *in our stead*. Thus Christ himself tells His Disciples *that his Body was given for them*, or as St. *Paul* expresses it, *His Body was broken for them*, 1 *Cor.* 11. 24. that is, whereas *they* should for their Sins have been broken and destroy'd, *He* underwent that Punishment in their stead. So in the same sense He tells them that *His Blood was shed for many*, *Math.* 26. 28. where tho' the preposition be περὶ, yet it is of the same signification with ὑπὲρ used in the former places, and signifies a *substitution* of Christ's Blood for ours, not but that the *Benefit* we reap by Christ's shedding his Blood is included here. But what can

can be plainer than those Words? *I lay down my Life for the Sheep, John* 10. 15. and those before, *the good Shepherd gives his Life for the Sheep, v.* 11. that is, he ventures His Life, and if there be occasion parts with it, rather than *they* shall lose theirs. By *Caiaphas* speaking by inspiration it was said concerning our Saviour, that He must *Die for the People, John* 11. 50. that is, He must Die to save them, He must substitute Himself in the Room of them. That Christ *Died in our stead* is clear from His Words in *John* 15. 13, 14. *Greater love than this hath no Man, that a Man lay down His Life for His Friends.* And then he applies it, *ye are my Friends*, namely, for whom and in whose stead I purpose to lay down my Life. So the Word *for* is taken in *Rom.* 5. 6. *In due time Christ Died for the Ungodly*, which is explained in the next Verse, *for scarcely for a righteous Man will one Die, yet for a good Man peradventure some will even dare to Die*, where 'tis unquestionable that the Preposition *for* signifies a *Commutation*, one Dying for another. In 2 *Cor.* 5. 14, 15. it is twice together said concerning Christ that *He Died for all*, yea, a Third time, *He Died for them, v.* 15. where the Preposition ὑπὲρ imports that one Person was substituted in the Room of another. The same is to be seen in *Gal.* 3. 13. *Christ hath Redeemed us from the Curse of the Law, being made a Curse for us*, where plainly is meant a *Surrogation*, a putting one in the place of another.

This is the meaning of those other places, *He tasted Death for every Man, Heb.* 2. 9. *Christ hath once Suffer'd, the Just for the Unjust*, 1 *Pet.* 3. 18. *Christ hath Suffer'd for us in the Flesh*, 1 *Pet.* 4. 1. And Lastly, we are to understand those Words in the same Sense, *He laid down His Life for us*, 1 *John* 3. 16. tho' the *Socinian* Writers alledge this place to prove that no more than a Final Cause is imply'd by Christ's *Dying for us*, i. e. Christ Died for the good of Mankind: For, say they, St. *John* here, who tells us that *Christ laid down His Life for us*, adds, that *we ought to lay down our Life for the Brethren*, i. e. for their Good and Benefit: Therefore this is only meant in the other foregoing Words. To which I answer, this Good and Benefit, which they speak of, destroys not a *Substitution*: For 'tis evident to any one that hath but a grain of Sense, that when we are bid to *lay down our Lives for the Brethren*, a Substitution is implied therein, for we lay down our Lives to spare theirs. One may obtain a Benefit for another, by being substituted in his Room. And this is the very Case before us, Christ Jesus purchas'd Life and Salvation for us, by Dying in our Room. And this is the genuine import of all those Texts which I have produc'd, wherein it is plain, that ὑπὲρ is equivalent to ἀντὶ; and no other Sense can be thought to be so proper and agreeable as this.

Wherefore from these Places we may Rationally and Solidly inferr, that Christ Suffer'd that which we should have Suffer'd. He underwent the Punishment which was due to our Sins. For He judicially represented us, and bore our Persons and with them our Sins, and consequently was to undergo that Wrath and Vengeance of God which we justly deserv'd. Both these were typified by the *Scape-Goat*, for He had not only the Sins of the People *laid upon Him*, which signified our Sins imputed to Christ, but moreover He *carried them away*: For when the People had charg'd Him with their Sins, He was dispatch'd into the Desart, that He might return no more, to signify that their Sins should be quite Abolish'd, and never after appear against them. This is effectually perform'd by the Son of God, that *Lamb Slain from the beginning of the World*; namely, in the decree and purpose of Heaven, but actually Slain in the fulness of Time, when He offer'd Himself upon the Cross. Hence he is deservedly styled, *John* 1. 29. *The Lamb of God which takes away the Sins of the World.* He did not only *bear* our Sins, but He *took them away*, and indeed the Word in the Original signifies both. Now this *taking away* of Sin is the expiating of it, and reconciling us unto God, of which the Holy Writ doth abundantly testify. By the Death and Sufferings of Christ our Sins are Atoned, and God's Wrath appeased, and we are admitted into His Favour.

I will make good this Proposition from those express places of Scripture, which make mention of *Reconciliation*, *Redemption*, and *Sacrifice* as they relate to the Sufferings of Christ. And at the same time that I shew how these Texts are a proof of Christ's expiating of Sin, and purchasing the Divine Favour, it will appear likewise that they are a plain evidence of the *Satisfaction* made by Him, which I spoke of before. These Three Clauses of Scripture-Texts will render these Doctrines undeniable; and truly it is the Holy Scripture which we must rely upon, and resolve our belief into in this weighty matter. Now, the New Testament doth plainly, evidently,

evidently, and fully set forth this Truth; so that it may justly be wondred at that any Persons, who own the Scriptures to be the Word of God, can doubt of it.

First, Let us seriously weigh those Texts which speak of *Reconciliation*. For we must know that Man by the Degeneracy and Corruption of his Nature, and by his Apostatizing from his Primitive State, highly displeas'd and provok'd the Divine Majesty, and hereupon God became his Enemy. But such was the Divine Goodness, Compassion, and Mercy, That God himself sought out a Redress, and condescended to Terms of Agreement and Reconciliation. He graciously accepted of the Mediation of a Third Person between himself and lost Man, and on the Consideration of the meritorious Sufferings of Christ Jesus received Offenders into Favour, and was no longer at Enmity with them. This is fitly and properly expressed in Scripture by *Reconciliation*. *When we were Enemies, we were reconciled to God by the Death of his Son*, Rom. 5. 10. And the same Doctrine the Apostle inculcates in three Verses together, 2 Cor. 5. 18, 19, 20. *God hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given unto us the Ministry of Reconciliation; to wit, that God was in Christ reconciling the World unto himself and hath committed unto us the Word of Reconciliation.* On which he founds that Compassionate and Christian Intreaty, worthy of an Ambassador of Christ, *we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God.* The same Apostle speaking of Christ, tells us, That *he reconciled both* (Jews and Gentiles) *unto God*, Eph. 2. 16. And again, *It pleased the Father by him to reconcile all Things unto himself*, Col. 1. 20. *And* (that we may see he delights in this Manner of Expression) I will add what follows in the next Verse, *You that were sometime alienated, and Enemies in your Minds by wicked Works, yet now hath he reconciled in the Body of his Flesh through Death.*

Some Nice *Socinians* take Notice, That in the fore-mentioned Places we are said to *be reconciled to God*; but 'tis not said, that *he is reconciled to us*, as if there were something of Weight and Moment in this. But this is a meer Cavil (like the rest of their Objections,) and hath nothing considerable in it; for it is certain, That in the Style and Sense of Scripture these Two are equivalent. Thus when 'tis said concerning *David*, 1 Sam. 29. 4. *wherewith should he reconcile himself unto his Master?* It is the same as if it had been said, wherewith should he reconcile his Master (that is, King *Saul*) to him, and make him favourable to him? And so in that Advice of Christ, *Mat.* 5. 23. *first be reconciled to thy Brother*, it is all one with *reconcile thy Brother to thee whom thou hast injured.* The like is observable in 1 Cor. 7. 11. *let the Wife be reconciled to her Husband.* So that it is idle and vain to insist upon the meer Phrase, for we see it is used in that Manner that it makes nothing at all for our captious Adversaries. When the Scripture asserts that we *are reconciled unto God*, it is of the very same import with *God's being reconciled unto us*, and becoming favourable and gracious to us: And indeed we can't possibly suppose our being reconciled to God without his Reconciliation towards us; and so on the other Hand, if he foregoes his Enmity to us, he conquers ours to him.

Here I might observe, that this *Reconciliation* is express'd in other places by *Peace*, and *Peace-making*. When the Messias is call'd *the Prince of Peace* by the Evangelical Prophet, *Isa.* 9. 6. this *Peace* between God and Man, is chiefly to be understood. This is that which the Evangelical Choire proclaim'd to the World at Christ's coming into it, *on Earth Peace*, Luke 2. 14. *i. e.* Peace and Reconciliation between the incensed Majesty of Heaven, and sinful Mankind. Hence St. *Peter* told *Cornelius* and his Company, that *God Preach'd Peace through Jesus Christ*, Acts 10. 36. And St. *Paul* agrees with his Fellow-Apostle, saying concerning Christ, *He is our Peace*; that is, he is the Blessed Author and Procurer of Peace between God and us, by the Sacrifice of himself; and he adds, that *he Preach'd Peace to them who are afar off, and them that are nigh*, i. e. *Jews* and *Gentiles*, *Eph.* 2. 14, 17. He not only Preach'd it, but really affected it by his Sufferings and Death, which expiated for the Sins of the World. *Thus he made peace through the blood of his cross*, Col. 1. 20. He appeas'd the Divine Anger, and brought us into Favour with the Almighty, whom we had provok'd.

Again, What can be more manifest than this Truth from those Texts of Scripture, which speak of *Redemption* as it referrs to Christ? For we must remember what the Condition of Mankind was, they were *sold under Sin*; they were *taken*, and *led Captive* by Satan, and so were in miserable Thraldom and Bondage: Whereupon,

upon, Christ came on purpose *to Redeem* these Captives, to *buy back* these Prisoners, *to purchase* these Slaves, and to set them free. And how did he effect this? What *Price* did he lay down? What *Ransom* did he pay? The Sacred Writings acquaint us with this, and let us know that he laid down his Life, he shed his precious Blood to accomplish this Redemption, and to deliver us from Captivity. *The Son of Man came to give his Life a Ransom for many*, Mat. 20. 28. A *Ransom* is that which is *paid* or laid down as a Price of Redemption; and no less than the giving his *Life* was the Price which the Blessed Jesus submitted to. *The Church of God* is said to be *purchas'd with his own Blood*, Acts 20. 28. *purchas'd* in this way of Redemption. *Ye are bought with a Price*, this Price of Redemption, 1 *Cor.* 6. 20. And the same Words occurr again in the 7th Chapter, *v.* 23. *In him we have redemption through his blood*, Eph. 1. 7. And the Apostle repeats the same in *Col.* 1. 14. *By his own blood he enter'd in once into the holy place, having obtain'd eternal redemption for us*, Heb. 9. 12. *He gave himself a ransom for all*, 1 Tim. 2. 5. *Ye are redeem'd with the precious blood of Christ*, 1 Pet. 1. 19. And thence those who are thus Redeem'd, are call'd by this Apostle, *the acquir'd, or purchas'd People*, 1 Pet. 2. 9. (as the Original will bear it) namely, by the Blood of Christ, and so are his *peculiar Possession*, as others render the Word. And I will conclude with *Rev.* 5. 9. *He hath redeem'd us unto God by his blood.* This Blood of Christ is the Price paid to God for our Redemption.

Which being so often repeated in the most express Terms, it cannot but raise Admiration, that any Man should be so blind and obstinate, as to deny this *Redemption* wrought by Christ, or so much as to look upon these words, λύτρον, ἀπολυτρῶν, ἀπολύτρωσις, as *ambiguous and uncertain*, (as * one hath lately done) and to represent them *as Terms hard to be understood*, and to suggest, that *we can't tell whether they are to be properly understood, when they are applied to Christ's Redemption.* Indeed, if they were but once or twice used, and by the bye only, there might be some excuse for such Scruples; but when the Texts are so numerous where those Expressions are made use of, and are so plainly worded, and so directly applied, it can be nothing but wilful Prejudice to appear in Opposition to them, and to endeavour to evade the Force of them. † *To Redeem*, in the proper import of it, is to purchase by a valuable Price; and we are assur'd by the infallible Writings, that our Saviour did this, he purchas'd Life and Happiness for us by the Price of his Blood; he sets us free, by paying a sufficint Ransom for us; for God the Father accepted of Christ's Sufferings, as a full Price and Recompence for our Sins. From all which the Proposition is fully evidenced, That by Christ's undergoing the Punishment of our Sins, we are perfectly absolved; we are no longer Captives, but are brought into the glorious Liberty of the Sons of God; we are freed from the Divine Wrath, and from Eternal Death; we are Reconcil'd and Pardon'd, and this by Virtue of the meritorious Passion and Blood of Christ.

* J. Clerici Art. Critic. cap. 5.

† Padah ἀπολυτροῦν. redimere, i. e. pretium solvere, ex alienâ potestate liberare, &c. pretium solvendo. Inde *pidion*, Gr. λύτρον, pretium redemptionis.

Next, I am to prove this from those sundry places of Scripture, which speak of *Christ's Sacrifice. Christ our Passover is Sacrificed for us*, saith the Apostle, 1 *Cor.* 5. 7. *He gave himself for us an offering, and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savour*, Eph. 5. 2. *Through the eternal Spirit he offer'd himself*, Heb. 9. 14. *Now once in the end of the world hath he appear'd to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself*, Heb. 9. 26. And we read of *the offering of the Body of Jesus Christ once for all*, Heb. 10. 10. And in other places in this Epistle, this *Oblation and Sacrificing* of himself, are fully set forth. We see then that it is amply attested by the Holy Writ, that Christ was an *expiatory Sacrifice* for us. I say, *Expiatory*, or *Propitiatory*, for that is always meant, when Christ is said to be a *Sacrifice*. Which I prove, thus, In every Propitiatory Sacrifice, there were these three things; 1. A Substitution. 2. An Oblation. 3. An Expiation. Now, all these meet in the Sacrifice of Christ.

First, It was requisite to a Propitiatory Sacrifice, that the Creature that was Sacrificed should be substituted in the place of those that Sacrificed; that is, the Offenders. Thus it was under the *Law*, by God's own Appointment, the Blood of the Beast was instead of that of the People; the former was punish'd for the latter. And so it was among the *Pagans*, (as *Grotius*, in his Book of the *Satisfaction of Christ*, hath largely evinc'd by abundance of clear Quotations out of their own Writers.) The received Notion of *Sacrifices* among them, was this, That the Beast was slain in the room of the Offender; the Death of a Sheep, or Bull, was interpreted to be in lieu of those that offer'd them; which Apprehension was either

ther borrow'd from the *Jews*, or from some particular Discovery made by God to the World about that matter. Thus the Death of Christ was *an expiatory Sacrifice* for Sin, because he was Sacrificed and Slain in the room of the Sinner. He suffer'd that we might not suffer; he died to exempt us from Eternal Death. This need not be insisted upon here, because I have shew'd this before, that Christ was substituted in our room, and was punish'd in our stead.

Secondly, The expiatory Sacrifice was not only to be slain, but to be *offer'd*. In these Sacrifices there was always to be observ'd the *Mactation and the Oblation* of them; the *former* as a *Punishment* by a substitution of them in the place of the Persons that had offended, *the latter*, as the proper Act belonging to Atonement. Accordingly, the Scripture takes particular notice, that Christ was *Offer'd*, as well as *Slain*. This is expresly mention'd in some of the Texts afore-cited, because it was so considerable and necessary an Action. The Sacrifice of Christ was to be *offer'd* up solemnly unto God, that he might be a true Expiatory Sacrifice.

Thirdly, The legal Sacrifices were call'd *Expiatory*, because they were accompanied with an *Expiation of Sin*. The design of this sort of Sacrifices, was to impetrate and conciliate the Favour of God, (as the *Eucharistical* ones were appointed to Commemorate it.) A * Learned Writer, hath from several Quotations of the *Rabbins*, proved this to be the Sense of the *Jews*, (against the Opinion of *Socinus*) and with them concurr the *Heathens*, as to the same Notion of these Sacrifices, as may be seen in the same Author. And *Grotius* proves at large from abundant History, that their apprehension concerning *Expiatory Sacrifices*, was, that the gods thereby were thought to be moved to lay aside their Anger, to be appeas'd and pleas'd. It is certain, that this is the right Conception we ought to have of this kind of Sacrifices, if we apply it to the True God; he Instituted them to this very Purpose, that they might be the means of diverting his Wrath and Displeasure, and of purchasing his good Will and Favour. Now, this was all with Respect to *Christ*, who was to be the Great Sacrifice of Expiation, and who was to pacifie the Divine Wrath, and render the Incensed Majesty of Heaven propitious to us. The legal Sacrifices were Representatives of this Expiation to be made by Christ for us. He therefore *gave himself an Offering, and a Sacrifice to God for a Sweet-smelling Savour*, that is, to the intent that God's Anger may be appeas'd, and that he may be reconcil'd to us; for that is the meaning of a *Sweet-smelling Savour*; it signifies God's Acceptance of this Sacrifice, and his being well pleas'd with *us*, as well as *that*. This is the true Notion of the Sacrifice of Christ on the Cross, it was in order to the Expiation of our Guilt, and Atoning of Heaven, and procuring the Remission of our Sins, and the Love of God to us.

* Outram de Sacrific. l. 1.

That, what Christ suffer'd for us, was really *Propitiatory*, that when He offer'd himself a Sacrifice to God for us, He expiated our Guilt, is yet further evident from such plain and direct Passages as these in the New Testament. Of our Saviour, 'tis said, *He was a High-priest to make Reconciliation for the Sins of the People*, Heb. 2. 17. It should have been rendred, *to make a Propitiation, or to Propitiate for the Sins of the People*; for ἱλάσκεσθαι is the *Greek* Word, which signifies, *to Propitiate*; but there is another word, namely, ἀποκαταλλάτειν, which is constantly used in the New Testament for *Reconciling*. *Propitiating* is the proper word to denote that *Atonement* which is made by Expiatory Sacrifices, and therefore is properly applyed to the Sacrifice of Christ, *whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation*, Rom. 3. 25. The *Greek* word ἱλαστήριον, which is here used, signifies *the Mercy-seat* which was over the Ark; to let us know, that Christ is the true *Propitiatory*, prefigured by that *Covering of the Ark*; He, with his meritorious Righteousness, hides and covers our Sins, and with his precious Blood, expiates for them: And accordingly, the *Hebrew* word, whence the Mercy-seat was denominated, is both *to Cover*, and to *Expiate*. *Jesus Christ the Righteous*, saith St. *John*, *is the propitiation for our Sins*, 1 Ep. Chap. 2. v. 2. using the word ἱλασμὸς, which every one knows alludes to the *Atonement* made by Sacrifices, and is the word made use of by the *Septuagint* for the *Sin-offering*, Ezech. 44. 27.

Καθαρίζειν, *to purge*, is a Term of the like import, and referrs to the Sacrifices of Expiation, and therefore 'tis fitly said by the Apostle, in *Heb.* 1. 3. *He by himself purged our Sins*; where καθαρισμὸς hath a plain reference to the Purification and Atonement made by the legal Sacrifices and Oblations. And thus we are to understand,

ſtand, *Rev.* 1. 5. *He waſh'd us from our Sins in his own Blood*, he cleans'd and purifyed us, and made us acceptable to God by the bloody Sacrifice of Himſelf. To this End he offer'd himſelf on the Croſs, that he might *Expiate*; or, which is the ſame, take away the Guilt and Obligation of Sin, and obtain Pardon of God for us, and bring us into Favour with him.

All that hath been ſaid of this kind, may be yet further prov'd and confirm'd, by conſidering the Nature of *Chriſt's Prieſthood.* A great part of the *Epiſtle* to the *Hebrews* is ſpent in this Argument, to ſhew the Correſpondence of Chriſt's *Prieſthood and Sacrifice* with the *Levitical* ones; and that there is a peculiar Efficacy in the Prieſthood and Sacrifice of Chriſt, in order to *Expiation*, above the Prieſthood and Sacrifices of the Law. On which account the Followers of *Socinus* could wiſh with all their hearts this Epiſtle were expunged out of the Canon; for it is the fulleſt Proof in the New Teſtament, of the *Expiatory Sacrifice* of Chriſt, and of its tranſcendent Worth and Excellency above all other Sacrifices. This inſpired Author tells us, that *the blood of bulls and goats could not take away ſin*, (Heb. 10. 4.) namely, in that manner that the blood of Chriſt took it away. This Sacrifice ſurpaſs'd thoſe of the Law, becauſe *they* were offer'd by ſinful Men, but *this* by one that was Sinleſs. Which is particularly taken notice of by the Author to the *Hebrews*; *Such an High-prieſt*, ſaith he, *became us who is holy, harmleſs, ſeparate from ſinners*, Heb. 7. 26. This matchleſs Dignity of the *Prieſt*, renders the *Sacrifice* ſo efficacious. His Body and Soul, (*both* which were made by him an Offering for Sin, *Iſa.* 53. 10. *Heb.* 10. 11.) were pure and free from all Pollution whatſoever, and therefore he is call'd, *a Lamb without blemiſh, and without ſpot*, 1 Pet. 1. 19.

This perfect *Innocence* and *Sanctity*, made him capable of yielding *perfect Obedience* to the Law; which being joyn'd with his *Sufferings*, makes his Satisfaction compleat; eſpecially, if we add this, (which indeed cannot poſſibly be omitted) that he who did, and ſuffer'd ſuch great things for us, was God as well as Man. It is this which conſummates all, and makes his Undertakings and Sufferings *perfectly* Meritorious and Satisfactory; namely, the Dignity of his Nature. He that underwent the Puniſhment of Sin for us, was God himſelf; though he ſuffer'd not as ſuch, becauſe the Divinity is not capable of ſuffering. The Apoſtle, St. *Paul*, peremptorily aſſerts, That the Blood which was ſhed upon the Croſs for us, was *the Blood of God*, Acts 20. 28. that is, it was the Blood of him who was God himſelf. Now, we cannot but own, that this Divine Nature gives an extraordinary Value and Worth to the Sufferings of Chriſt; and thence, we may conclude, that it adds Merit and Efficacy to what he underwent in his Humane Nature. Wherefore, 'tis no wonder, that when *Socinus* and his Partiſans deny the *Divinity* of Chriſt, they are ſo eaſily brought to deny his *Satisfaction*, for this depends upon that. If Jeſus had not been the Son of God, 'tis difficult to conceive how he could have Expiated for our Sins; but now being aſſured of that, we have no reſon to doubt of this; for on the account of his Divine Nature, the leaſt drop of his Blood was ſufficient to waſh away the Sins of the whole World. We are ſure that his Sacrifice was truly *Expiatory*, and that his Father accepted of it inſtead of our Suffering; and ſo our Sins are pardon'd, and God is reconcil'd to us, and we to him, and we are inſtated in his Favour, and are Heirs of Eternal Life and Happineſs. But there is no Happineſs without Purity and Holineſs; it is impoſſible we ſhould be in the Favour of God, unleſs we in ſome meaſure partake of his Nature. And ſo I proceed to

The *Third Reaſon and Ground* of our Saviour's Paſſion and Death, or, (which is the ſame thing) the Third *End and Deſign* of them, which was the *Sanctifying* and *Reforming our Lives.* And this was the chieſeſt and ultimate End; for thoſe which I have mention'd before, were all *in order* to this. Chriſt's Atteſting of the Truth, and his exemplary Life, and his ſatisfying of the Divine Juſtice by the Sacrifice of himſelf, and his procuring of Reconciliation and Pardon, had immediate reſpect unto this, and were deſign'd to promote this principal End of all. For we are to remember, that Man being fallen, lay under a double Miſery, *Defilement* and *Guilt*, and the former was the cauſe of the latter; therefore, unleſs that was removed, it would be impoſſible to remove this. But Chriſt's Death was ſerviceable and available towards the taking away of both; and we cannot imagine, that any thing elſe could have been ſo ſerviceable to this purpoſe, and eſpecially for the removing

and

and vanquishing of Sin, which is the thing I am now to make good; and to shew, that this was one great End of Christ's Sufferings. The main Proof of this depends upon the Will of God reveal'd to us in the Writings of the New Testament; and there we are sufficiently informed, that the Death of Christ was intended, not only for the Expiating of our Sins, but the conquering and subduing of them, and the implanting of Holiness in our Hearts and Lives. A great part of the 6th Chapter to the *Romans*, is a clear Eviction of this, where there are such Passages as these, *we are Baptiz'd into Christ's Death*, v. 3. that is, we are obliged, in way of Conformity to him in his Death, to dye to Sin, and to mortifie our Corruptions, *we are buried with him into Death*, v. 4. that is, we are to express a Spiritual Conformity to Christ's Burial, which represents a farther Degree of the Mortification of Sin. *We are planted together in the likeness of his Death*, v. 5. i. e. we are to resemble Christ in his Death, by our dying unto Sin. *Our old Man is Crucified with him, that the Body of Sin might be destroy'd, that henceforth we should not serve Sin*, v. 6. By Virtue of Christ's Crucifixion, our corrupt Nature, is as it were Crucified, the Body, and the Frame of it destroy'd, and the Service of Sin disclaim'd. *Now, if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him*, v. 8. If we be conform'd to Christ in his Death, by dying to Sin, we shall likewise resemble him in his Life, that is, we shall live the Life of Holiness and Righteousness. Thus we see that Christ's Death was design'd for the Death of Sin in us; and this is it which is pursued by the Apostle in so many Verses together.

This End of Christ's Dying is again mention'd by him, 2 *Cor.* 5. 15. *He died for all, that they which live, should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him who died for them*; that is, that they should live Holy and Godly Lives, to the Glory of him who Redeem'd them by his Death. This is call'd *the fellowship of Christ's Sufferings, and being made conformable to his Death*, Phil. 3. 10. The Apostle here, and in other places, acquaints us, that the faithful suffer and die with Christ, they partake of, and have *Fellowship* with his Crucifixion; because this powerfully influences upon their Lives, and is effectual towards the mortifying of their Vices, and begetting the Life of Grace and Holiness in them. Which must needs be, because this was one great End of our Saviour's Dying. As the same Inspired Writer further tells us in *Gal.* 1. 4. *He gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world*; that is, from the Temptations, Snares, and Wickednesses of it, and keep us unspotted in our Lives. Again, in *Tit.* 2. 14. *He gave himself for us*, (namely, by laying down his Life for us) *that he might Redeem us from all Iniquity, and purifie unto himself a peculiar People, zealous of good Works.*

This Glorious Design of our Lord's Crucifixion, is attested by another Apostle, *He, his own self*, saith he, *bare our Sins in his own Body on the Tree, that we being dead to Sin, should live unto Righteousness*, i. e. should live in a Righteous and Holy manner, imitating him who died for us, 1 *Pet.* 2. 24. which the same holy Penman repeats in other words in the next Chapter, *v.* 18. *Christ hath once suffer'd for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God*, i. e. not only that he might reconcile us to God, but that he might render us like him, and make us Partakers of the Divine Nature, and so bring us near to him in Sanctity and Purity of Life. And, again, in the following Chapter, *v.* 1, 2. *For as much as Christ hath suffer'd for us in the flesh, arm your selves likewise with the same mind; for he that hath suffer'd in the flesh hath ceas'd from sin*; (that is, by Virtue of Christ's Sufferings, he hath subdued his Sin) *that he no longer should live to the lusts of Men, but to the Will of God.* And many other Passages might be produc'd out of these Sacred Writings, which expressly assert this Truth, That Christ's Passion was design'd for the Mortifying and Crucifying of our Sins, and for the advancing of a Holy and Virtuous Life.

But as the Holy Writ, so the Reason of the thing it self will convince us of this Truth. For if all Christ's other Undertakings, as his Birth, his Miracles, his whole Life, together with his Preaching and Doctrine, were in order to this; namely, to restore us to our former Purity and Holiness, (as is not denied by any that own'd the Christian Religion) then it will easily be admitted, that his Passion and Death were intended for the same Purpose. There is the same Reason to believe the one, that there is for believing the other, and that is the general and universal Design of the whole Gospel, and of the Author and Founder of it; which is to bring in universal Righteousness, and to purge Men's Lives from the Pollutions of Sin, and to Reform the World. *For this Purpose the Son of God was manifested,*

manifested, (manifested in all his Undertakings) *that he might destroy the Works of the Devil*, i. e. that he might promote the Destruction of Sin. And this End is carried on by Christ's Sufferings and Death, as much as by any of his other Undertakings and Transactions. *How*, and *in what manner* this is done, I will distinctly shew in these Four Particulars:

1. The Death of Christ is serviceable to the mortifying of Sin, as it is a Pattern for us to imitate.
2. As it shews us the heinous Nature of Sin.
3. As it gives Christ a Right and Title to us.
4. As it is a Motive to Thankfulness.

First, I say, the Death of Christ is very useful for the destroying of Sin in us, as 'tis a *Pattern* for us to conform our selves to. For I have made it evident, from several Passages in the New Testament, that Christ's Death was design'd to represent our Dying unto Sin; his Crucifixion was to be exemplified in our being Crucified to the World, and to the Flesh, and to all evil Desires and Appetites. It was the Tradition of the Ancients, that *Adam* was Buried in Mount *Calvary*, the place where Christ Suffer'd on the Cross. This we are sure is true, that where *Christ's Death* and *Passion* prevail, there the *Old Adam* is Buried, there the corrupt Nature is suppress'd, there unlawful Desires and Inclinations are subdued. This is done by way of *Correspondence* and *Conformity* of one to the other; for the Death of Christ, (as well as all his other great Undertakings) is representative of some Spiritual Act or Change in us; and this particularly signifies, and sets forth the Spiritual Crucifixion, the Mortifying of Vice, and the Death of our Sins.

But, *Secondly*, More closely and directly, Christ's Sufferings and Death, are a happy weakning, and diminishing the Power of Sin in us, as they teach us the horrible and heinous Nature of it. We may see the Greatness of the Malady in the wonderful Strangeness of the Remedy. It was a desperate Disease, that could not be reliev'd but by such Means. What think ye? Would there have been such a strange and miraculous thing as this, *God-Man*, *Divinity Incarnate*? Would God have sent down his own Son from Heaven, to assume our Flesh, and sustain the Infirmities of our Natures; yea, (which is much more) would the Son of God have submitted to Affronts, and Injuries, and Persecution, and to the ignominious, and painful Death of the Cross, if the Sins of Mankind were not of such a *horrid Nature*, that they could not be Expiated any other way but this? It is true, some of the * *Schoolmen* heretofore, and some † *Socinians* of late have held, (but with little Reason) that Christ would have been *Incarnate*, tho' Man had not sinn'd; but none of them ever ventur'd to assert, that he would have *Suffer'd*, and *Died*, if Mankind had not fallen. This, and this alone it was that cost him so dear; this caus'd his bitter Agony, his bloody Sweat, his Bleeding on the Cross for us; for such was the Nature of Sin, that it call'd for Vengeance and Punishment. The Wound was such, that it could not be cured but by the Blood of Jesus; the Stain and Pollution was so deep, that nothing but this could wash it away. When therefore, we consider, how rigorously Sin was punish'd in God's own Son, in him who was Harmless, Undefiled, and Separate from Sinners; when we consider, that *our* Sins were *his* only by Imputation; he was made Sin for us, who himself knew no Sin, and yet he suffer'd, as if they were his *own*; when we consider this, and ponder it, we cannot but discern, and be sensible of the most heinous Quality of Sin, which is so absolutely contrary to God's Nature, that he would not permit it to go unpunish'd. The Sufferings and Death of Christ, are the best Glass to see Sin in, and thence to be convinc'd of the Odiousness of it; and, (as the Consequence of that) to forsake and abandon it. If we attentively view Christ Crucified for us, that Spectacle will soon render Vice abominable to us, because it will discover how abominable it is to God himself. Never did he so fully and visibly declare his Hatred of Sin, by all the Judgments that he executed in the World, as he did in the bloody Passion and Cross of Christ. Never in any Instance, was the Almighty's loathing and abhorring of Vice so manifested, as in the Sufferings of his own Son; and therefore, if these will not represent it odious to us, nothing can. This, without doubt, was the Intent of Heaven, that we should set them before our Eyes continually, and be excited thence to a perfect Hatred of every evil Way: For questionless they are a powerful Instrument and Means of mortifying and subduing our Lusts, and suppressing the Power and Dominion of Sin.

* Scotus, Rupertus, Alexander Hales, Catharinus, Pighius, &c.
† Smalc. cont. Frantz. disp. 12.

Thirdly, They are so as they give Christ a Right and Title to us. *Ye are bought with a Price*, ye are redeemed by the Blood of Jesus paid to God for your Ransom, *therefore glorifie God in your Body, and in your Spirit, which are God's* by Redemption, 1 *Cor.* 6. 20. There is an absolute Obligation now laid upon us to Obedience, both in Body and Soul, by the Sufferings and Death of Christ for us, whereby we are redeem'd. Now, (as the Apostle saith in the foregoing Verse) *we are not our own*, but are at another's Disposal altogether: Christ is our *Proprietor and Owner*, and no Creature hath any Propriety in us, unless it be derivative and subordinate. By the Right of Dominion which he hath purchased over us, he is become our absolute Disposer, and we must wholly resign ourselves to his Will. He claims us as his own, because he bought us with a Price, even that of his Blood; for he died (as well as rose again) *to this very End, that he might be Lord both of the Dead and Living*, Rom. 14. 9. As he is our *Lord*, we are engaged to do him Service; as he hath a full Propriety in us, we are bound to yield up ourselves entirely to him. Thus we see, That the Death of Christ on this Consideration (as well as on that before mention'd) is a great Instrument and Means of working Mortification in us, and of enlivening all our Vertues and Graces.

Fourthly and *Lastly*, It must needs be so, because it is a powerful Motive to Thankfulness and Obedience. Christ Jesus may well be thought to speak to us from the Cross in such Language as *this*: "Here I hang bleeding for your Sakes, "and in your Stead; here I undergo unspeakable Pain and Torment to redeem "you from all Pain. Behold! I stretch forth my Hands to take you into my "Embraces: Behold my *Side pierced* and my *Heart opened*, that you may see "there what Love I bear to you. Will you, can you then continue in your "Sins when I have suffered these Things for you? Will you not be perswaded "to deny yourselves, since I have not only done so, but taken up my Cross? "Will you shew yourselves such ungrateful Wretches as to slight all my Sufferings, "and to disregard all my extraordinary Enterprizes of Kindness for you? O be "not so base and disingenuous: But seeing I have condescended to die for you, "that you may live, give Proof of your being really Thankful for so transcen-"dent a Favour vouchsafed to you. As *I learned Obedience by the Things that I* "*suffered*; so I teach you the same Lesson by them. Certainly, you cannot but "shew yourselves obsequious and obedient unto me, when you consider what I "have undergone for you. Since I have done and suffered so much for you, "think nothing too much to do or suffer, nothing too dear to Part with for me. "Refuse no Pains, Trouble, or Death itself for my Sake: But especially, I call "upon you to part with your beloved Sins, to crucifie your Lusts and inordinate "Affections, to offer up your Souls and Bodies a living Sacrifice to me, and to "make it your great Business and your chiefest Pleasure to do what is pleasing "to me, that is, to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present World: "For nothing is more acceptable to me, than your conscientious Discharge of "your Duty in all these Respects.

Thus there is a powerful Rhetorick in the Wounds and bleeding Gashes of the crucified Jesus, to perswade us to forsake our Sins, and to lead Holy Lives. There is a mighty Influence in the Death of Christ for this Purpose. Some deluded Papists talk of the Wonders and Miracles wrought by some supposed Fragments and Pieces of Christ's Cross; but this we are sure of, That there is a wonderful Value to be derived from his Cross, *i. e.* his Suffering on it. This cures all our Infirmities, this heals all our Maladies, this cleanses both Soul and Body from Sin, and inspires us with Life and Vigour in the Ways of Righteousness. Even on a principle of *Gratitude*, the Death of Jesus is a strong Incitement to Vertue and Holiness. *God brought forth his People*, (saith the Psalmist) *with Joy, and his chosen with Gladness, that they might observe his Statutes, and keep his Laws*, Psal. 105. 43. That Deliverance of the *Israelites* out of *Egyptian* Thraldom, was a Type of the great Redemption by Christ Jesus; and you see that was the *End* and *Design* of it, that we should observe and keep God's Laws; *that* (as it was more particularly expressed afterwards) *we being deliver'd out of the Hands of our Enemies, might serve him without fear* (i. e. without a slavish *Fear*, and such as banishes the entire *Love* of God and Goodness) *in Holiness and Righteousness before him all the Days of our Life*. This was the End of Christ's Crucifixion: It was

was intended to promote the Spiritual Crucifixion of our Sins and Lusts: His Blood was to purifie our Souls: He suffer'd that we might be able to deny Ungodliness and Worldly Lusts, and to perfect Holiness in the fear of God. So much for the Second General Head of my Discourse, under which I undertook to assign the *Principal Reasons and Causes* of Christ's Passion; and I hope I have sufficiently back'd them with Testimonies of Scripture, which is the great Judge in this Cause.

I am in the *Third* and Last Place, to shew what are the proper *Inferences* from the foregoing Doctrine.

And 1. It is fit and reasonable that we should believe and assert the Truth of it; namely, That Christ did truly and really suffer for us. There were some that began betimes to oppose this Article of our Faith: *Simon Magus* impudently denied that Christ was come, or that he suffered any Thing of the *Jews* (as the ancient Fathers that writ against him, abundantly inform us.) The *Gnosticks* denied, That Christ *really suffer'd*, and in order to that, That he was a *true Man*: As appears from *Ignatius's Epistles*, the main design of which is to prove the contrary. That good Father insists upon this with great Earnestness, that Christ ἀληθῶς, not δοξαστικῶς, in Opposition to some perverse Men of that Age who held Christ was not truly Man, and that his Sufferings were not real. *Basilides*, a notorious Gnostick, maintain'd that our Saviour did * not suffer at all, but that *Simon* the *Cyrenian* was crucified in his stead. There was another set of Hereticks who held that God the *Father suffer'd*, whence they had the Denomination of *Patripassians*: So backward of old were heretical and depraved Minds, to acknowledge this Article which I have been treating of. And so it hath been since; *Mahomet* in his † *Alcoran* would perswade his Followers that Christ did not suffer, did not die on the Cross, but one in his Shape and Likeness. And the *Familists* and *Quakers*, and the whole rabble of Enthusiasts despise the History of Christ's Sufferings (as well as of all his other Undertakings and Actions) and turn them into Allegory and Mystery.

* Irenæus adv. hæres. l. 1. c. 23.

† Azora 11.

There is another sort of Men (as pernicious as these) who, though they acknowledge that Christ suffer'd, yet they deny the Efficacy of his Sufferings. Take their blasphemous Infidelity in their own Words, which are these: ‖ *All that Christ suffered can of itself have no more Virtue in it, than if any meer Man had undergone the same.* * *Though now it is the vulgar Sentiment of Christians, that Christ merited Salvation for us by his Death, and fully satisfied for our Sins, yet this is a deceitful and erroneous Opinion, and extreamly dangerous.* And some Hundreds of Passages of the like Nature might he produc'd out of those Writers. Yea, though it is true, that † these Men will vouchsafe to call Christ's Death an *Expiatory Sacrifice*, yet when they come to explain it, they hold no such Thing in a strict and proper Sense, *i. e.* That Christ's Death was that Motive which prevailed with God to forgive Sins. And it may be observed, That the Texts in the Apostolical *Epistles* which *Grotius* makes Use of in his *Book de Satisf.* to prove Christ's Satisfaction, and that his Death was a proper Sacrifice of Expiation, are otherwise interpreted by him, or by some Body for him in his *Annotations*. A ‖ later Writer tells us, That [because *Sacrifices* were the chief Worship among the *Jews*, therefore in the New Testament all the Offices of Religion are express'd by the Name of *Sacrifice*, and so the Death of Christ is called a *Sacrifice*, because it was the chief Part of that Religion] and he adds, it was only a *Metaphorical and improper Sacrifice*. Thus it is too plain and evident to be doubted of, that the *Socinians* detract from the *Virtue* of Christ's Sufferings, and endeavour to evade all those Places in Holy Writ whereby it is established. They boggle at express Words of Scripture, and are laboriously subtile and nice in offering other Interpretations. But he that faithfully scans the Meaning of the Apostles in their Epistles, and is a true Son of rectify'd Reason, cannot but acknowledge the Doctrine which we have asserted; he cannot but see that the New Testament presents him every where with abundant Texts to prove that Christ suffered and died in our stead, and was a propitiatory Sacrifice. Wherefore, let us firmly believe and be perswaded of the

‖ *Quicquid passus est Christus, nullam vim majorem per se habere potest quam si quilibet purus homo idem passus est.* Socin. de servat. par. 3. c. 4.

* *Et si nunc vulgo Christiani sentiunt Christum morte suâ nobis salutem meruisse, & pro peccatis nostris plenariè satisfecisse, tamen ista sententia est fallax, & erronea, & admodum perniciosa.* Cat. Racov.

† Socin. de Christo servat. l. 2. c. 13. Crell cont. Grot. de Satisfact. c. 10.

* Le Clerc. Art. Crit. Par. 1. cap. 1.

the Truth of this Doctrine, which is so plainly asserted by the infallible Penmen of the Scriptures, and is express'd by them in all those Words and Terms which we could desire; let us constantly adhere to this, and make it the Matter of our Christian Faith.

2*dly*, Let us not be ashamed of a crucified Christ. When the *Jesuits* lately in *China* preached the Gospel, and propagated Christianity amongst that People, they were silent concerning the *Death of Christ*, and never acquainted them that he was crucified, though this is the main Point of Christianity. But those cunning Men excused themselves by alledging that it would hinder the propagating of the Gospel, if they should let the *Chinese* know that our Saviour suffered such an ignominious Death. This was an ill Course that they took, because the Passion of Christ is necessary to be known in order to a right Understanding of the Christian Religion, and the true Design of it. But this indeed is most true, that ignorant and vain Minds are exceedingly prejudiced against this Doctrine, and look upon a crucified Saviour, as most despicable and reproachful. So it was of Old, and so it is at this Day. By Way of Contempt and Odium, Christ is called by the *Jews*, *Talui, he that was hang'd.* And 'tis well known, that the *Mahometans* most blasphemously upbraided the Christians for their *crucified Jesus*, and boast that they are the Masters and Keepers of his Sepulchre. As for the *Heathens*, nothing was more ignominious and disgraceful among them than this: And therefore that great Scoffer *Lucian*, calls Christ ἀνεσκολοπισμένον ἐκεῖνον σοφιστὴν, *that crucified Impostor.* It was generally objected by the Pagans against the Christians, that they worshipp'd one * *who died upon the Cross*, that they ador'd *a dead and crucified God.* And this they thought was a sufficient disgrace to Christianity and the Professors of it: But *Arnobius* in answer to this Cavil, tells them, "That the Vileness and "Ignominiousness of Christ's Death, changes not the Quality and Nature of his "Doctrine and Life. *Pythagoras*, saith he, was burnt alive, but doth this cruel "and violent Death in the least detract from his excellent Sayings and Precepts? "Have his Writings lost their Vertue thereby? So *Socrates* was condemn'd and "put to Death by the *Athenians*; are therefore his Works that treat of Moral "Vertues and the Duties of Mankind, of no Force and Authority? Are his "Philosophy and Manners disparag'd by that? Have they no Worth or Reality "because of the unjust Condemnation of that great Man? Many other excel-"lent Persons, as *Aquilius*, *Trebonius*, *Regulus*, have suffered violent and igno-"minious Deaths: Are they therefore to be scorn'd and reproach'd because of "that kind of End? No surely! ‖No Man that lived innocently and vertuously "can be infamous for the Manner of his Death. Then he tells them, That they "themselves worship *Bacchus*, *Æsculapius*, and *Romulus*, who were taken away "by grievous and violent Deaths: And therefore, whilst they pay a Reverence "to these, and yet vilifie our Saviour, they confute themselves.

This was learnedly and bravely said, in reply to the fore-mentioned Objection; but we have *greater* Things to say. It is so far from being reproachful to own the crucified Jesus, that it is our greatest Honour and Glory. *God forbid*, saith the Apostle, *That I should Glory, save in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ*, Gal. 6. 14. that is, in the Sacrifice of Christ on the Cross, which is the only Thing that I and all true believers can boast of, and put Confidence in: Because it is for this alone that we are accepted of God, and find Favour with him, though we be sinful and polluted Creatures, and have no worth of our own. Here then is the only Matter of our boasting, that the Son of God vouchsafed to honour us in this high Degree, that when we were Enemies to him, he reconciled us by his Blood, that he made an Atonement and Expiation for our Sins by his Death. Whence the foresaid Apostle tells his *Corinthians*, That *he determin'd not to know any Thing among them save Jesus Christ, and him crucified*, 1 Cor. 2. 2. that is, he was fully resolv'd to urge upon them that Part of the Gospel, which seemed most Contemptible and Odious, and which Humane Wisdom did most boggle at; namely, the Sufferings and Death of Christ. This was the grand Theme of his Discourses and Sermons; this was the frequent Subject of his Epistles, and this was it which all true Christians were to look upon as their greatest Honour and Glory. Wherefore let us not be ashamed to own and profess a crucified Saviour.

* חתלוי Suspensus ille.

† Patibulo affixus interiit. *Arnob. adv. Gent. lib.* 1.

‖ Nemo unquàm innocens malè interemptus infamis est.

3*dly*,

3*dly*, Let us make his Passion the Matter of our Contemplation, and endeavour to be affected with it. Let us briefly revolve in our Thoughts the various Parts and Circumstances of it, till our Hearts be throughly moved and warm'd with the Consideration of them. Let us represent to our Minds how this Passion began in the Garden in *Gethsemane*, where he did even sweat Blood: How he was betray'd by *Judas* to the Priests and People, who dragg'd him through the Streets of *Jerusalem* from one Tribunal to another. They hurried him first to *Annas*, then to *Caiaphas*, then to the *Sanhedrim*, then to *Pilate*, from him to *Herod*; then back to *Pilate*. He was tried both in the Ecclesiastical and Civil Courts; in the former, he was accused of Blasphemy, in the latter of Treason. And with these *False Accusations*, and with his *unjust Condemnation*, were mixed all those Insolences, Affronts, Abuses, and Injuries, which the Evangelists particularly mention; as that he was scoffed and rail'd at, spit upon, buffetted, whipt, and scourg'd: He was Blind-folded and then smitten: He was scornfully and deridingly array'd in Purple, and a Scepter of Reed put into his Hand: His sacred Head was prick'd and pierc'd, wounded and torn with a Crown of Thorns. And then they bowed their Knees and scoffingly saluted him; they reproachfully mock'd and revil'd him. Call all this to Mind, and how his Disciples and Apostles fled from him, and how he was left destitute of all Humane Help and Aid. Remember how he was worn out with Fasting and Watching, and became so weak and faint, that he could not carry his Cross, but another was forced to do it. And now recount how he ascended Mount *Calvary*, and finished this Tragical Scene in that Place where Malefactors were wont to receive the Reward of their Villainy: And accordingly he had two Thieves for his Fellow-Sufferers. Think how his Hands and Feet were nailed to the Cross, and how exquisite the Pain and Torment was which he underwent on that very Account. Remember how the malicious *Jews* gave him Gall and Vinegar to drink, and rudely scoffed at him whilst he hung on the Cross. Remember his loud and doleful Exclamations before he gave up the Ghost, so great and terrible, That they shook the Frame of the World, and put the Universe out of Order. Lastly, Recount the Length and Duration of *Christ's Passion*, which was Eighteen Hours continued; namely from the Time of his Agony in the Garden about Nine a Clock on *Thursday*-Night, till Three a Clock in the Afternoon the Day following. O that we may seriously contemplate these Things, and so long dwell upon them, that we may be deeply affected with the Sense of them! * St. *Augustine* tells us, That he shed Tears when he read the Destruction of *Troy*; though it was a Thing that happen'd so many Years before, and though it concern'd him not; yea, though perhaps it was a feigned Story. And this is no unusual Thing: Some are moved and stirred with counterfeit Relations; and the doleful Narratives even of Romances beget really Passions in them. And shall we be cold and unconcern'd at the hearing or reading of the History of the Sufferings of our dear Lord and Saviour, which, as it is most True and Real, so it is most Doleful and Tragical, and most fit to excite our warmest Passions? Here we cannot immoderately indulge our Grief; and therefore let us set the bleeding and dying *Jesus* before our Eyes, to stir up our Sorrow and Lamentations, and to render our Meditations on his Death the more useful and advantageous to us.

* Confess. l. 1.

4*thly*, See here and be sensible of the true Worth and Value of Humane Souls. Christ's Passion and Death teach us this effectually; for they let us know how *great a Price* was paid for our immortal Souls. This is the usual Way of estimating Things; we determine their Value by the Price that is given for them. And in our *present* Case certainly we may conclude alike. If Christ laid down his Life, and shed his precious Blood for us, we may infallibly inferr that our Souls and their Eternal Welfare are of no mean Importance. Precious in the Sight of the Lord is the *Death of his Saints*, much more of his only begotten Son, whose Dignity and Merit are unvaluable; and therefore from the preciousness of his Death, we may conclude that of our Souls, for the ransoming of which he laid down his Life, and became obedient unto Death, even the Death of the Cross. The inestimable Worth and Eminency of the *Person* who undertook the Redemption of Mankind, must needs augment the Greatness of that Enterprize: The Salvation wrought by one of so transcendent Merits cannot but be exceeding Great. If all the Kings and Emperors on Earth had laid down their Lives and shed their Royal Blood, or (as the Apostle speaks of the *Tongues* of not only *Men*, but of *Angels*, so) if we could suppose the

the *Blood* of those glorious and exalted Creatures, and that it could be offer'd as one common Sacrifice, yet this would be mean and insignificant in Comparison of that All-sufficient Oblation made upon the Cross by the Son of God, whose Worth infinitely surpasses that of all Creatures and finite Beings. Whence we infallibly gather that the *Souls* of Men are of great and unspeakable Worth, they being purchased at so dear a Rate. *We are redeemed* (saith St. *Peter* 1 *Ep. Ch.* 1. *v.* 18.) *not with corruptible Things, as Silver and Gold* which Things though with us they are in great Esteem, yet in the Sight of God they are nothing worth) *but with the precious Blood of Christ, as of a Lamb without Blemish and without Spot.* The Eternal Son of God knew well the true Worth and Value of Humane Spirits, when he paid so dear a Price for them. He might with respect to *us*, say as that *Chief Captain, with a great Sum obtain'd I this Freedom*, this Redemption and Liberty of Mankind. He paid an infinite Price to set us free from Sin and Satan, he gave *himself* a Ransom for us; and 'tis certain there could be no greater Thing given. Consider this, and know your own Value, be sensible how dear and precious your Souls are.

5*thly*, Admire and be astonished at the matchless Love and Mercy of Heaven. Nothing doth commend these so much as the Sufferings and Death of our Saviour. When *Abraham* would have sacrificed his Son, the Lord said to him, *now I know of a Truth that thou loveſt me*, Gen. 22. 12. Much greater Reason have we to conclude that God hath abundantly loved us, when we see that he hath given his only Son to be a Sacrifice for us, and when we see that this his only Son did actually offer up himself for us. There are Three Ways to express Love; namely, the Affection itself, Doing, and Suffering. Now, 'tis certain, That Christ did by all these Ways express and declare his extraordinary Love and Kindness to us, but more signally by the last; for his *Sufferings* were the highest Demonstration that could possibly be given of the Love he bore to us. *Greater Love hath no Man than this, that a Man lay down his Life for his Friends*, John 15. 13. That is, he shew'd the Greatness of his Love in dying for those who were his Enemies, that he might make them his Friends. *God so loved the World that he gave his only begotten Son*; namely, to lay down his Life for us, *John* 3. 16. He *so loved us*, that is, in so high a Degree, that no Tongue can tell, no Heart can conceive it: His Mercy and Kindness are beyond Expression, beyond Imagination. Happy that Soul which every Day loseth itself in the Meditation of this unconceivable Goodness and infinite Bounty of God in Christ Jesus our Saviour. *In this was manifested the Love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the World*, viz. to die for us, *that we might live through him*, 1 John 4. 9. For a King to die for a rebellious Subject, is an unheard of Thing: For a Judge to condemn his Son to save the Malefactor, was never known. But tho' there is no Precedent of this among Men, yet this is done by our Heavenly King and Judge: And this is the Case that is now before us. So great was his Philanthropy and Mercy, That he sent his Beloved and Only Son to die for Rebels and Malefactors, for the worst of Sinners, and the vilest of Men. It was the infinite Mercy of God the Father to transferr the Punishment which was due to us upon his Son: It was the infinite Love of his Son to submit to the worst of Deaths, *i. e.* a shameful, and painful, and accursed Death. And I may truly say, he would be content to leave all his present Glories, and die once more for Men, if we could suppose and imagine it to be necessary for the procuring of their Happiness. It behoves us then to admire and extol the transcendent Love of our dear Lord. If our Souls were never so groveling, this is able to exalt them, and to elevate them to the highest pitch of Admiration; Wherefore with the most consummate Devotion let us bless and praise God's Holy Name, for the unparallelled Sufferings and Death of Christ Jesus for us.

Lastly, I will sum up all in this General Inference, Let us endeavour to feel the Efficacy of Christ's Passion and Death in our Hearts and Consciences, and in the whole Course of our Lives. There is a crucifying of Christ *within us*, as well as on the *Cross*, and that was intended to be promoted by this, as I have shewed before. Wherefore let us not think that we have sufficiently improved the Doctrine of *Christ's Passion*, till we have had Experience of this, till our Consciences are purged from their Defilements, and till this inward Change be attested by the outward and visible Demeanour of our Lives. How unsuitably to the Cross of Christ do most Men act, who yet call themselves by the Name of Christians, and seem to glory in it? In

In their Words perhaps they seem to magnifie the Virtue and Merit of his Blood, but do they not palpably despise and vilifie it by their Actions? Do not too many shut their Eyes against that Light which shines so clearly in the Gospel; do they not wilfully neglect the Discoveries of God's Will, and are they not content to be ignorant of their Duty, that so they may not be troubled with the Performance of it? Do not Men generally commit those Sins with *Delight*, which cost the Blessed Redeemer so many bitter *Groans* upon the Cross? Are not the Sacraments of Christ's Institution (and which are the Representations and visible Signs and Seals of his Grace) too frequently despised and dis-esteemed? Are not the Body and Blood of Christ in the Eucharist trampled under Feet, either by those who unpreparedly approach to it, or contemptuously and contumeliously stay from it? Do we not behold Men acting over again the Part of those cursed *Jews* and *Romans* who had a Hand in our Saviour's Murder? They betray him, and perfidiously sell him for a little Gain, for a little Pleasure. They spit on his Face by Slanders and Reproaches cast on his Saints: They pierce and tear his Body with Oaths and Curses, prophaning the Name, and the Blood, and the Wounds of Christ with their blasphemous Execrations. In a Word, by their irreligious and prophane Lives, *they crucifie to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open Shame*, Heb. 6. 6.

But let that sharp Expostulation of the Author to the *Hebrews* be attended to, *If the Word spoken by Angels (viz.* under the Law) *was stedfast, and every Transgression and Disobedience received a just Recompence of Reward, how shall we escape if we neglect so great Salvation?* Heb. 2. 2, 3. And again, *If he that despised Moses's Law, died without Mercy under two or three Witnesses, of how much soever Punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath troden under Foot the Son of God, and hath counted the Blood of the Covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy Thing, and hath done despite to the Spirit of Grace*, Heb. 10. 28, 29. The walking unworthy of Christ's Undertaking for us, but especially the vilifying of his Sufferings and Blood, is the great damning Crime; and therefore above all Things, let us beware that we be not Guilty of such Folly and Madness; let us not evilly entreat that Person who came on Purpose to oblige us; let us not barbarously abuse our best Friend: But let it be our great Care and Concern to live answerably to such extraordinary Kindness; that is, to live to his Service and Glory. To which End, it will behove us to urge this upon our Minds with great Seriousness and Earnestness, that though in Consideration of the Sufferings of his Son, God was pleas'd to offer Pardon of Sin and Eternal Life, yet it is upon Condition of Repentance and Holiness of Life. If we would effectually reap the Fruit and Advantage of Christ's Meritorious Passion and Satisfaction, we must renounce and abandon our Sins. Christ's Death will avail us nothing, unless we feel the Power of his Death within us for the mortifying of our Lusts. Though Christ hath suffer'd for us, yet we have no claim to the Pardon of our Sins, or any other Benefit of *his Passion*, till we perform the Conditions of the New Covenant. To conclude, Then we rightly and truly understand and improve the Doctrine of Christ's Passion when we are so sensible of our Sins, which were the Cause of Christ's Crucifixion, that we utterly abhor them and forsake them.

THE

THE LATTER CLAUSE OF THE IV ARTICLE.

He descended into Hell.

In treating of which the *Divers Opinions* of the Learned concerning Christ's *Descent into Hell* are particularly Examin'd. The *Author*'s Interpretation is propounded, and Establish'd by *Authority* and *Reason*. Together with his *Thoughts* concerning Christ's *Burying*.

IT is added in the Creed (as an Appendix to this Fourth Article) that Christ *descended into Hell*, and this is adjoyn'd as part of His *Passion*. It is true this part of the Article is not mention'd by St. *Ambrose*, or by St. *Augustine*, in their Expositions of this Creed. Nay, it must be granted that it is not to be found in the Ancient Creeds either of the *Roman* or *Eastern* Churches: Only it is inserted into that of *Aquileia*, in which it was used about Four Hundred Years after Christ, not before that we know of. But tho' the Ancientest Creeds make no mention of this *descent into Hell*, yet the thing itself hath been received in the Church, and this Article hath not been refused by the most Pious and Learned Christians. None of the *Reformed* Churches have boggled at it, only there hath been some difference about the *Explaining* of it. And our own Church particularly hath retain'd this part of the Apostles Creed, but there have been some Disputes about the *meaning* of it. I will briefly represent the different Sense of Learned Men, both in our own, and other Churches, and I will propound an Interpretation which I apprehend to be most agreeable to Truth.

First, that Learned Hebrician Mr. *Hugh Broughton*, and others understand it of Christ's going into *Paradise*; which they endeavour to prove from *Luke* 23. 42. *this Day shalt thou be with me in Paradise*. Whence they inferr that himself was that Day in Paradise, that is, his Soul went to Heaven. And besides, the Word ἅδης, which is here used in this Article, being of a large Signification, and denoting the place of the *Blessed*, as well as of the *Damned*, they take it in the former Sense, and understand it of Christ's going to the Region of Happy Souls: He went whither the Spirits of Holy and Righteous Men go, that is, to Heaven.

In Answer to which, I say, It is granted that Christ's Soul went immediately to the place of the Blessed, which is by St. *Luke*, or rather by our Saviour himself, styled *Paradise*. And moreover, it is granted that the Word ἅδης signifies sometimes the place of the Deceased, whether it be *Heaven* or *Hell*. But tho' these two things be conceded, yet there is no ground at all, for the aforesaid Interpretation of this Article, for 1. the Word κατῆλθεν, *he descended*, carries the Sense another way. Heaven, which is called Paradise, is always represented as a place *Above*, and therefore *descending* thither cannot possibly be applied to it. This would be as absurd as that Actor's carriage, who when he cried out, *O Heaven*, pointed to the *Earth*. And they do but render themselves *more* ridiculous, when they not only say that by *Hell* is meant *Heaven*. but that by *descending* thither is to be understood *ascending* into Heaven. Again 2*ly*, If we consider the frame and make of the Creed,

Creed, we shall not readily be imposed upon by such an Interpretation, for we can't but observe, that presently after this Article of the *descent* of Christ, there is added expresly His *Ascending into Heaven* as a distinct Article, and opposite to the *descent* spoken of before. So that the very contexture and tenour of the Articles, are sufficient to baffle this weak Exposition. And I suppose there is none so silly as to say, that Christ did both, that is, He *descended* and *ascended* into *Heaven.*

Secondly, it is the opinion of *Calvin* and *Beza* and some others, that by Christ's *descending into Hell*, his meant his Suffering the same Pains and Torments that are in Hell. Tho' he was not in Hell locally, yet he was there (say they) as to the tortures he underwent in his Soul, whilst he hung on the Cross: And on this Account * he may be said to *descend into Hell*, because he had experience of the Pains that the damned in that place Suffer.

* Si ad inferos descendisse dicitur, nihil mirum est, quum eam mortem pertulerit quæ sceleratis ab irato Deo infligitur. *Calv. Instit.* l. 2. c. 16.

But this Exposition is precarious and groundless, because tho' we should grant (which some think cannot safely be done) that Christ endured the Pains of Hell upon the Cross, yet it follows not thence that He *descended into Hell*: Nay, indeed, when the aformention'd Expositors assert, that Christ suffer'd the Torments of Hell *on the Cross*, it is evident that they acknowledge that he was not *in Hell*, but only that he suffer'd those Pains which the damned in Hell suffer, and consequently did not *descend* to that place. Again, the suffering of the infernal Pains cannot be meant by *descending into Hell* in this Article of the Creed, because this *descending* is here put after *Crucifying, and Death, and Burial.* Therefore this *descending* speaks of something that follow'd these, and for that reason we can't interpret it of any thing that happened whilst our Saviour was on the Cross. Moreover, it is to be observed that the *descent* here is opposed to an *ascent*, [He descended into Hell] and [He ascended into Heaven:] which intimates to us, that it is to be understood of a *Local* Descent, because the other is meant of an Ascent that is such. For these reasons I can't admit of the foregoing Exposition.

Thirdly, some understand the *descent* in this Article concerning the *State of the Dead.* That is, say they, Christ was for a time under the Dominion of Death. *Hades* according to them is remaining in Death, and continuing in a separate State. * Dr. *Hammond* embraces this notion of the Word, and undertakes to prove from several Authors, that it signifies not a place, but the State of the departed, whether Miserable or Happy. ᾅδης is *Qu.* ἀιδης that is, *Invisible*, and so that ἀφανισμός, that Invisible State of the Dead, whether good or bad, is denoted by it. He tells us that *the Writers of the Church had this notion of the phrase in the Creed*, and he labours to prove it, from what *Theophylact* saith on *Rom.* 4. 25. and *Eph.* 4. 9. And other Authors, besides him, quote that of the said Father, on *Luke* 16. *When the Soul saith he, leaves the Body, it is not seen: This is that which is call'd* ᾅδης *or the unseen place.* And *Irenæus*, and *Origen*, and *Lactantius*, and some other Writers of the Church are cited, for applying the Word to the good and bad Souls departed, and their Invisible State in another World. The *Assembly of Divines* in their *Catechism*, took to this way of interpreting the Word ᾅδης in the Creed; and so hath the late Bishop of *Chichester*, Dr. *Williams*, in his Catechetical Exposition of this Article of the Creed; and the like is done by the most Learned, Dr. *Wake*, the present Bishop of *Lincoln*, in his Excellent Comment on the Church Catechism.

* *Annotat. on* Mat. 11. 23.

But I'm enclin'd to think that these Expositors made choice of this Interpretation, not from a firm perswasion that this is the genuine meaning of the Article, but rather they did it to evade the *Popish Opinion* of Christ's descent into Hell. It is probable they fix'd this Sense on the Words, that they might beat Men off from understanding the Article in Favour of that groundless Doctrine, which the Church *of Rome* hath espoused, and which some of other Churches have not disliked, yea, have maintain'd, because they thought there is foundation for it in this Article of the Apostles Creed. But the best way to evade a wrong Opinion, is to confute it by substantial Arguments, and not to take up another wrong or doubtful Opinion to do it. Such is this concerning the acception of the Word ᾅδης, namely, that it denotes the *condition* or *State of the Dead.* Which is a *notion wholly New*, saith Bishop *Pearson*; and he proves it hence, because none of the *Ancient Fathers*, nor any *Heathen Authors* use the word *Hades* in this Sense, but always for a *place* into which separate Souls are conveyed. Especially as to the *Fathers*, it may truly be said, that tho' they differed about the Place, yet they all held that it signified

some place or other, and not a State or Condition, notwithstanding what is suggested before, concerning *Irenæus*, *Origen*, and others. Accordingly we are to think that the Compilers of the Creed meant by Christ's descent into ἅδης, not a *State* that he was entred into, but some certain *receptacle* and *place* that he went to.

To make this good, I offer these following Considerations; First, *to descend into a State* is a very improper way of speaking, especially to *descend* to the State of Happy Souls, which go immediately to *Heaven*, as they interpret the Words. Besides, here is in this and the neighbouring Article, a plain opposition between *descending* and *ascending*: So that this very thing, will direct us to the meaning of this passage: For *descending* imports a motion towards some place *Below*; as *ascending* denotes going to some place *Above*. Which confutes the Opinion of those that understand *Hades* of a *State*. Again, this Interpretation implies the descent of Christ's *Soul*, for the Patrons of it don't imagine that Christ's *Body* descended thither. Now, 'tis evident all along, that the Article speaks of the Body of Christ; for thus it runs, *He was Crucified, Dead, and Buried, and Descended into* ἅδης. He was *Crucified* as to his Body, for that was fastned to the Cross: He *Died* as to his Body, for his other part was not capable of Dying: He was *Buried* also as to this part only, for his Soul was no more capable of Burial than of Death. It is highly reasonable therefore to understand his *descent* concerning his Corporeal Part, which shews it is meant of a Place, not a Condition.

Further, I argue thus, the *State of the Dead*, is either the State of the *good* or of the *bad*: The former are in Heaven, the latter in Hell, and there is no middle State or Place. Now, the *State* here spoken of (as they think) can't be meant of either of these; not of the former, for to say Christ *descended to Heaven* is sufficiently absurd, as hath been noted before; not of the latter, for *Hell* being the unchangeable State of the Damned, it was not a State befitting our Saviour. For tho' it should be granted that whilst he was on the Cross, He underwent *some* of those Pains, which the Damned in Hell Suffer; yet when the Work was finished (as he said himself) on the Cross, there was no more *Suffering* that he was capable of: And therefore we can't interpret the *descent* of Christ, concerning his going to Hell. Nor indeed do the Patrons of this Opinion which I'm now treating of, hold any such thing. But this is that which I object to them, that they understand ἅδης concerning the *State* of those that are Deceased, and yet that State is neither Heaven nor Hell. Lastly, if we interpret ἅδης concerning the State of the Dead, we must be forc'd to admit of a *Tautology*, because it had been said before in the Creed, *he was Dead*. He must be very nice, that can distinguish between these Two, *Dying* and *descending into the State of the Dead*; for 'tis certain that all that are Dead, are in the State of the Dead. Thus when we come to Examine this Interpretation, it is plain that it is not to be imbraced by us.

Fourthly, there are others, who rejecting the notion of a State or Condition, and of a single Place, fansie a *Common Place* or *General Rendezvous* of all Souls after Death, and this they apprehend is meant by ἅδης or *Hell* in the Creed. A late worthy * Writer of our own hath Adopted this Opinion, and tells us that there is an *Invisible Receptacle*, that receives all Mens Souls, there is one *common dwelling* of separated Spirits, good and bad, godly and wicked, sav'd and damn'd, and Christ's Soul descended into this place. But I can see no ground for this Assertion, but the Vulgar Opinion among the Ancient Christians, that there was such a general Receptacle or place of Custody for all humane Souls, and that there they remain'd from Death, till the last Resurrection, and shall not be in Heaven or Hell, till that Time. But this was not the Opinion of *all* the Ancients: † *Origen* declares against it, and holds that the Souls of the Saints since Christ's Resurrection, go to Paradise. And of this Judgment were St. *Ambrose* and St. *Jerom*: And generally the *Western* Churches held the same, and laid aside that other conceit which had obtain'd among the Fathers of the *Eastern* Church. However, I will briefly consider the *Reasons*, which the forcited Author hath given of his persuasion of Christ's descent into the common Receptacle of Souls, or Hell, after his Death, for by attending to what some of the Fathers had said, this Learned Man concludes, that there is such a Receptacle, and then he frames certain *Reasons* and *Ends* of Christ's descent thither.

* In his History of the Apostles Creed. *chap.* 4.

† Homil. de Engastrym.

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The first, he saith, is to *sanctify and sweeten to us the State of Separation, to abate its dread and terror, and to render it the more comfortable and Joyful, in that our Head and Saviour endured it before us.* But this can't possibly be applied to the common Receptacle of Souls, where the *bad* as well as the *good* are, where the *wicked* as well as the *righteous* are suppos'd to inhabit; for then we must say that the separate State of the former, as well as the latter, is *sanctified* and *sweetned*, and the *horrour* of it is taken off, and it becomes *Comfortable* and *Joyful*: Which is a Position which I believe few will entertain.

Secondly, he assigns this as another Reason of Christ's descent, *because it was a necessary and principal part of his Humiliation.* Under which Head, he represents the Souls of all Men, good as well as bad, groaning under their Sins, and suffering the effects of them in that State of Separation, and crying to God for Pity and Mercy. But this Reason contradicts the former, wherein the State of separate Souls was represented as *Sweetn'd* and free from *Dread* and *Horror*, and Accompanied with *Joy* and *Comfort*. Besides, how shall we reconcile these two, *viz.* Christ's Soul being in a State of Suffering, and under Uneasiness and Trouble, and yet at the same Time in *Paradise*? And again, this groundless *Hypothesis* of a common Receptacle or middle Condition, which this Learned Writer endeavours to uphold, is that which the Learnedest *Protestants* oppose when they undertake the confutation of the Popish *Purgatory*.

The Third ground of this Authors Opinion is, that Christ went *to conquer Hell in his own Person: That the loosing of his Soul from the Bonds thereof, might be an earnest and assurance to all his Followers, that at the appointed time of their Resurrection, their Souls should be also rescued thro' his Almighty Power, and obtain an Eternal Victory over Death and Hell.* But here is little foundation I conceive for a sober Man's belief, for why should the descent of Christ's Soul, be an earnest and assurance to his *followers* more than to any *others*, that their Souls shall be rescued from Death and Hell, and gain a Victory over them? There is no ground at all for this Difference between the one and the other, for if Christ's Soul descended to the place where the *bad* as well as the *good* are lodg'd, we have as much Reason to believe that he intended to give assurance of kindness to the former, as well as the latter. His Presence among them, and his continuing with them till his Resurrection, argue no less. If this be denied, how then did Christ *conquer Hell* by going thither, when he left half at least of the Captives behind him? For this Writer seems to appropriate the Benefits of Christ's descent to his *Followers*. And yet he doth not stick to this, but flies off, and tells us that Christ brought back with him some Captive Souls, and set them at Liberty. He quotes *Athanasius concerning the Incarnation of Christ* for this, but this doth not render his Opinion the more Authentick; for the same Father saith in the same place, that *Christ's Soul went to Hell to perform those things in that place which were requisite in order to the complete Redemption of Men*: Whereas we know that the Work of our *Redemption* was *Finish'd* on the Cross.

The Fourth and last Account of Christ's descent which this Ingenious Author offers is this, *That he might subject himself to the Laws of Death, and be in every thing conformable to us.* But if there be no such Laws of Death, that is, no passing to a *general Lodge* or *common Habitation of Souls*, then this Arguing is insignificant: But from that discovery which is made to us, in the Sacred Writings, concerning the future State of departed Souls, we have no notice of any such common Habitation, and thence we may inferr, that there is no foundation for the foregoing way of Arguing. It is confounding Heaven and Hell, and making the place of the Blessed and the Damn'd the same.

Which is an oversight in another Writer among ourselves, who hath lately told us, that the *Atmosphere* which surrounds the Earth is the Seat of the glorified Angels and Saints, and also of the Apostate Spirits and Damned Souls. In that common Air or Expansion above us are placed, he saith, * *all Invisible Beings both good and bad*, only with some distinction as to the degree of the purity and fineness of the Air. And afterwards he argues that † *Christ and the Saints and the Wicked Spirits* are seated, in this expanded Air. And more positively in the following Words, ‖ *In this Air are all the Thrones, Dominions, Principalities, Power, Arch-Angels, and Angels good and bad, with the Souls of departed Men; in short, all invisible Beings belonging to this World*, among which he reckons the invisible *Bodies*, (for so he styles them) of all Men that ever were in the World. These he all crowds up together in the same *General Expansion* or *Atmosphere*, the utmost height of which he confesses is,

* *The Accomplishment of Scripture Prophecies*, p. 291.
† P. 293.
‖ P. 297.

but Forty Five or Fifty Miles from our Earth. But I think I need not insist on the confutation of this Notion, which will find no Patrons among those who have conversed with the Holy Writings, which speak so frequently of the Immense Distance of the Heaven of the Blessed, and of the contrary Situation of the place of the Damned.

I shall proceed in the next place, to consider the Opinion of those who understand this Article of the Creed concerning *Hell*, as that Word is generally taken; namely, for the *Infernal Regions* of the Diabolick Spirits and Damned Souls.

Fifthly then, it is the Judgment of some that Christ's Soul being separated from his Body, went down into those lower parts which are the peculiar and proper habitation of damned Spirits; and this they take to be the Sense of the Words, *he descended into Hell*. And to establish this Opinion, they quote some Texts of Scripture, and pretend to offer Reasons for what they say and hold. It is not to be denied that this Local Descent into the Infernal Regions is held by *Papists*, and by *Lutherans*; and it was of old maintain'd by * *Athanasius* and † *Epiphanius*. And it is said to have been generally the Sense of the *Fathers*, that Christ's Soul descended to that place below, which is properly call'd *Hell*, that is, the place where damned Souls are Tormented. But the Answer to this shall be fully given, by shewing First, that the *Texts of Scripture* which are produced to prove this Opinion, are not to the purpose. Secondly, that the Opinion of the *Fathers* is not to be relied upon. Thirdly, that the *Reasons* which are pretended of this Assertion are of no Strength and Validity.

* Contra Hæret.
† Hæres. 24. & 46.

1. As to Scripture, there are but three places, saith our Learned Expositor, Bishop *Pearson*, which have been thought of any great Validity to confirm the descent into Hell. The First place is that to the *Ephesians*, chap. 4. v. 9. *Now that he Ascended, what is it, but that He descended First into the lower parts of the Earth?* And it is certain, that some of the *Fathers* were of Opinion, that these Words spoke of our Saviour's going down to the Infernal Regions, that is, that his Soul went thither, whilst his Body lay in the Grave. The Learned Prelate I last mention'd, tell us, that this *Exposition of the Text, must be confessed so probable, that there can be no Argument to disprove it*. But, as if he had forgot what he had said, he presently afterwards in the same Breath hath these words, *That the Apostle intended so much in these words*, (that is, that Christ descended into Hell) *the Place it self will not manifest*. No, certainly, nor is there any cogent Argument to induce us to expound these words concerning Christ's Descent into the Place of the Damned; for the design and meaning of the Apostle in this place is no more than this, to shew that our Lord Jesus descended from Heaven before he ascended thither. And when he saith he descended into *the lower parts of the Earth*, he calls them *lower* in respect of Heaven, from whence he descended; not that they are *lower parts* in regard of the Earth itself. When 'tis said, he descended *into the lower Parts of the Earth*, it is no more than this, he came into the World he came down from Heaven, and was here upon *Earth*, for this is tightly called *the lower Parts* in comparison of the Celestial Regions. He vouchsafed to come down into this lower World for our sakes. Or, if this Expression be yet further urged, and the Answer already given to it be not thought Satisfactory, I shall afterwards propound another Acception of the Words, [*the lower parts of the Earth*] and I shall shew that this in the Style of Scripture is meant of the *Womb*, and of the *Grave*; and consequently this Text can't be made use of to the Purpose for which it is alledged.

The next place is that, 1 *Pet.* 3. 19. *By which* (Spirit) he *went and Preach'd to the Spirits in Prison*, &c. which was another Text alledg'd by some of the *Fathers*, to prove that Christ's Soul went to Hell, when his Body was laid in the Sepulchre. But there is no Ground at all for such an Interpretation; and this is confess'd by Bishop *Pearson*, who in these few words hath said much, *These words* (saith he) *of St. Peter, have no such Power of Probation, except we were certain that* [*the Spirit*] *there spoken of was the Soul of Christ, and that the time intended for that Preaching was after his Death, and before his Resurrection*. But we are sure of neither of these; nay, we are rather certain of the contrary, for *the Spirit by which Christ Preach'd* was his Divine and Eternal Spirit, by which he was rais'd from the Dead, and by which he did such wonderful and miraculous things after his Resurrection. One of which was his Preaching to the Spirits in Prison, that is, to the Souls and

and Consciences of Unbelievers in the Apostle's Times, who were *Imprison'd* by Satan, and bound with the Chain of their Sins, and are truly said to be *Disobedient, as those in the Days of Noah were.* Christ did not *Personally Preach* to these, but he did it by his Apostles and Ministers; and what was done by them, who were enabled by his Spirit, is truly said to be done by Christ himself, and therefore 'tis said *he Preach'd.* This is the plain and short Account of those Words of St. *Peter*, which I have more largely insisted upon in * another place. But I think this that I have said is sufficient to shew that these words have no relation to Christ's *Descent into Hell.*

* *An Enquiry into Four remarkable Texts of the New Testament.*

The Third Text is that in *Acts* 2. 30, 31. *He being a Prophet, and seeing this before, spake of the Resurrection of Christ, that his Soul was not left in Hell, neither his Flesh did see Corruption.* Which latter words are taken from the *Psalmist*, Psal. 16. 10. *Thou wilt not leave my Soul in Hell, neither wilt thou suffer thy Holy one to see Corruption.* This is the only Text that Bishop *Pearson* grounds the Descent of Christ into Hell upon. *From this place*, saith he, *the Article is clearly and infallibly induced*; and he attempts to tell us *how*, that we may see the force of the Deduction. *If the Soul of Christ*, saith he, *was not left in Hell at his Resurrection, then his Soul was in Hell before his Resurrection, but it was not there before his Death; therefore upon, or after it, and before his Resurrection his Soul descended into Hell.* This he thinks is a plain Deduction from the Prophecy of the *Psalmist*, and from the Application of St. *Peter.* But this excellent and worthy Writer, I conceive, is wont to use a more solid way of Reasoning at other times; and the Ground of his Mistake at present is the misinterpreting of the word *Sheol* used by the *Psalmist*, and the word ᾅδης in the *Acts*, for they signifie not *Hell*, but the *Grave*; which I shall fully clear afterwards, and then it will appear that the whole Arguing of this Reverend Author falls to the Ground. These are the Three Texts of Scripture which are alledg'd, (and by the Church of *Rome* chiefly) for Christ's Local Descent into Hell; but it is impossible to make them speak plainly in favour of that Opinion.

And indeed it is not to be expected, (whatever some think) that *Scripture* should any where favour this Doctrine, if we consider this, (which I apprehend to be of very great force) that at several times there was Occasion given the Apostles in their Writings to take notice of Christ's Descent into Hell, if there had been any such thing, but we find that they never so much as make mention of it. Thus in the close of the *Evangelical History*, we might have expected to meet with something of this nature, if it had really happen'd, but there we only have an account of Christ's *Passion*, and *Death*, and of his *Burial*, and *Rising from the Dead*, and *Ascending to Heaven*; but not one of the Evangelists hath any reference to his *going down to Hell.* And the Reason of it is plain, because there was no such thing. Let us go on to the Book of the *Acts* of the *Apostles*, where St. *Peter* in that famous Sermon, by which so many were Converted, calls this to their remembrance, that *Jesus of Nazareth had been taken by them, and by their wicked hands crucified and slain; whom God had raised up, having loosed the pains of death, because it was not possible that he should be holden of it*, Acts 2. 23, 24. Of Christ's *Burial* he takes occasion to speak afterwards in this Sermon, (as I shall observe) and therefore he is silent concerning it here. But surely, if the going of Christ down to the Infernal Mansions had been a Doctrine of the Gospel, and if this Descent had happen'd between Christ's Death and his Resurrection, the Apostle would have spoken of it, or given some small hint of it. Nay, it is implied here that there was an *immediate* Connexion between Christ's Death and his Rising again, for so much is signified in those words, *whom God hath raised up, having loosed the Pains of Death.* Which is as much as to say, tho' Christ died a painful Death, and was some time held under it, yet he was deliver'd from it by Divine Power, and Triumphantly rose from the Grave, as soon as Death was conquer'd by him.

So in another Sermon, not long after, when Five Thousand Persons were gain'd by it to the Faith, the *Death* and *Resurrection* of Christ are immediately coupled together, *Chap.* 3. *v.* 15. The like you find in *Chap.* 5. *v.* 30. where, as well as in other places, there is not a Syllable of Christ's *Descent into Hell.* Again, when St. *Paul* Preach'd at *Antioch* to the Believing *Jews*, he fell upon the same Subject, reminding them of what befel our Saviour Christ; how, that after *he was slain, he was taken down from the Tree, and laid in a Sepulchre, but God raised him from the dead*, Acts 13. 29, 30. Where the *laying* of Christ *in a Sepulchre*, is inserted between

tween his Death and Rising again, to let us know that *this* was the only thing that intervened between them, and that whenever Christ's Dying and Rising again are mention'd; this is to be supposed, and no other thing. So when he Preach'd to the *Jews* at *Thessalonica*, three Sabbath-days together he inculcated this Doctrine, That *Christ must needs have suffer'd, and risen again from the dead*, Acts 17. 3. It is implied here, that his Body was committed to the *Grave*, else he could not be said to *rise again*; but neither here, nor in any of the fore-cited places, is there the least intimation of his going, between his Death and Resurrection, to the Regions of the Damned below. The same Apostle, in his incomparable Oration and Defence before King *Agrippa*, tells him, that this was the Sum of his Doctrine, both to small and great; namely, *Christ's Suffering, and Rising from the Dead*, Acts 26. 23. Where, if Christ's Soul had descended to the Infernal Mansions for our sakes; and especially, if this was to be an Article of Faith, there would, without doubt have been mention of it; at least, in *some* of those places where St. *Peter*, and St. *Paul*, those great Instructers of the Church, speak of the Articles of Christ's Death, and his Resurrection, they would assuredly have dropt something about this.

I will offer but one place more, and that is in 1 *Cor.* 15. where the Apostle tells those *Corinthians*, that he *is now declaring to them the Gospel which he Preach'd unto them, which also they had receiv'd, and in which they stood; and by which also they were saved.* Nay, further, to conciliate their Attention to what he is to write to them, he adds, that the Doctrine which he was about to propound to them, was *that which he deliver'd to them first of all*, as the Principal and Fundamental Article of Christianity, and *that which he also receiv'd*; namely, *not of Man, but by the Revelation of Jesus Christ*, Gal. 1. 12. And then, after all this great and solemn preparing of their Minds, for what he was to deliver to them, he lets them know that it is no other than this, That *Christ died for our sins; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day*, v. 4. which last he afterwards proves by Arguments taken from all sorts of Topicks. Here you see is Christ's *Death*, and *Burial*, and *Resurrection*, but nothing is hinted concerning his descending into Hell. Now, 'tis certain, that if his *Descent* were a real Truth, and Matter of any great Concern, especially so great as to be put into the *Creed*, and inserted among the prime fundamental Articles of the Christian Faith, this Apostle, and the rest, at one time or other in their Writings would have plainly express'd it, or set it down in such words as we could not but interpret in favour of Christ's Descent; but especially in some of those places where the *Death*, and *Burial*, and *Resurrection* of Christ are expressly mention'd, we might expect to hear of this Doctrine.

II. As for the *Authority of the Ancients*, which is alledg'd, and made use of, we are not to lay any stress on that; for, first, the Silence of Antiquity may be an Argument against this Opinion. Hear what Bishop *Pearson* hath said of this Article, "[It is not to be found in the ancient Creeds, nor in the Rules of Faith, de-
" liver'd by *Irenæus*, by *Origen*, by *Tertullian*; it is not express'd in those Creeds
" which were made by the *Councils*, as larger Explications of the Apostle's Creed;
" not in the *Nicene*, or *Constantinopolitan*; not in that of *Ephesus*, or *Chalcedon*; not
" in those Confessions made at *Sardica*, *Antioch*, *Seleucia*, *Sirmium*, &c. It is not
" mention'd in several Confessions of Faith, deliver'd by particular Persons, not in
" that of *Eusebius Cæsariensis*, not in that of *Marcellus*, Bishop of *Ancyra*, not in
" that of *Arius* and *Euzoius*, not in that of *Acacius*, Bishop of *Cæsarea*, not in that
" of *Eustathius*, *Theophilus* and *Silvanus*. There is no mention of it in the Creed
" of St. *Basil*, in that of *Epiphanius*, or in the Creeds of *Gelasius*, *Damasus*, *Maca-*
" *rius*, &c. It is not in the Creed expounded by St. *Cyril*, or by St. *Augustine*, or
" by *Maximus Taurinensis*, or by *Petrus Chrysologus*. And *Rufinus* affirms, that
" in his time it was neither in the *Roman*, nor the *Oriental* Creeds.] So he. And it is confess'd, that *Rufinus* was the first that made mention of this Article in the Creed.

Again, as to the Opinion it self, we mistake the *ancient Writers of the Church*, when we assert that it was their Perswasion that Christ descended into Hell; for the generality of them held this only, That Christ's Soul, immediately after his Death, went down to some Mansions or Receptacles of Souls that were under the Earth. According to *Irenæus*, he went *to the Place where the Souls of the Dead were*. Lib. 5. c. 26. *Tertullian* calls it *inferiora terrarum*, Lib. de Animâ, *cap.* 55. It is

is call'd by St. *Ambrose abyssus*, De Incarnat. *cap.* 5. And others make use of the words *inferna*, and *infernus*, but don't mean the place of the *Damned*, which is properly *Hell*; for they did not hold that the Souls departed went either to Hell or Heaven, but to a middle-place. And several others use such Expressions as do not simply and absolutely denote the place which we call Hell. And when some of the *Greek* Fathers used the word ἅδης, with reference to our Saviour's Descending; it is evident from what hath been said, that they did not mean *Hell* by that word. So that the Authority of the Catholick *Fathers*, which is pretended, is of no Validity; for they come not up to the Sense of the Article which some contend for.

Or, if it shall be said, notwithstanding this, that it was the meaning of those that first inserted into the Creed this Article of *Christ's Descent*, that Christ Locally and Personally went down to the Place of the Damned, and that this was the Opinion and Belief of the *Ancient Fathers* generally; the Answer is, that they were mistaken in many things, and so were in this. And some of those Writers of the Church who came after them, and Commented upon this Article, kept up the Error, and maintain'd it by Apocryphal Authority, and distorted Texts of Scripture. And in some perhaps the Mistake was occasion'd by that *Antithesis* which is here in the Creed, *Descending*, and *Ascending*; and because it makes mention of *Ascending into Heaven*, they conclude that the *Descending* must be meant of the contrary place, *Hell*. And 'tis probable, that the reason of the expressing the word by *Hell*, was grounded on a Mistake of the word ἅδης, which I shall endeavour to correct anon. From the whole it is plain, that the *Testimony of some of the Fathers* signifies nothing, as that Learned Father of our Church (Bishop *Pearson*) most readily grants. And it is well known, that several such Opinions of those ancient Writers, (which were held and professed by them) have been laid aside long since by the Church of Christ.

III. I shall shew the improbability of this Notion of the Article, by considering the *Reasons* and *Ends* of Christ's descending to Hell, which are alledged by the Authors of this Opinion. And here they are much divided, and cannot agree to tell us, *to what purpose* Christ Locally went into Hell; which, by the way, is a great Prejudice against the Opinion. But let us hear their several Pretences, and briefly shew the Vanity of them.

First, There have been some, but of very mean Note, who have assign'd the Reason of Christ's Descent into Hell to be this, That he might undergo the Punishment which we deserv'd to suffer in that Place. But seeing I have already shew'd, that Christ's Sufferings had their ultimate Period on the *Cross*, I have at the same time rendred this other Assertion utterly improbable. It cannot then with any Pretence and colour of Reason be affirm'd, that Christ went down to Hell to finish his Sufferings.

Secondly, Others give this as the Reason why our Saviour, immediately after the separation of his Soul and Body, went to the Regions of the Damned, because, (say they) he design'd to release the Souls of the Damned, or at least some of them from that place. Some of the ancient Writers of the Church, as * *Clement* of *Alexandria*, † *Origen*, *Cyril* of *Alexandria*, and some other *Greek* Writers, of no great Fame, thought so. But ‖ our Learned Expositor hath given a brief and solid Answer to this, The Souls of Men, *saith he*, were never cast into infernal Torments, to be deliver'd from them. The Days which follow after Death were never made for Opportunities to a better Life. And he shews how *incongruous*, *absurd*, and *ridiculous* it is, and how inconsistent with the Dispensation of Religion, as it is deliver'd to us in the *Scripture*, to say that Christ went and Preach'd the Gospel to the Damned, and triumphantly brought them away with him out of the Flames of Hell, into the glorious Mansions above. We must remember, that it is an Article of *Faith* that we are speaking of, and therefore it must be founded upon the *Word of God*; but this of Christ's Descent into Hell hath no Foundation there. Christ never went thither, much less to *fetch any damned Souls thence*, and to translate them to Heaven, for those that are once in that Place, are irrecoverably there.

* Strom. *l.* 6.
† Cont. Cels. *l.* 2.
‖ *Bishop* Pearson *on the Creed.*

Thirdly, Some say that our Lord went to those Regions below to release, not the Wicked, but the *Godly*. For some of the ancient Writers of the Church were of Opinion, that there was one common Receptacle of all Souls departed, both Righteous and Unrighteous, and that after Death they were convey'd to that place, and Reward-

Rewarded or Punish'd there. This was their Notion of *Hades*, as Bishop *Pearson* hath from several Quotations prov'd. Others thought that the Souls of the Faithful were not Translated from that common Rendezvous of Souls to the Heavens above, but are kept there till the Resurrection. The same Learned Bishop quotes some Fathers for this, and shews how strangely the Writers of the Church were divided in their Sentiments about this matter. It was the Sense of * *Epiphanius*, and † *Cyril* of *Jerusalem*, that Christ went to the Place where the Souls of all holy Men were deposited, and brought them away thence. Now, to call this Place of the Godly *Hell*, was thought indecorous, and therefore the Church of *Rome* chang'd that Name, and their *School-men* styled it *Limbus Patrum*, because the old Saints and Patriarchs were Imprisoned there; and 'tis the unanimous Perswasion of those of the *Roman* Communion, that Christ after his Death immediately descended to that Place to release the Souls of Believers from that uneasie Mansion they were in. But all this is precarious and fanciful, and confounds the Notions of things, and takes away that Distinction which the Scripture makes between the *Godly* and the *Wicked*, and between the *different Places* allotted for either, and therefore it is by no means to be attended to.

* Hæres. 69.
† In Cateches.

Fourthly, Others tell us that Christ went to Hell to triumph over Satan, and all the infernal Powers; he went to insult the Prince of Darkness in his own Territories. So that this Descent was the beginning of his Exaltation. This would be accepted as a good Interpretation, if it did not want Ground from Scripture; for as for the Places which they bring to prove it, it is too apparent that they are distorted. As *Col.* 2. 15. *Having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it.* Where the *Triumphing* referrs to the *Cross*, which is the last word of the foregoing Verse, and is plainly meant, when 'tis said he triumph'd over them ἐν αὐτῷ *in it*, i. e. in, or on the Cross; and accordingly *Origen* inserts ξύλῳ, and *Athanasius*, and *Chrysostom*, and *Epiphanius* add σταυρῷ instead of αὐτῷ. And, besides, the ancient Fathers interpret this Text of our Saviour's Triumph at Death. See Bishop *Pearson* quoting them for this, who hath briefly refuted what is alledged by Ancient and Modern Writers in Defence of that other Opinion. As for that place quoted by them, *Acts* 2. 26, 27. it is nothing to their purpose; for whatever be the meaning of these words, *thou shalt not leave my Soul in Hell*, (of which I shall give a particular Account afterwards) it is plain that *Christ's Soul being in Hell*, is mention'd there as a State of Humiliation, for the being released from it occasion'd that *Rejoycing of Heart*, that *Gladness of Tongue*, that *Fulness of Joy* which are there spoken of; and therefore Christ did not descend to Hell, to *Triumph* there. There are some other Texts which are strain'd to serve the contrary Opinion, but the Answer to them, and to those before-mention'd, is this, That what Christ had done on *Earth*, and in *Heaven*, was enough to confound the Spirits of Darkness, and to declare him an absolute Conqueror; so that there was no need of his going down to *Hell*, to proclaim what he had done, and to triumph over the Devils there; wherefore there can be no Text brought to prove this.

Fifthly, The Learned Writer whom I have so often mention'd, Bishop *Pearson*, hath a Notion of his own; namely, That *the Soul of Christ pass'd into the Places below, where the Souls of Men departed were, that he might undergo the Condition of a dead Man.* Again, he tells us, that *Christ went into the other World*; yea, *he went to the Place where the Souls of Men are kept for their Sins, to undergo and satisfie the Law of Death.* And another Reason, or End of Christ's Descent into Hell, was this, he saith, *He went into those Regions of Darkness, that our Souls might never come into those Torments which are there; He went to secure Believers from descending thither.* But a great many things may justly be objected to what this excellent Writer delivers: As

First, It appears hence, that he had no reason to quarrel with the Interpretation of those who Expound this Article concerning *the State of the Dead*; seeing the first Reason which he assigns of Christ's Descent, resolves the Article into this at last, as is manifest from those Words, *that he might undergo the Condition of a dead Man*, for the *State* or *Condition* of a dead Man is the same. And this appears from the Close of his Discourse on this Article, where he sums up the Contents of it, part of which is this; *I give a full and undoubting Assent unto this, that when all the Sufferings of Christ were finish'd on the Cross, and his Soul was separated from his Body,*

dy, it underwent the Condition of the Souls of such as die. He makes ᾅδης to be the *State or Condition of the Dead,* and yet he had professedly opposed this before.

Secondly, He seems to be loth to assert the Descent of Christ's Soul to Hell, that is, the Place of the *Damned*; and yet he uses Expressions which are equivalent, as that *he went to the Place where the Souls of Men are kept for their Sins,* which is a Periphrasis of Hell. Nay, he ventures to say in the same place, that Christ went into the other World in the Similitude of a Sinner; as if he himself were there to suffer under that Denomination; which seems not to be consistent with what he had before said concerning the meaning of ᾅδης in the Creed.

Thirdly, Whereas he saith, that Christ's *passing into the Places below, where Men are kept for their Sins, was to satisfie the Law of Death*; it is a strange and unaccountable Assertion, for the Law of Death is satisfied without going into those Places, else *Good* and *Holy Men* can't be said to *satisfie the Law of Death*; for they descend not to those Regions where the Wicked are kept for their Sins. Or, if by the *Law of Death,* he means no more than *really Dying,* then it is certain, that *passing into those low Places,* is not included in the satisfying of the Law of Death. And indeed, *Death,* and *passing into those low Places* are two things; Death was the Separation of his Soul and Body, when these two were parted, he *died.* Therefore Christ satisfied the Law of Death, tho' he never went to the infernal Mansions. There is no other Satisfaction of it but actually Dying; and this our Saviour underwent, as 'tis acknowledg'd expresly in those foregoing Words of the Creed, *he was Dead*; and 'tis further added, *he was Buried,* to shew that the Law of Death was fully satisfied and accomplish'd. His *Burial* is inserted here as an Argument of his *being really Dead,* which was denied by some *Hereticks,* who asserted that Christ's Incarnation and Death were both of them only in shew and appearance, not real. This was the Sense of some of the Fathers concerning this part of the Article, as the Learned Author of the *History of the Apostle's Creed* hath shew'd, *Chap.* 3.

Fourthly, As for that other pretended End of Christ's going down to Hell; namely, *to secure us from descending thither,* there is not the least shadow of Reason in it; for we were sufficiently secur'd from being sent into those Regions of endless Pain and Torment, by Christ's Suffering on the Cross for us. This all Theological Writers of any Account most readily grant, that Christ's Sufferings there freed us from suffering afterwards. So that there was no reason why our Lord should after his Death go and visit the Mansions of the Damned. By Christ's Passion and Blood the Sins of all Believers are wash'd away, the Guilt wholly removed, and therefore Satan can have no Power over them, with respect to that future Punishment in Hell; he can't possibly drag them into those Habitations of Despair and Misery, and Eternal Pain. This is what the Apostle assures us of, that *through Death Christ destroy'd him that had the Power of Death, that is, the Devil,* Heb. 2. 14. Observe it, it is *through Death*; Christ by his *Dying* deliver'd us from Everlasting Death in the Receptacles of the Devils and damned Spirits; wherefore there was no necessity of his going down thither to effect it. By the sole Virtue of our Saviour's Passion and Death, the faithful are exempted from coming under the Dominion of Satan, and being Tormented by him in those Everlasting Flames.

Thus all the *Reasons* and *Ends* of Christ's Descending to Hell being found to be precarious, the thing it self, *viz.* his Descent, falls to the Ground. And as for the other Interpretations before-mention'd, I have particularly shew'd on what Grounds I could not admit of any of them.

It remains then that I assign the True, Genuine, and unexceptionable meaning of the Article; which is plainly this, by ᾅδης is meant the *Grave,* and by *descending into* ᾅδης, is meant Christ's *being laid in the Grave,* or *Sepulcher.* Which I shall demonstrate to be the unquestionable Sense of the Article from these following Considerations.

1. The word *hades,* and the *Hebrew* word שאול, are generally owned by the Learned to signifie the *Grave,* or *Pit,* and accordingly are so rendred by the best and most judicious Interpreters, and particularly by our own Learned Translators of the Bible. Both *Sheol,* and *Hades* are Translated the *Grave,* in *Gen.* 37. 35. *I will go down into the Grave unto my Son.* The *Septuagint* render it κατεβήσομαι εἰς ᾅδης, to which

which answers this Article in the Creed, κατῆλθεν εἰς ᾅδου, *he went down into the Grave.* It is idle to think that the Patriarch *Jacob* in these words, meant either *Heaven* or *Hell*, or this or that *State*, (as some have understood the word *Sheol*) but his plain meaning is, that out of a deep Sorrow for the loss of his dear Son *Joseph*, he was willing to leave the World, and go down Mourning to his *Sepulchre*, or *Grave.* Accordingly it might be observ'd, that both *Jonathan's Targum*, and that of *Jerusalem*, render *Sheol* here *the House of the Sepulchre*; and the *Arabick* Version to the same sense, renders it *the Dust of Mourning*, which is a Periphrasis of the *Grave.* So in *Gen.* 42. 38. *Ye shall bring down my grey hairs with sorrow to the grave*; the *Hebrew* word is *Sheol*, and the *Greek* ᾅδου, and Bishop *Pearson* hath observ'd, that the two *Targums* before-mention'd, together with the *Persian* and *Arabick* Version, concurr in this very Sense, this being the standing meaning of the word *Sheol*, and of the word ᾅδου that answers to it.

Again, in *Gen.* 44. 29. 'tis Translated the *Grave*; and so, *v.* 31. for 'tis the same Passage with that before-mention'd, but is here twice repeated. You'll find it render'd *the Pit*, which is the same with the *Grave*, in *Num.* 16. 30. *They shall go down quick to the pit.* And *v.* 33. *They went down alive into the pit*, εἰς ᾅδου, the gaping Earth being the *Grave* of those Rebels. So *Sheol* is the *Grave*, in 1 *Sam.* 2. 6. *The Lord killeth, and maketh alive; he bringeth down to the grave, and bringeth up.* It is again rightly Translated the *Grave* in 1 *Kings* 2. 9. *His hoary head bring thou down to the grave with blood:* In *Job* 7. 9. *He that goeth down to the grave, shall come up no more.* The Expression is almost the same with that in the Creed; for it is καταβαίνειν εἰς ᾅδου.

So *Hades*, and *Sheol* are the words in these following places; *O that thou would'st hide me in the grave*, Job 14. 13. *The grave is my house*, Job 17. 13. *In the grave who shall give thee thanks?* Psal. 6. 5. *Thou hast brought up my soul from the grave*, Psal. 30. 3. *What man is he that liveth, and shall not see death? Shall he deliver his soul from the hand of the grave?* Psal. 89. 48. Where it can't be meant of *Hell* properly so call'd, for all Men do not go to the Place of the Damned. *Our bones are scatter'd as at the graves mouth*, Psal. 141. 7. *Let them be silent in the grave*, Psal. 31. 17. *God will redeem my soul from the power of the grave*, Psal. 49. 15. *My life draweth nigh unto the grave*, Psal. 88. 3. *Let us swallow them up alive as the grave*, Prov. 1. 12. *The grave saith not, it is enough*, Prov. 30. 16. *Jealousie is cruel as the grave*, Cant. 8. 6. *I shall go to the gates of the grave*, saith good *Hezekiah*, *Isa.* 38. 10. where *Sheol* and *Hades* are opposed to *the land of the living*, v. 11. *The grave cannot praise thee*, Isa. 38. 18. *I will ransom them from the power of the grave*, Hos. 13. 14. And in the same Verse, *O grave, I will be thy destruction.* And it were easie to shew, that in all these places there is something joyn'd and added that confirms the certainty of this meaning of the word *Sheol* in the Original, and of ᾅδου in the Septuagint Version. There is generally some Word or Expression in the Verse it self, or in the neighbouring ones that absolutely determines the words to this particular Sense. And then in the New Testament, I might observe that, tho' ᾅδου be seldom mention'd there, yet in one place at least it denotes the *Grave*, or Place of Burial, and is so rendred by our own Translators, as in 1 *Cor.* 15. 55. *O grave, where is thy victory?* But,

2. Let it be considered, That in those Places where *Sheol* and *Hades* are render'd *Hell* by our *English Translators*, it is no more than *Death* or the *Grave.* As in *Deut.* 32. 22. That which they translate *the lowest Hell*, is no other than the deepest and remotest Parts of the Earth, as is very evident from the Words following, which expressly mention *the Earth and the Foundations of the Mountains.* When *David* saith, *the Sorrows of Hell* (according to our Translation) *compassed him about*, 2 Sam. 22. 6. the Meaning is, That the sorrowful Apprehensions of Death and going down to the Grave environ'd his Soul, for we find that it is explain'd in the same Verse by *the Snares of Death*, and in the foregoing Verse by *the Waves of Death.* The same is in *Psa.* 18. 5, 6. so in *Psa.* 55. 15. *Let Death seize upon them, and let them go down quick into Hell*, where our Translators have corrected this reading in the Margin, and render'd *Sheol, the Grave.*

When *Solomon* saith of *the strange Woman, that her Feet go down to Death, her Steps take hold on Hell*, Prov. 5. 5. the latter Clause seems to be only an Explication of the former; and it is the same that he had said before, *Chap.* 2. *v.* 18. *Her House enclineth unto Death, and her Paths unto the Dead.* So in *Prov.* 23. 14. *Thou shalt deliver his Soul from Hell*, it is as much as *thou shalt deliver* his Soul or Life

Life from the Grave or Death, for so 'tis explain'd in the preceding Verse, *he shall not die.* It is said in *Isa.* 5. 14. *That Hell hath enlarged herself, and opened her Mouth without Measure*; that is, the Grave doth as it were open its fatal Jaws to devour the Enemies of God's People: For it is, as I conceive, an Elegant Allusion to the former Verse, which speaks of those that *died of Hunger and Thirst*, who gaped wide for some Sustenance and Refreshment, but had none given to them. *A Covenant with Death, and an Agreement with Hell*, Isa. 28. 15. are equivalent; for *Sheol* here is the *Grave*, or those Judgments and Calamities which would certainly bring those Persons to the Grave, as is clear from the neighbouring Words concerning *the overflowing Scourge which was to pass through, and by which they were to be trodden down.* So the generality of Expositors interpret *the casting down to Hell*, Ezek. 31. 16. *and going down to Hell*, v. 17. which are applied to *Assyria*, and signifie the Death and Fall of that proud People, and in that Chapter are express'd, by *delivering them unto Death, to the nether Parts of the Earth*, v. 14. *and going down to the Grave*, v. 15. The Words of the Seventy are καταβη εις ᾅδου equivalent with this Part of the Article we are now insisting upon.

It might still *further* be shew'd, That the *Hebrew* and *Greek* Words which our Translators render *Hell*, should rather be *English'd* the *Grave*, as in *Jon:* 2. 2. *Out of the Belly of Hell cried I:* Where the Belly of the Whale is resembled, and that very fitly, to the *Grave*, because *Jonas* was kept up close there as in a Grave or Tomb. I will mention only one Place more, *Hab.* 2. 5. *Who enlargeth his Desire as Hell, and is as Death*; where the Words *Sheol* and ᾅδου should be render'd *the Grave*, for that is the known and received Notion concerning the Grave, that it is insatiable. The *Grave is one of those Things that are never satisfied*, Pro. 30. 16. It is the very same *Hebrew* Word that is used in that Place of *Habakkuk*. And there is a Passage of the like Nature in Pro. 27. 20. *Hell and Destruction are never full.* So our *English* Translation, but the *Hebrew*, which I have so often mention'd, should be render'd *the Grave* here, *the Grave and Destruction*, or Death, *are never satisfied.* Which with all that I have said under this Head, proves that the Words *Sheol* and ᾅδου should be render'd *the Grave* in many Places where we find them translated *Hell.*

And so it is in the New Testament, *The Gates of Hell shall not prevail against it*, Mat. 16. 18. *i. e.* according to the primary Sense of the Words, the Power of Death or the Grave shall not get the Victory over the Church of Christ. The Church shall never be *totally Interr'd*, though it may seem sometimes to be plung'd into the *Grave*; for it shall be rescued from the Power of it, and shall lift up its Head again, and have as it were its *Resurrection*, as the Learned Dr. *Hamond* explains this Place. And let the Reader consult *Isa.* 38. 10. before-mentioned, where this very Way of speaking is used, and he will then readily own, That *the Gates of Hades* are no more than the *Gates of the Grave*; for the Good King *Hezekiah* doth not lament there his going to *Hell.* Thus in *Rev.* 1. 18. *Hades* is not *Hell*, but the *Grave*, and therefore the Place should be render'd thus, *I have the Keys of the Grave and of Death*; that is, I have Power to fetch any Man back from the Grave, and to rescue him from Death. It is the same with that in the Song of *Hannah* before-mentioned, *He bringeth down to the Grave, and bringeth up.* Those Words in *Rev.* 6. 8. should be render'd thus, *His Name that sat on him*, (*i. e.* on the pale Horse) *was Death, and the Grave followed with him*, Rev. 6. 8. for ᾅδου here signifies the *Grave* or *Sepulchre*, which is elegantly said to *follow* after Death, to be the *Attendant* of Mortality. That Place likewise, *Rev.* 20. 13. ought to be thus translated; *Death and the Grave* (ᾅδου) *deliver'd up the Dead that were in them*, i. e. those that were dead and laid in their Graves, were raised up. And *v.* 14. *Death and the Grave were cast into the Lake of Fire*, i. e. those wicked Men who had been dead, and interr'd in their Graves, were now (after they were risen and judg'd) cast into Hell. But what Sense can there be in this, That *Hell was cast into the Lake of Fire*; that is, Hell was cast into Hell? Wherefore our *English* Translation which renders the Word ᾅδου *Hell* in these Texts seems to be very faulty. And as for *Mat:* 11. 23. *thou shalt be brought down to Hell*, the Word ᾅδου doth not necessarily signifie the *Place of the damned*, but *a low* and *wretched Condition. Capernaum* here in the former Part of the Verse is said to have been *exalted to Heaven*; that is, highly advanc'd (for it is a Proverbial Way of speaking) and consequently *her being brought down to Hell*, signifies her being humbled and brought low; yea,

even to *Ruin* and *Destruction*. In short, excepting one Place only, *Luke* 16. 23. the *Greek* Word is never applied in the New Testament to *Hell* properly so call'd. Thus by searching into the genuine Meaning of the Words *Sheol* and ᾅδης, we have made Way for the Understanding of the true Sense of the *Greek* Word used in this Article of the Creed. It appears, That the true and proper Meaning of Christ's *Descent into Hades*, is his *Descent into the Grave or Sepulchre*. It is plain we have the Style of Scripture on our Side: This is the frequent and receiv'd Signification of the Word in the Sacred Writings There is no Reason therefore to distort the Word, and to abandon the known and usual Acception of it.

3. This Interpretation is vouch'd by two of those very Texts which are wont to be cited to the contrary. That noted Place *Psa.* 16. 10. *Thou shalt not leave my Soul in Hell*, hath no other Meaning than this, Thou shalt not leave *me* in the *Grave*; for the Word *Soul* is taken here as it is in *Psal.* 3. 2. *Many there be that say of my Soul, there is no Help for him in God.* And again, *Psa.* 11. 1. *How say ye to my Soul, flee as a Bird*, &c. In both which Texts the *Soul* signifies the *Person*. But because the *Person* consists of *Soul and Body*, therefore these two are sometimes promiscuously put one for the other; yea, sometimes according to the Way of speaking among the *Hebrews*, the *Soul* is put for the *Body*, wherein the *Soul* hath lately been. Of this there are several Examples, as in *Lev.* 19. 28. *Ye shall not make any cutting in your Flesh for the Dead*, Lenephesh, ἐπὶ ψυχῇ, as the *Septuagint* render it. *There shall none be defiled for the Dead, Neither shall he go in to any dead Body*, Num. 5. 2. *Whosoever is defiled by the Dead*, Num. 6. 6. *All the Days that he separateth himself to the Lord, he shall come at no dead Body.* Nephesh, *Anima* is the Word in all these Places. And so it is in *Num.* 9. 6. —— *who were defiled by the dead Body of Man*; and *Hag.* 2. 13. *If any one is unclean by a dead Body*, *Heb.* Nephesh, a *Soul*. In these Texts, as well as in the foregoing ones, the *Hebrew* Word which at other Times signifies a *Soul*, denotes *a Body*, yea, a *dead Body*, a Carcase, which was the Receptacle of the *Soul*. And we see that our own Translation follows this Sense, and renders the Word accordingly. And *Ainsworth* in his Translation of the *Pentateuch* (as Bishop *Pearson* hath observed) hath render'd some other Places according to this Acception of the *Hebrew* Word.

And it is probable, that this is the Use of the Word in *Psal.* 49. 15. which our Translators render thus, *God will redeem my Soul from the Power of the Grave.* But according to that Idiom of the *Hebrews* before instanced in, instead of *Soul*, it should rather be *dead Body*; for the *Psalmist* by Faith assures himself here of the Resurrection of his Body out of the Grave. Now, if this be the import of the Word *Nephesh* not only in many Places of *Moses*'s Writings, but in the Prophet *Haggai*, and in the fore-nam'd Place in the *Psalms*, why should we not interpret *this* Text of the Psalmist after the same Manner thus, *Thou shalt not leave my Body in the Grave?*

There are some Writers that attempt to expose and ridicule this Interpretation, and think it odd that by *Soul* would be understood *Body*. But they betray their Weakness and Partiality in not atending to the Phraseology of the *Hebrews* which is in Use with them sometimes. Seeing there is this Acception of the Word *Nephesh* among them, 'tis Folly to argue against it; for in that Language, as well as in all others, nothing is improper, and to be refused that is authoriz'd by Use. Nay, I will add, That this Mode of Speech is not so peculiar to the *Hebrews*, but that it is sometimes made use of by the *Latins*, and even the exactest of them, as *Virgil* concerning *Polydore*'s *Funeral Rites*.

Ergo instauramus Polydoro funus, & ingens
Aggeritur tumulo tellus, animamque Sepulchro
Condimus——

Quia corpus domicilium animæ, dicitur anima ipsa decorari sepulturâ, &c. Cerd. Coment. in Æn. 11.

Where it is manifest, That * *Anima*, the *Soul*, by an usual Figure, a *Metonymy*, is to be taken for the *Body* wherein the Soul lately inhabited. And thus we are to understand the Psalmist, *thou shalt not leave my Corporeal Part*, which is the Receptacle of my Soul, *in the Grave*, but thou wilt raise it up in a short Time, speaking of the Resurrection of Christ.

And

And that this is the true and genuine Sense of the Place the very Words themselves do plainly evidence; for St. *Peter* who quotes them in *Acts* 2. acquaints us, That *David* by the Spirit of Prophecy, foretold the rising again of Christ's *Body out of the Grave*; for no other Meaning can be affixed to those Words in v. 31. *He seeing this before*; namely, *(that God would raise up Christ*, v. 30.) *spake of the Resurrection of Christ*, i. e. the Resurrection of his *dead Body* from the Grave, for his *Soul* could not *rise*, because it never fell. And then the Apostle having said this, that *David* prophetically *spake of the Resurrection of Christ*, he immediately, by VVay of Explication, adjoins, That *his Soul was not left in Hell*; as much as to say, The Holy Prophet *David* expressly foretold the rising again of Christ's *Body*, when he spake those Words concerning him; namely, That *his Soul should not be left in Hell*. So that it is clear from the Words themselves, That they are not to be understood of *Christ's Descent into Hell*, but only of his *Resurrection from the Dead*, which respects his Body alone. And Saint *Peter* confirms this interpretation in the following Words, v. 32. *This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are Witnesses*. That is, as the Psalmist predicted the Resurrection of Christ's Body, and his coming to Life again, so we, who were Eye-Witnesses of it, have seen the actual Performance of it. The whole Place therefore referrs to the *Resurrection of our Saviour's Body*. And besides, this will further be manifested, if we take Notice of the necessary *Connection* of the Psalmist's Words, and take them together thus, *My Flesh also shall rest in Hope, for thou wilt not leave my Soul in Hell*, &c. where that *for* renders a Reason of the foregoing Clause, to wit, why Christ's *Flesh*; that is, his Body in the Grave, *rests there in Hope*; namely, in Hope of a Resurrection, because God would not suffer it to continue there long, and to be corrupted.

Moreover, This must be the Meaning of the Place; for 'tis plain, That the Word ᾅδης, which is translated *Hell*, and applied here to our Lord, answers to μνῆμα, the *Sepulchre*, which is spoken of *David*: For there is a Parallel between the *Sepulchre* in which *David* was buried and there continued, and the *Grave* out of which Christ rose. If this one Thing had been well considered, it had put an End to the Controversie. And therefore, I desire that this may now be particularly taken Notice of, and impartially weighed. Let the 29th and 30th Verses be laid together, and we shall soon understand this Matter; for the Apostle tells the *Jews* there, That those Words of the Psalmist, *thou wilt not leave my Soul in (Hell*, or) the *Grave*, are not to be understood of himself, especially in the Strictness and Rigour of them, because his Body (which had been the Receptacle of his Soul) was left in the Grave; for, saith he, his *Sepulchre* in which his Body was laid, *is with us unto this Day*, v. 29. and consequently his Body *sees Corruption*: But it was otherwise with Christ's Body after his Death, *it was not left in the Grave, neither did his Flesh* there *see Corruption*, v. 31. namely, because it was raised out of the Grave the Third Day. We cannot reconcile the Apostles Words to good Sense, and make them pertinent and apposite, unless we understand ψυχὴ, the *Soul*, in the Sense that I have mentioned, and unless we take ᾅδης for the *Grave*, for else they hold no Correspondence, with the former Verses, to which they are annex'd, and to which they were intended to answer, as is evident by the Drift of the Discourse.

That other Text in *Eph.* 4. 9. *he descended into the lower Parts of the Earth*, is so far from countenancing the Descent of Christ into *Hell*; that is, the Place of the Damned, That it is a very plain Proof of the Interpretation which I have offer'd, *viz.* that Christ descended into the *Grave*. For according to the Language of Scripture, *the lower Parts of the Earth* never denote *Hell*, but the *Grave* or *Sepulchre*. Thus in *Psalm* 63. 9. 'tis said, *Those that seek my Soul to destroy it, shall go into the lower Parts of the Earth*; that is, they shall be slain, and made ready for the Grave, though they shall be denied the Honour of Interrment, or a formal Grave: But in a large Sense, any Place that receives the Carcases of the Dead may be called a *Grave*. So in *Ezek.* 31. 14. *the nether Parts of the Earth* (they are the same Words in the Original with those in *Psal.* 63. 9. only the former Word is here in the Singular, and there in the Plural) are the *Grave*, as is evident from the next Verse, where they are explained by *going down to the Grave*. To these *lower* or *nether Parts of the Earth*, answers in the New Testament, *the Heart of the Earth*, as in *Mat.* 12. 40. *the Son of Man shall be Three Days*

Days in the Heart of the Earth, i. e. in the Grave or Sepulchre, as is confess'd by all sober Expositors. For according to the *Hebrew* Manner of speaking, *the Heart* is the *inward Part* of a Thing, *Deut.* 4. 11. *Ezek.* 28. 2. and other Places. And what we translate *the midst of the Seas*, Jon. 11. 3. is according to the Original, *the heart of the Seas*. So Christ's Body was for a Time deposited in the inward Part of the Earth, that is, the Grave.

Thence the *Grave* is call'd our *Mother's Womb*, Job 1. 21. because it is an inward and remote Receptacle, wherein the Body is contain'd and hid after Death, as it was in our Mother's Womb before our Birth. *Naked*, saith he, *came I out of my Mother's Womb, and naked shall I return thither*, i. e. to my Mother's Womb the *Earth*, our common Parent; for since *Adam* was taken out of the *Earth*, this hath been reputed the Mother of all Mankind. And after this Manner the Psalmist speaks in *Psa.* 139. 15. *I was curiously wrought in the lowest Parts of the Earth*: where *the lowest Parts of the Earth*, are the very same with *his Mother's Womb*, v. 13. We see hence, what is the Style of the Holy Scripture, and hence we are taught how to interpret Christ's *Descent into the lowest Parts of the Earth*. The *Grave* being a Place where the Body is shut up and enclosed, as it was at first in the *Womb*, and this being a Place where the Body is as it were buried for a Time, it was fitting that *both* these should be expressed in the same Manner as we have found. And accordingly, when it is said of Christ in that fore-nam'd Place of the Epistle to the *Ephesians*, That *he descended into the lower Parts of the Earth*; the plain Meaning is, That he descended first into the *Womb* of the Blessed Virgin at his Incarnation, and then afterwards into the *Grave* when he was buried. For it is common for a Text of Scripture to have a double Meaning: Herein the Sacred Writings surpass all others, as I have shew'd in another Place. However, we are certain that the latter of these is meant in this Place, and that Christ's Descent into the *Sepulchre* (which was a signal Act and part of his Humiliation) is here to be understood for the Grave or Sepulchre, or Place of Burial, is here express'd in the same Terms that it is in other Places of Scripture. Thus we see that the Interpretation which I have offered, is founded upon Holy Writ.

4*thly*, This Interpretation of the Article will be render'd the more probable, if we recurr to the First Creed where this Article is to be found, and that is in the Creed of the Church of *Aquileia*: where the Words are these, *descendit ad inferna*, or as some Copies, *in inferna*. Now this Word *Inferna* doth not include in it the Notion of *Hell*, but only *the lower Parts*, and accordingly *in inferna* was by the *Greeks* render'd εἰς τὰ κατάχθονια, and εἰς τὰ κατώτατα, which have no necessary Relation to *Hell*. It began afterwards to be changed into *in infernum*, and *ad inferos*, but corruptly. *Inferna* was the Primitive Word, and is of a great Latitude, and well agrees with the Interpretation I have assigned; that is, of Christ's Descent to the *Grave*.

5*thly*, Another Thing that makes for this Interpretation is this, That the fore-said Creed of *Aquileia* runs thus, *Crucifixus sub Pontio Pilato, descendit in inferna*, and that is all the Article. Which when *Rufinus* had compared with the *Roman* and the *Eastern Creeds*, which expressly mention Christ's *being buried*, he thence inferrs, that these and the *Aquileian* Symbol agree; for *descendit ad inferna*, is but equivalent with *sepultus est*. His Words are these, "* We must know, that "in the Creed of the *Roman* Church, there is not added the *Descent in inferna*, "nor is this Expression in the Symbols of the Oriental Churches, but yet the "import of these Terms *descendit in inferna*, seems to be the same with what "the *Roman* and Oriental Creeds expressly mention; namely, *he was dead*. This is a very Considerable, as well as a very ancient Confirmation of the Sense and Meaning of this Article which I offer. It is so considerable, that the judicious Bishop *Pearson*, though he is pleased in Conformity to some other Writers, to interpret the Article concerning the Descent into *Hell* in another Meaning, yet he ingenuously and freely confesses, That *the first Intention of putting these Words into the Creed, was only to express the Burial of our Saviour, or the Descent of his Body into the Grave*. And immediately after, *Those who had only the Burial in their Creed, did confess as much as those who without the Burial did express the Descent*. Whence it may be gathered, That the *Burial* of Christ is meant by his *Descent into Hell*, for the *Descent* is not distinct from the *Sepulchre*.

*Scendum sane est quod in Ecclesiæ Romanæ symbolo non habetur additum *descendit in inferna*; sed neq; in Orientis Ecclesiis habetur hic sermo: vis tamen verbi eadem videtur esse in eo quod *sepultus est*. Ruffin. Exposit. Symb.

6*thly*,

6thly, It is fit we should understand this Article concerning the *Descent* of Christ's Body, not of his Soul, (as the other Interpreters would have it) because otherwise it would not be analogous and conformable to the *other* neighbouring Articles, which do *all* of them speak of Christ's *Body*. And therefore it is not likely, that this which is in the midst of them, should be otherwise understood. It is plain, that all these Articles, *who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin* Mary, *Suffered under* Pontius Pilate, *was crucified, dead and buried*; *The Third Day he rose again from the Dead, He ascended into Heaven, and sitteth on the Right-Hand of God the Father Almighty*; *From thence he shall come to judge the Quick and the Dead*, referr to Christ as he had a Body chiefly, and some of them respect his Body only, as those, *He was crucified, dead, and buried*; *the Third Day he rose again from the Dead.* And who then can think, That those Words *he descended into Hell* relate to his *Soul* wholly? Will not any unprejudiced Person rather think that the *Body* is meant here, when this Article is thus joyn'd with those that speak of this Part? What was *crurified, dead*, and *buried*, and *rose again from the Dead*, that very same was it which *descended into Hell*, or, as we should rightly translate the Words, *descended into the Grave.* Now, nothing descended thus but the *Body* of Christ. This shews how incongruous it is to apply these Words to Christ's going down, as to his *Soul* only, to the Regions of the damned. I grant that some of the Ancient Fathers were of this Perswasion, but it was meerly upon the Mistake of the Sense of that Text, *Thou wilt not leave my Soul in Hell*, which I have endeavoured to set in a true Light, and represent it to the Reader in its genuine Meaning. And there were several Primitive Fathers that did *not* apply that Text to the Descent of Christ's Soul.

7thly, We are assured that Christs *Soul* was in Heaven after it was separated from his Body. He told us himself, That upon the very Day of his Suffering he should be in *Paradise*, *Luk.* 23. 42. the Place of righteous Souls separated from their Bodies: Which is a sufficient Proof that he was not in *Hell*, the Habitation of the departed Spirits of the Wicked: For we can't Harbour so wild a Thought as to imagine that he was in *both* Places together. This may confirm us in the Perswasion that Christ's Descent into the *Grave*, not into *Hell*, the Mansion of the damned, is meant in this Article.

Lastly, 'Tis no Wonder that the depositing of Christ in the *Grave*, is particularly mention'd in the Creed; for the New Testament doth in a signal Manner take Notice of, and expressly mention this very Thing, as of great Moment and Importance. We are ascertain'd, That this was typically represented in *Jonas*, Mat. 12.40. *As Jonas was three Days and three Nights in the Belly of the Whale, so the Son of Man shall be three Days and three Nights in the Heart of the Earth.* This was predicted by the Prophet *David* in those Words so fully insisted upon, *thou wilt not leave my Soul in Hell.* This was foretold by *Isa.* 53. 9. *He made his Grave with the Wicked and with the Rich in his Death.* For the malicious *Jews* designed to *bury* Christ with the Two Malefactors with whom he suffered, as was the Custom, whence (as the learned Bishop *Pearson* most sagaciously observes) according to the *Intention* and *Design* of his Enemies, Christ is said to have *made his Grave with the Wicked, i. e.* with the Malefactors who suffer'd on the Cross with him: But if we respect his actual Burying, *he made his Grave with the Rich in his Death*; that is, he obtained a Burying-Place by the Assistance and Favour of those Two Rich and Honourable Persons, *Joseph* and *Nicodemus*; the one bestow'd on him his own Vault or Tomb, the other took Care of preparing his Body for the Sepulchre by embalming it, *John* 19. 39, 40. It was a very remarkable Providence of God that Christ was *buried*, if we consider that among the *Romans* those who suffered Death on the Cross were not taken down, but left exposed to the Fowls of the Air, or there to rot and perish. But the *Jews*, who according to their Law, *Deut.* 21. 22. were not to permit *any that were hang'd on a Tree, to remain all Night there, but to bury them that Day*, went to *Pilate* the *Roman* Governor to desire that this Law might be put in Execution, *John* 19. 31. and he granted their Request: But *Joseph* of *Arimathea* particularly went to the same Governor, and begg'd Christ's Body for his own Sepulchre. Thus, the *interring* of Jesus was extraordinary, and therefore it is, That all the *Evangelists* take Special Notice of it, and St. *Paul* in his Sermon, *Acts* 13. 29. tells us, That they not only *took our Saviour down from the Tree, but they laid him in a Sepulchre.* This then being of so important a Nature, it cannot

seem

seem strange that it is inserted into the *Creed*; as it is no Doubt that when 'tis said, *Christ descended into Hades*, the Meaning is not that he went down in *Hell*, the Place where the Souls of Wicked Men are tormented after they are separated from their Bodies, but that he descended into the *Grave*, he was laid in the Ground, he was committed to the Earth, he was deposited in a Sepulchre.

But though I have thus endeavour'd from *Reason* and *Scripture*, and *the Propriety and Use of the Word* to settle this Interpretation, yet there is a plausible *Objection* that will be started, and which will seem to overthrow all that I have said. It is this, That it is not the *Grave* that is here meant by ᾅδης, because then there would be a manifest *Tautology* in this Part of the Creed. The Word immediately foregoing in the Article is ἐτάφη, *he was buried*, which is the *very same* with *descending into the Grave*; therefore it is absurd to add this to that, it is a needless and idle Repetition which is not to be admitted.

This Objection is remov'd by some after this Manner, *he descended into the Grave* is added by Way of *Explication*; as thus, *he was buried*; that is, he was laid in the Sepulchre or Grave, the Place of Burial. Nor will this be thought a very contemptible Answer to the Objection, if we consider that there is nothing more common in Scripture than to repeat the same Thing in different Words. Yea, as to this very particular Way of speaking which is now before us, I find that there are several Texts of the same kind. We read of *burying, and laying the Carcase in the Grave*, 1 Kin. 13. 30. *burying and coming to the Grave*, ch. 14. v. 12, 13. *being cast out of the Grave, and not being join'd with others in Burial*, Isa. 14. 19, 20. And accordingly we meet with these together in the Creed, *he was buried*, and *he descended into the Grave*.

But though the Scripture in some Places seems to allow of this manner of Speech, yet I don't see how it can very well be digested, that in the *Creed*, which is a Collection of several *particular distinct* Articles, one plainly *different* from another, there should not be a more exact Way of speaking; and especially in this Body of Articles, which is so *brief* and *concise*, it can't be expected that there should be a *Repetition* of the same Thing; that is, That immediately after it is said concerning Christ that *he was buried*, it should be added that *he descended into the Grave*. Wherefore I crave leave to propound another Way of taking off the *Tautology* which is objected; namely, by understanding that original Word, which we render *buried* in another Sense than it is commonly taken, and translated here in the Creed. I desire you not to startle at it because of the newness of it, but with your wonted Candor and Judgment consider and weigh it as I shall now offer it to you. It is probable that ἐτάφη is not to be render'd *sepultus est*, but *funeratus est*. We are not to translate it *he was buried*, but *he had the Funeral Rites*, viz. those which precede burying. So that the Article runs thus, *He suffered under Pontius Pilate, he was crucified, and he died, and had the Funeral Rites, and went down into the Grave*. Here is nothing of *Tautology*, nothing superfluous and redundant, but all is even and entire. It remains then, that I clear the Notion concerning the Word ἐτάφη, and make it evident that it is to be understood here not of *burying*, that is of interring of the Body (for that is the Meaning of *descending into Hades*, as I have shew'd,) but of the *Funeral Rites* which are the Forerunners of burying.

We are to know then, that the Verb θάπτειν, and so the Passive θάπτεσθαι hath a double Signification; it denotes not only *Sepulture*, but *the Preparation* in order to it, and particularly *Embalming* is meant by this Word. This is undeniably evident from *Gen.* 50. 26. *they embalmed him, and he was put in a Coffin*, which is thus render'd by the *Septuagint*, ἔθαψαν καὶ ἔθηκαν ἐν τῇ σορῷ. Where we see θάπτειν is the Word made use of by those Interpreters for the *preparing of the Body for the Burial*. Before *Joseph's* Friends interr'd his Body they embalm'd it, and dress'd it up, and decently and honourably placed it in a Coffin. These were the Funeral Solemnities before the Interrment of his Body, and θάπτειν is the *Greek* Word to express them. And the *Hebrew* Verb for *burying* is of a large Signification, and imports not only *bare burying*, but something more, as when it is often said of the Kings of *Israel* and *Judah* that they were *buried*, it includes the *Funeration* as well as the *Interrment*. So when it is said in *Luke* 16. 22. that *the rich Man died and was buried*, the Word ἐτάφη takes in all the Funeral Preparation; for it is not to be doubted, that he who when alive was *cloathed in Purple and fine Linen*, had

had his dead Body wrapt up in the fine Funeral Linen, with odoriferous Ointments, as was the Custom of that Time.

There is another, and a plain Instance of the foresaid Acception of this Word θάπτειν in one of the *Greek* Fathers, I mean *Athanasius*, in the Life of St. *Anthony*, who speaking of the Manner how the Christians in *Egypt* dispos'd of the dead Bodies of their Friends, especially those of the Holy Martyrs, he tells us, That * *they used to prepare* (θάπτειν is the Word) *their Bodies for Burial, to wrap them up in Linen, but not to place them under Ground, but to lay them upon Couches, and so to keep them among them at Home.* Where it is manifest that θάπτειν doth not, cannot signifie to *bury* or *interr*, because *Athanasius* speaks of those who used no Interrment, but had a Custom of keeping the Dead above Ground, but never committed them to a Grave or Sepulchre. And it is as manifest that θάπτειν and περιειλίσσειν ὀθονίοις (which are the Terms used by *Athanasius*) are explicatory one of another; that is, they denote the *Funeral Preparation* which was used towards the dead Bodies in that Country. I might confirm this from what we find in *Stephens's Thesaurus*, who tells us, That θάπτειν signifies *to take Care of the Funeral*, and he quotes two † *Greek* Orators for this Purpose. This is sufficient to prevail with any to subscribe to what I said, that the Import of the Word θάπτειν, is not only *Sepelire*, but sometimes it is as much as *præparare ad*, or *in sepulturam*. And so ἐνταφὴ in this Article of the Creed, is to be understood in the latter Acception of the Word; namely, concerning the Honours done to Christ's Body after his Death, the Rites used in order to his Burial.

* Τὰ τῶν τελευτώντων σπουδάζουσι σώματα, καὶ μάλιστα τῶν ἁγίων μαρτύρων φιλοῦσι μὲν θάπτειν, καὶ περιειλίσσειν ὀθονίοις, μὴ κρύπτειν δὲ ὑπὸ γῆν, ἀλλ' ἐπὶ σκιμποδίων τιθέναι, καὶ φυλάττειν ἔνδον παρ' ἑαυτοῖς.

† Antiphon & Isæus.

I will farther shew, That this is sometimes the Signification of the Verb θάπτειν, from the Words that are derived from this Theme. Thus ταφὴ is not only *Sepultura* but *exequiæ, funus:* So this Word is taken in this large Sense in *Eccl.* 6. 3. *If a Man have no Burial*, render'd by the Seventy καὶ ταφὴ οὐκ ἐγένετο αὐτῷ. Where any one can't but apprehend, that ταφὴ signifies the *Funeral Solemnities and Exequies as well as Interrment.* And particularly *embalming* the dead Body is meant by this Word in Gen. 15. 3. where ἡμέραι τῆς ταφῆς, are *the Days of embalming.* So the Word τάφος is not only the *Sepulchre*, but the *Funeral Supper* (in one of *Homer's Iliads*) *Il.* ψ which was one of the Rites and Usages of old that attended the Burial of great Men, and were celebrated in Honour of them. Thus ταφεὺς (as *Hesychius* and other Writers of that Sort assure us) is *pollinctor*, he that takes care of the washing, anointing, and dressing of the dead Corps, which were the constant Funeral Preparatories of old. The Poetick Word ταφήϊος is *funereus*, and according to *Hesychius* ταφήϊα, are those Clothes that the Dead are wrapt in, in order to Burial. Ἐνταφιος the Adjective is *funereus, feralis, funebris, ad funus pertinens*, as well as *Sepulchralis*, and *ad sepulturam pertinens.* Ἐνταφιον and ἐνταφια, Substantives are *exequiæ, inferiæ, funus*; yea, * *Plutarch* uses ἐνταφιον for a Mourning Funeral Garment. So ἐπιτάφιος is *funebris*, as ἐπιτάφειον δεῖπνον in *Synesius*, the Funeral Supper. Lastly, Ἐνταφιαστὴς is *vespillo, pollinctor*, in prophane Authors, and so it is in the Seventy Interpreters, *Gen.* 50. 2. whose Office it was ἐνταφιάσαι (as we read in the same Verse) *to take Care of embalming* the dead Bodies.

* In Symposi.

Which Word ἐνταφιάσαι is also used by some of the *Evangelists* to signifie that *anointing* and *preparing* of *the Body*, which precedes Burial, and though it is by our Translators render'd *Burial or Burying*, yet it is plain they use it for the Rites preparatory to Burial. Thus in *Mat.* 26. 12. *she did it for my Burial*, Πρὸς τὸ ἐνταφιάσαί με, *for my embalming* which goes before burying. And (whatever Expositors may have suggested) I doubt not but the Word is so to be understood in *John* 19. 40. *They took the Body of Jesus, and wound it in Linen Cloths, with the Spices, as the Manner of the Jews is to bury*, Greek ἐνταφιάζειν, *to prepare Bodies for Burial*, to embalm them. *Burying* here you see is *Embalming.*

And the Substantive ἐνταφιασμος is used as the Verb, *Mar.* 14. 8. *She is come afore-hand to anoint my Body to the Burying*, εἰς τὸν ἐνταφιασμόν, she did as 'twere anticipate that Funeral Work which she afterwards perform'd, *Mark* 16. 1. So in *John* 12. 7. *against the Day of my Burying*, τῆς ἐνταφιασμοῦ, *hath she kept this*, that is, against the Time of my *Embalming*, which precedes Burial. We see then, That in all these Places the *Greek* Words that come from ἐνταφὴ signifie *embalming* or *fitting the Body for Interrment*, though our Translators render them *Burying.* Which by the Way, shews that the Word *Burying* hath been used in *this* Sense; namely, to signifie the *preparatory Rites* and particularly *Embalming*, in order to

Interrment or Burial. And so here in the *Creed*, ἐτάφη is to be understood; that is, in the Sense of ἐνταφιάζειν *funerare* (as *Beza* best of all translates it) or *præparare ad sepulturam*, though it is translated *he was buried.*

We are then to look to the Thing itself, which is meant by *Burying*, and that is the *Funeral Rites* perform'd to our Saviour's Body before it was laid in the Grave. These are all comprized in these Two Things, *wrapping in Linen*, and *using an Aromatick Composition.* For though the *Jews* did not go so far as the *Egyptians*, who took out the Bowels and Entrails of the Dead, and fill'd up the Bodies with dry Gums and Spices, and Wax, and other Things that they knew would preserve them, (whence these are call'd *Mummies*, from *Mum* a *Persian* Word for *Wax*, because they always made use of this in preserving the Bodies of the Dead, and it was as 'twere the Vehicle of their Balsamick Compositions) yet they follow'd the Custom of the *Greeks* and *Romans* who wrapt up the Bodies in fine Linen with Aromatick Unguents and Spices. This preparing of Christ's Body for Burial was perform'd by *Joseph* of *Arimathea*, by *Nicodemus*, and by the pious *Women*, who are particularly mentioned on this Occasion, and who are by the Ancients called μυροφόροι, because of their bringing sweet Ointments to anoint our Saviour's Body.

And if we consider how *particularly* and *distinctly every one* of the Evangelists makes mention of these *Funeral Preparations*, in order to the laying Christ's Body in the Grave, we shall think it very pertinent and proper, that the *Creed* should take Notice of it.

First, St. *Matthew* particularly records, That *when Joseph of Arimathea had taken the Body, he wrap'd it in a clean Linen Cloth*, ch. 27. v. 59. the same that we call a *Winding-Sheet.*

St. *Mark* tells us, that this *Joseph bought fine Linen, and wrap'd* Christ's Body *in the Linen*, ch. 15. v. 46. and he adds in ch. 16. v. 1. That *Mary Magdalen and Mary the Mother of James and Salome bought sweet Spices, That they might come and anoint him.* St. *Luke* also attests, That *Joseph wrapp'd in Linen* Christ's sacred Body, *ch.* 23. v. 53. and concerning the Women he adds that *they prepared Spices and Ointments*, v. 56. For what *Joseph* had done, was done in haste, because the Sabbath was the next Day, and 'tis probable that his Publick Office and Place requir'd his Attendance at that particular Juncture; for which Reasons he could not be exact in performing this Funeral Rite of embalming: Wherefore these Holy Women, who had more Leisure that Night, spent that Time in preparing the Materials for that Purpose: And accordingly 'tis particularly recorded in *Luk.* 24. 1. That *upon the First Day of the Week, very early in the Morning they brought the Spices which they had prepar'd.*

Lastly, the Evangelist St. *John* acquaints us, That *Nicodemus* (as well as *Joseph*) signaliz'd himself by this pious Act of Embalming our Saviour, for these are his Words, *ch.* 19. *v.* 35. *There came also Nicodemus, who at the first came to Jesus by Night, and brought a Mixture of Myrrh and Aloes, about a Hundred Pound weight. Then took they the Body of Jesus, and wound it in Linen Cloths, with the Spices, as the Manner of the Jews is to embalm.* For so this last Word is to be render'd, as I have before shew'd, and as the Learned Dr. *Hammond* hath render'd it.

Thus we see how *particular* and *express* all the Evangelists are concerning this Matter, to let us know without doubt, how *considerable* and *important* it is.

And further, if we consider that this Embalming of our Saviour's Body, (as well as his *Burying*, (which I spake of before) was wholly an *extraordinary* thing, that is, it was brought to pass contrary to the design of the *Jews*, and contrary to the practice of the *Romans* in the case of Malefactors, and consequently was effected by the *particular Over-ruling* Sway of the Divine Wisdom and Power, we must needs acknowledge it to be worthy of the publick notice of the Christian Church. And I might add this, that this Embalming was perform'd by very considerable Persons, *Joseph* and *Nicodemus*, one a rich Ruler, the other an honourable Counsellor, who were in a high Station among the *Jews*; and on *that* account might be thought to be *backward* to appear openly in such a Cause, and therefore this Action was the more remarkable. And this last Office of Piety and Friendship was done likewise by the weak and timorous Sex, who might justly have been excus'd from so hazardous a Work. All which proves it to be a most *remarkable* and *wonderful* Undertaking, and fit to be Commemorated, as by all the Evangelists,

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so by all Christian Churches in their publick Symbols and Devotions. Accordingly the *Creed* takes notice of it, and comprehends it in that word ἐτάφη, which is commonly render'd, *he was Buried*; but from what hath been said, it appears that the *meaning* is this, his Body *was prepared for Interrment*, it had the Rites which were wont to forego Burial.

And if we understand the word thus, there is no *Repetition* of what was said before, and all pretence of a *Tautology* vanishes. For thus we express our selves, We believe that Christ was not only Crucified, and Dead, but that he was Embalm'd, and that he condescended to be laid in a Sepulchre or Grave, which is the proper Receptacle of dead Bodies. This I humbly offer to your Consideration, and judge of it according to its Merits.

If I had only built my Interpretation on the acception of the word in a prophane Author or two, it might justly be excepted against; but when we see it not only confirm'd by them, but establish'd on the express Style and Language of the *Septuagint*, and of the *New Testament*, and of *Ecclesiastical Writers*, we have reason to think that *these* gave the Compilers of the Creed occasion to use this word in that Sense; especially when we consider that many of the Ecclesiastical *Greek* Writers chose to make use of several of the Words, and peculiar Expressions that are found in the Septuagint Version, and they think that to be sufficient Authority.

And now to return to speak of the last Clause, [*He descended into Hades*] I cannot see why this rendring and interpreting of it which I have offer'd should not readily be admitted, it being according to the most noted signification *of the word* ᾅδης, and most agreeable to the *neighbouring Articles*, and most conformable to the *Sacred Writ*; tho' I am far from Censuring those Learned Men of our Church who embrace another Sense, they being supported by some shew of Antiquity, and by some Texts of Scripture which seem to favour their Opinion. But if we impartially, and without Prejudice weigh the Matter, we can't be perswaded that *Hell* properly so call'd is meant in this Article; or we can't assert the *Truth* of it, if such an Exposition be urged.

We must remember then that *Creeds* are no further Authoritative, and properly *Creeds*, than they are the Contents of Holy Scripture. Nothing ought to be inserted into a *Creed*, but what is taken out of the Bible; and nothing is so, but what is expresly asserted in it. This is acknowledg'd by that Great Man, Bishop *Pearson*, who hath this Maxim, (tho' he did not observe it himself) *Whatsoever is deliver'd in the Creed, we therefore believe, because it is contain'd in the Scriptures.* Nay, it is not fitting, that so much as the words, (if we must needs continue them in the Creed) should be interpreted, or understood in a Sense that is not confirm'd by plain Scripture; and for that *Reason* I cannot interpret these words, *he descended into Hades*, as some have done.

Our Business in our present Case is to wave all Conjectures, and uncertain Surmises, and to see what the Holy Scripture saith; for we must not profess any thing to be an Article of our Faith, but what is Authoriz'd by the Word of God. Wherefore 'tis evident, that no Man can with a safe Conscience, rehearse this Article as it is commonly worded, when he is perswaded that *Hell* is not the word to be used; and he must needs be perswaded of it, if he believes that Christ *did not go down into Hell*. And, if on this very Score, even those that interpret *Hades* concerning *the State of the Dead*, can have no reason to call that State *Hell*, much less have those who think the word signifies here the *Grave* only. Therefore it will follow hence that the *Word* should be taken away.

I don't say the *Article* ought to be taken away, for this, together with the rest of the Creed, hath been an ancient Platform of Faith, and all the Reformed Churches have own'd it. But tho' these latter are unwilling to lay aside this part of the Article, yet they are as unwilling to interpret it of *Hell, properly so call'd*, as the Papists generally do. There seems to be no necessity at all of expunging Christ's *going down into Hades*; but it is necessary to *express it aright*, that People may know what they profess, and publickly acknowledge daily in the Solemn Assemblies, when they rehearse the Creed. Which is the thing now in hand, and I have endeavour'd to shew that there is no better way of expressing the whole Article, and declaring our Belief of it, than in such Terms as these; *He suffer'd under Pontius Pilate, was Crucified, Dead, and Embalm'd, and descended into the Grave.*

Here we may fix, especially seeing *our Church* in one of its *Articles* hath been so Cautious and Wary in expressing her self. She doth not at all undertake to *Expound* it, but only saith, *As Christ Died for us, and was Buried; so also it is to be believ'd, that he went down into Hell.* This is all that our Church saith, and in her *Second Article* she hath quite left it out; for 'tis only said that *Christ was Crucified, Dead, and Buried to reconcile his Father to us.* And she teaches us to Pray to *be deliver'd by Christ's precious Death and Burial, by his Glorious Resurrection and Ascension*, but not a word of Christ's Descent into Hell; and therefore she may the more easily condescend to the Alteration of those two words, and change *Burying* for *Funeral-rites*, and *Hell* for the *Grave*.

Or to compromise the whole Business, we may still retain the word *Buried*, but understand it of the Funeral Obsequies. So the word *Hades* may remain in the next Clause, (as Dr. *Hammond* would have the word *Paraclete* be continued) untranslated. But as for the word *Hell*, I conceive it is not to be used. I rather urge that the *Grave* should be put in the place of *Hell*; for besides what I have said, there is this further substantial Reason for the admitting of this Translation of the word ᾅδης; namely, because *very few*, I dare say, of our Church are of Opinion that Christ went down into *Hell*, i. e. the Place of the Damned; but they *all* believe and acknowledge that he went down into the *Grave*; and they generally own that this word ᾅδης signifies the *Grave*. Wherefore seeing all the Members of our Church Unite in this, but by no means in the other, it is rational and fitting that we should all agree to use those Expressions which we unanimously consent to, and have no Disputes about.

I have suggested already that the Creed should consist of such Doctrines only as are unquestionable, and have a sure Ground in the Holy Scriptures. That is not *Faith*, but *Conjecture* which I may demurr to. The Articles of our Belief must be of such things as are *Certainties*. Wherefore I cannot see any Reason why we should profess in express Terms the Belief of the Descent of our Saviour to Hell, when we are not *Ascertain'd* of it. This makes our Belief unsettled and vage; yea, this is not the Christian Faith, but believing at Random. Which seems to me to be Dishonourable to our Religion, and to reflect on our Church; and I fear that the Church of *Rome*, which we justly blame for maintaining the Lawfulness of *Equivocations*, may object to us our *speaking* otherwise than we *mean*. And when we dislike their Praying in an *unknown Tongue*, they will be inclin'd to take notice of our expressing our Faith in such Terms as we *know not* to be expressive of the Sense of our Minds. Wherefore for the sake of our Adversaries of the *Roman* Communion, we should be very careful in this Point, that they may not quarrel with us for our Publick owning Christ's Descent into Hell, whilst at the same time we deny our Assent to the Truth of it.

So likewise our Dissenting Brethren may take occasion to confirm themselves in their Dislike of the Service of our Church, when they see that we openly profess that very Doctrine which the Generality of *Protestants*, and even of our *own Church* rejects. May it not be thought a Disparagement to our Publick Worship and Service, to retain the word *Hell* in the fore-mention'd Article, when few, or none of us believe the *thing* which is meant by it?

Besides, hereby we mightily gratifie the *Polite Men*, (as they are pleas'd to style themselves) of this Age, who are wont to talk wonderfully against *Creeds* and *Systems*; for what can be more acceptable to these Unbelievers, and what can more Authorize their Infidelity, than putting into our Creed the Local Descent of Christ into *Hell*, the Place of the Damned; when some of the chiefest Prelates, and Doctors of our Church acknowledge, that this is not the import of the word in the *Greek*? Or, to say the best of it, it is a *doubtful Point*, and therefore ought not to be inserted into the Creed. Thus you have my Thoughts concerning this Article of the Apostle's Creed, which I humbly submit to the Judgment of the Learned, and assert nothing dogmatically.

It remains now, that I shut up all with one or two *Practical Inferences* from the whole.

1. We are assur'd from the Promises of the *Certainty* of Christ's *Death*, which is the great Fundamental Doctrine of the Christian Religion. Men are not *Embalm'd* before they *Die*. That *Funeral Preparation* always implies that the Persons are *really Dead*. So then this Passage in the Creed gives us an Assurance of the *Truth of Christ's*

Christ's Death, upon the Reality and Certainty of which all our Happiness depends; for it is by his Meritorious Passion and Death, that Eternal Life and Glory are purchas'd for us; and that we are not consigned to Everlasting Death and Misery. Thus we see of what vast Importance *this part* of the Article is.

2. We have a mighty Consolation Administred to us from the *other part* of it; namely, Christ's *Descending into the Grave*; for he hath Consecrated it by lodging in it, he hath sweetned the Stench, and perfum'd the Rottenness of our Sepulchres. This renders Death desirable and welcome, and makes it the Door to Heaven and Happiness. It is only by the effectual Application of the Blood of Jesus, who descended into the *lower parts of the Earth*, that we can have admittance to those *higher Mansions above*. Hence it is that *the Righteous hath Hope in his Death*, as the Wise Man speaks; he resigns his last Breath with Chearfulness, and goes down to the Grave with Joy and Triumph.

3*ly*, And lastly, We are reminded from the Premises to *prepare our selves* for that Period of Time, when our *Bodies* must, (as our Saviour's was) be committed to the Ground, and our *Souls* take their flight to another World. Let us urge this upon our Minds, that nothing, on *our part*, can fit us for this but a Religious and a Holy Life, a strict Observance of the Divine Laws, a right Performance of the particular Offices which our peculiar Stations require of us. I beseech you by all that is dear and precious to you, receive this Word of Exhortation, *Seek the Lord whilst he may be found, and call upon him whilst he is near*; break off your Sins by Repentance, and be serious about the Salvation of your Immortal Souls. Fill up all the parts of your Life with what is Praise-worthy and commendable; be ever doing or designing some Good. Make it the grand Business of your Lives to keep your Consciences pure and unstain'd; for this, next unto the *Blood* of *Jesus*, will be your greatest Solace and Ravishment. This that I commend to you is of the greatest Moment; wherefore I beg of you that you would seriously lay it to Heart.

Thus I have finish'd this Point, and conclude that this *Descent* of Christ was in order to his *Ascent*, *Eph.* 4. 9. His Humiliation made way for his Exaltation; and accordingly I am to proceed to Christ's *Resurrection*, and so to his *Ascension* into Heaven.

ARTI-

ARTICLE V.

The Third Day He rose again from the Dead.

A Discourse on Phil. III. 10.

That I may know him, and the Power of his Resurrection.

IN

This Discourse the *Truth* and *Certainty* of Christ's *Resurrection* are demonstrated, and the abundant *Usefulness* of it is display'd. Here is discuss'd that Problem, *How Christ was three Days and three Nights in the Grave.*

THE Acts of Christ's *Humiliation*, are his *Birth, and Life*, his *Sufferings, Death, Burial*, and *Descent into the Grave*; of which I have distinctly treated. Now I proceed to his *Exaltation*, the parts of which are also mention'd in the Creed; namely, his *Resurrection*, his *Ascension*, his *sitting at God's right Hand*, his *Judging the World* at the last Day. I begin with the first of these, as 'tis express'd in the foregoing words, which mention Christ's *Resurrection*, and the *Power* of it; the Matter of Fact, and the blessed Event and Consequence of it. For the better apprehending of which Passage, we are to take notice, that in the beginning of this Chapter the Apostle cautions his *Philippians* against a sort of Men that were then abroad in the World, who were extreamly Disorderly and Malicious, such indeed as deserv'd not the Name of *Men*, but might without the Breach of Charity be call'd *Dogs*, v. 2. the same whom in * this Chapter he calls *the Enemies of the Cross of Christ*, those that undermine and oppose the Merit of Christ's Person, whilst they cry up the Observance of the *Mosaick* Law, and all the Rites and Ceremonies of it. These Men very boldly and peremptorily talk for *Circumcision*, but they are rather of the *Concision*, saith the Apostle, *v. 2.* that is, they rend and tear the Church of Christ in pieces, and separate from their Brethren, and are very earnest that others should Judaize with them.

* V. 18.

But as for our selves, *saith he*, we are the † *Circumcision* truly and really so call'd, we are the true Children of faithful *Abraham*, ‖ *who Worship God in the Spirit, but we have no confidence in the Flesh*, i. e. in outward and bodily Circumcision, nor in any such ritual Performances; tho' I must needs say, saith St. *Paul*, if you speak of *Confidence* and *Boasting* in respect of the Privileges and Advantages of a *Jew*, no Man hath more reason for it than I, because, (as he tells them) he was according to the Order and Prescription of the *Mosaick* Law, *Circumcised the Eighth Day*, his Parents and Ancestors were *Israelites*, and of a very eminent *Tribe*, (that of *Benjamin*) both his Father and Mother were *Hebrews*; and besides all this, he was of the strictest and zealousest Sect among the *Jews*, a *Pharisee*; and so eager was he for the Law of *Moses*, that he *Persecuted* the Christians that opposed it; and as for *the Righteousness which is in the Law*, i. e. all External Observances, and Performances, he was Punctual and Precise, he never neglected any of them, and consequently was *Blameless*. Thus St. *Paul* had no little reason to boast his Pedigree and Parentage, and to extol his manner of Life and Profession. He was as to *both* of them very eminent and conspicuous, and few of the *Jewish* Nation could make this Boast so truly as the Apostle could. Well, but all this is mean and insignificant in his Esteem, who is now ready to part with all Advantages, to quit all Honours and Privileges which he enjoy'd and claim'd as a *Jew*, that he might obtain the more honourable, but yet despised Name of a Christian, and embrace the Doctrine of the Blessed Messias; nay, he reckons all his Immunities as *loss* and *dung*, as vile and useless to him in comparison of the noble Attain-

† V. 18.
‖ V. 3, 4.

tainments in Christianity, which he was in hopes of arriving to, and which would be of such great Advantage to him, and which every true Christian should principally aim at, and exercise himself about.

Some of these he instances in, and thus expresses them, *That I may know him*, (i e. Jesus Christ) *and the Power of his Resurrection*, that is, that I may effectually know Christ to be risen, and that I may feel the Virtue and Efficacy of it on my Heart and my Life: Again, *That I may know the Fellowship of his Suffering*; that is, that I may in some sort partake with Christ in his Sufferings, that I may suffer with him in a Spiritual and Mystical Sense, that I may die to Sin and the World, as Christ dyed on the Cross. This I apprehend to be the same with *being made conformable unto Christ's Death*, in the next words, and which I had occasion to speak of under the Fourth Article of the Creed. But it is the former of these great Attainments which is to be the Subject of my Discourse at present, *That I may know him, and the Power of his Resurrection*; that is, as I shall consider the words with reference to the Article, that I may be fully perswaded of this great and important Truth, and that I may be no stranger to the Power and Virtue of it.

These then are the two great Things which I intend to insist upon: 1. That we are to know Christ to be risen. 2. That we are to know the Power and Virtue which accompany his Resurrection. And these Two Heads comprehend all that can be said on this Article of our Creed, *The third Day he rose again from the Dead.*

I begin with the first of these; the Knowledge of Christ risen, or the Truth and Certainty of his Resurrection. We must know, and acquaint our selves with this, and be throughly perswaded of it. For the demonstrating of which, we have most clear and evident Testimony from the Evangelical Writings. *First*, There is the Testimony of *Angels* from Heaven, of one alone, *Matt.* 28. 2. Where we read, that when the Women came near the Sepulchre, an Angel from Heaven came and removed the Stone from the Mouth of it, and sat upon it, and spoke to the Women as they were entring into the Sepulchre, and bad them be of good Chear, for Christ was risen, and this Angel led them into the Sepulchre, and shew'd them the Place void of Christ's Body. There is also the Testimony of two Angels together; for as the Women went out, two other Angels met them, and confirmed what the first had said, *Luke* 24. 4. These appear'd, saith the Evangelist, *in shining white Garments*, but these could not be more *clear* than the Testimony they there give, *v. 6. He is not here, for he is risen.* And this, without doubt, is as good an Argument of Christ's Resurrection as can be desired; for the *Apparition of Angels* was one way, and that a very common one too, whereby God used to attest and certifie to Men the Truth and Reality of things. And if this were a thing that could be easily illuded and counterfeited, then farewel the Religion of the Ancient Patriarchs and Prophets; farewel all certainty, even of those Matters which are presumed to be the most undoubted in the World.

Next to this of *Angels* succeeds the Testimony of those Godly and Devout *Women* in *Luke* 24. 9, 23. *John* 20. 1. who presently upon what the Angels told them, ran to the Apostles, and communicated to them the News. They related what they saw and heard, and therefore are competent Witnesses. Besides, they were innocent and harmless Persons, and for that Reason cannot but be admitted to bear Testimony in the case we are Treating of.

Thirdly, Let us joyn the several Testimonies of the *Apostles* and *Disciples* with *Christ's* own *Apparition*. That he did really *appear*, after he had lain in the Grave as long a time as he foretold he would, and that he was *seen* of different Persons, at several times, and in divers places, we have all the reason in the World to believe. For here, (as the Apostle saith in another Case) we are encompass'd about with a great cloud of Witnesses. To which purpose those words of St. *Peter*, in his Sermon to *Cornelius* and his Company are remarkable, *Acts* 10. 40, &c. *Him God rais'd up the third day, and shew'd him openly, not to all the people, but to witnesses chosen before of God, even to us who did eat and drink with him after he rose from the dead. And he commanded us to preach unto the people, and to testifie that it is he who was ordain'd of God to be the Judge of quick and dead. To him give all the Prophets witness*, &c. But I proceed to exhibit the more *particular Testimonies*. Christ appear'd on the Day of his Resurrection five several times, and the Witnesses of it were

were above five times as many. First, he appear'd to *Mary Magdalen* alone, *Mark* 16. 9. For she returning to the Sepulchre, and there staying, Weeping and Lamenting, was the first that saw Jesus after he was risen, *Mark* 16. 9. *John* 20. 11. Then he appear'd to her in company with the other *Mary*, (the Mother of *James* and *Joses*) *Mat.* 28. 9. and another Evangelist adds a third to them. Afterwards Christ shew'd himself to the Disciples going to *Emaus*, *Mark* 16. 12. then to *Simon Peter*, *Luke* 24. 34. 1 *Cor.* 15. 5. then (on the Evening of that Day) to all the Apostles but *Thomas*, and to others at *Jerusalem*, *Luke* 24. 36. *John* 20. 19. Thus he appear'd on the Day of his Resurrection.

Eight Days after he did so to every one of the Apostles, *Thomas* not excepted, *John* 20. 24. After this he shew'd himself to the Disciples at the Sea of *Tiberias*, and Dined with them, *John* 21. 1. (That is call'd, *v.* 14. his *Third Appearing*; the meaning is, it was the *third* which was made to many of them together, though not to one singly, or to two only.) Then we read of his appearing to the Eleven Disciples together on a Mountain in *Galilee*, *Mat.* 28. 16. And with these Eleven were many others, it is likely, for this seems to be the appearing of *the five hundred Brethren*, mention'd in 1 *Cor.* 15. 6. Then he shew'd himself to *James* alone, 1 *Cor.* 15. 7. And, lastly, on the Day of his Ascension to all his Disciples at *Jerusalem*, and on Mount *Olivet*. So that the Evangelists, with St. *Paul*, reckon about ten Appearings of Christ after his Resurrection.

To these we may add his Appearing after his Ascension; for of that the Apostle St. *Paul* speaks in 1 *Cor.* 15. 8. *Last of all he was seen of me also.* It is universally granted that St. *Paul* never saw Christ whilst he was on Earth. This *seeing* of Christ then was after his Ascension, when *Paul*, (or *Saul* rather) was on the spur to *Damascus*, and was dazled with the Light which shone from Heaven, *Acts* 9. 3. Then it was that Christ shew'd himself to him corporally; for the Apostle's words must needs be understood of the *Bodily Appearance* of Christ, because he speaks them to confirm the Doctrine of the Resurrection. [*Last of all he was seen of me.*] This Vision must be *Bodily*, and not in Shew only; for if the true Body of Christ did not appear to him, the Truth of the Resurrection would by no means be proved from what the Apostle saith. And thus I have search'd into the *Records of the Gospel*, and we are by this time convinced, (I doubt not) that the Doctrine of Christ's Resurrection owes its discovery to *these*, and that it is fully vindicated and confirmed by them. From the *Premises* it is easie to make *this Conclusion*; That the Testimony whereon Christ's Resurrection is built, is able to create in us the firmest Faith imaginable; for who can rationally desire a *better Ground* to credit any thing upon than a Divine and Infallible Testimony? And such is that of the inspired Evangelists and Apostles. This cannot deceive us, this is sure and impregnable, this must not be suspected and doubted of. This must needs *force our Belief*, and work upon us as the clearest Evidences, and the most undeniable Demonstrations use to do.

Besides, I might superadd a whole heap of *Circumstances* which concern this great Miracle, which, if not asunder, yet in conjunction will hugely contribute to our Belief. Thus it is not of light Moment which the Holy Ghost Records in the Gospel, that the dead Bodies of some Saints who had slept in their Graves many Years, were rouzed at Christ's Resurrection, and went into the Holy City, and appear'd to many of their surviving Friends, *Mat.* 27. 53. It were *enough* if there were nothing else considerable in it but *this*, that here was *one Miracle* to back and abett *another*, though perhaps that *strange Earthquake* which happen'd about that time was *instrumental* in unlocking these Graves, and setting open the Sepulchres. *That* (it is probable) shaked those dark Cells, and gave the dead Bodies a Discharge from their close Prisons.

Consider also how the Guards about Christ's Tomb were affrighted, and scar'd out of their Wits. They were fitter to be *laid in the Sepulchre* than to *keep it*; for the Sacred History informs us that [they became as *dead Men.*] And is it *probable*, (think you) that such sturdy Fellows as the *Keepers*, should shake and quiver at any ordinary Occurrence? Was not this cau'd by the Angel's appearing, and his removing the Stone?

Again, remember how the Soldiers that watch'd were hired to tell a Lye, *viz.* to say that Christ's Disciples came by Night and stole him away, whilst *they* were sleeping. Which very Fable doth add some degrees of Perswasion and Credibility to

to the History. For it is so sorrily contrived, that all the World cannot but suspect it for a *Fiction*. Doth it not sound like an arrant Falshood, that all the Watch should be fast Asleep, and not one of them to keep Century? Is it likely that the great Stone which lay at the Door of the Sepulchre, could be Roll'd away without any Noise and Disturbance? Can we imagine that a Company should enter the place, strip our Saviour of his Grave-Clothes, take up his Body, and carry it away (all which must ask some considerable Time) and all this while not one of the Watch awake? And by the way, when we read that the *Linen Cloaths were not taken away*, *Luke* 24. 12. is it not a clear Argument that the Body was not Stolen away? for the Thieves would not have stay'd to separate one from the other, but would have taken both together. And Lastly, supposing the Guard to be asleep, is it likely that the Poor Timorous and Dejected Disciples, would venture to make their way thro' them, without fear of wakening them, and attempt to Steal the Body, and bring it away with them?

Thus you see when the bold Lye is unravell'd, what pitiful Nonsense it is: And none but a blind and obstinate *Jew*, will dare to defend it. Thus the *Circumstances* of Christ's Resurrection assure us, that he really Rose. I might with the like ease shew you, that many *other passages* conspire to create in us, a firm belief of Christ's Resurrection. St. *Luke*'s Words are full, and comprehend All, in *Acts* 1. 3. where he tells us, that [*Christ shew'd himself Alive after his Passion by many Infallible Proofs, being seen of them Forty Days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the Kingdom of God.*] What *more* can be said? The *Proofs* are no less than *Infallible*. Christ did not keep up close, but went abroad and visited his Friends often. *Him God Raised up the Third Day, and shew'd him openly*, Acts 10. 40. He conversed and discoursed with his Disciples freely, he Eat and Drank with them frequently. They saw him, they heard him, they touched him, they observed him Forty Days, for so long he tarried on Earth before he Ascended. You hear what they testify and confidently assert concerning him. And to give you further Satisfaction, and to secure the *Authority* of the *Persons*, I will adjoyn these Four Considerations,

1. The matter which these Witnesses attest, is a thing which they had no great Inclination to believe. Had they been Forward and Credulous, then we might have cause to suspect what they said: Their Testimony might be lookt upon as the product of a fond Precipitancy, and not of Sober Reason and Conviction. But *Thomas*'s Hesitancy and Incredulity (tho' blameable in themselves, and therefore check'd by our Saviour) are of Use to Future Ages, and may strengthen and confirm them in their Faith. Nay, not only *Thomas*, but all the Apostles were backward to believe that Christ was Risen, and they took him rather for a Ghost or Phantom than for that Jesus who expir'd on the Cross. Our Saviour therefore exposes his Body to the Touch, bids them Act like Men, and make use of their *Senses*, as if *That* were an undeniable Conviction and Demonstration that he was really Risen.

2. Another consideration is, that the Resurrection of Christ was such a thing, as these Persons might easily and clearly perceive, and make a right Judgment of. Had it been something which they were not competent Judges of, we might justly conclude, that they spoke besides the Business. And not understanding themselves, or what they said, their Testimony would have been useless, and all their Discourse about this matter ought to be no more minded, than the Talk of Children or Fools. But the Case is otherwise here, for that the Apostles and Disciples were Men that had common Understanding (to say no more) I suppose none will be so Irrational as to deny. And that they had the Use and Exercise of their Senses, as other Persons have, I think will be as easily granted. And if so, then they could Judge of those things which were Objects of Sense; and such was the *Body of Christ*. They might as certainly know whether they saw and felt Christ's Body, as we do whether we see one another, or whether we hear one another speak. And we have no reason to think, that there was any Delusion or Deception of their Senses, seeing Christ appeared *so often* in the presence of them all, and seeing God shew'd him *openly*, as St. *Luke* testifies. The Depositions then of these Witnesses are a rational Confirmation of our Faith, for the Resurrection of Christ being matter of Fact, it must be prov'd in such a manner, as other things of that Nature use to be. This Evidence was so clear and convictive, that the Apostles were

hereby emboldned to Preach this Doctrine maugre all Contradictions and Hardships. *We cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard*, say they. St. *Luke*, in the entrance of his Gospel tells us, that the things he writes are such, as he had a *perfect Understanding of from the very First*. And St. *John*, in the beginning of his Epistles professes, that the matters he treats of, are no other than what he and others Persons had both *seen* and *heard*. Which could have no weight in it if those Credentials which are brought from *Sense* are not to be receiv'd by us, and are of no Authority with Understanding Men.

3. *Many Witnesses* unanimously concurr here in the same thing. The Holy Men who Penn'd this History, writ it in different Places, and at different Times, and yet *all* their Testimonies agree. Had it been a Lye, it could not have been given under so many Hands, and confirmed by so general a suffrage. In this Evidence about Christ's Resurrection there were concerned Angels and Men, Together and Alone; both Sexes, and all sorts of Persons. The Joint concurrence of their Relations proves it to be no Fiction and Imposture.

But here it may be *Objected*, that Christ's Resurrection is confirmed by his own Disciples only, for he appeared to none but these. It had been better if he had shew'd himself to *Herod* and the High Priests, and the rest of the People of the *Jews*: This would have been ample Testimony indeed. As to the first part of the *Objection* I answer, Christ did not appear only to the Apostles and Seventy Disciples, but many others were present at the same time, even *Five Hundred Brethren at once*, 1 *Cor.* 15. 6. If he had appeared but to a *few* of the Brethren, then indeed there might have been some ground for the Objection; but we are ascertain'd that a *Multitude* of them saw him, and conversed with him, and that no less than Forty Days. Here is Evidence enough. And then as to the Second part of the Objection, I answer,

1. Though Christ appeared not after his Resurrection to the generality of the *Jews*, yet his Authority and Mission were sufficiently attested before, *viz.* by Miracles openly wrought before all the *Jews*. These were a sufficient Testimony of his Divinity: Therefore there was no necessity of his Appearing to them after his Resurrection to convince them of That:

2. The Truth of his Resurrection was evident enough without his Appearing to the whole People, the Circumstances being so many, and so evident: More particularly, there was that undeniable Demonstration of the Truth of Christ's being Risen, which I mentioned before, and that is the reason why we read nothing of his appearing openly to the *Jews* afterwards. *Pilate* had secured the Sepulchre with a Watch or Guard of Soldiers: It was well known that a handful of timorous Men could not Steal the Body away: Therefore when *Pilate* and *Herod*, and the High Priests (who narrowly searcht into this Business) *certainly knew* that it was not in the Sepulchre, they knew also as certainly that Christ was Risen, and not Stolen. Seeing there was this clear Evidence of Christ's Resurrection, there was no need of his shewing himself to those Men.

3*dly*, They were by reason of their *Obstinacy*, unworthy of such a Favour. It was not fit his Resurrection should be attested by the unbelieving *Jews*, and *Romans*, who had so grossly Sinned against their Knowledge, and continued Stubborn and Refractary, notwithstanding all the Miraculous Discoveries which Christ made of his Divinity.

4*thly*, If he had appeared to them, they would not have acknowledged him to be the Person who had been Crucified: Out of Spight and Malice they would have rejected him, and impudently cried him down as an Impostor, as one that was set up by the Christians to Personate the True Jesus. Say not then, if he had appeared in the Temple at *Jerusalem* (as he used to do before his Passion) this would have been a great Confirmation of the Truth of his Resurrection, and of Christianity itself. No: This would have had no effect upon them, they would have exploded it as a Cheat and Forgery, and they would have been the more inraged against the Followers of Christ. For these reasons it seem'd good to the All-Wise God that he should not be seen by these Men after his Resurrection; but that he should appear only to his Friends and Followers, and no others. God thought fit to order it thus: Let us not be offended at God's disposal of this Affair, but Acquiesce in it as most Accountable. But then

5*thly*,

5*thly*, Though Christ Appeared not to his *Enemies*, yet his Resurrection was confirmed even by *Them*, as you read in Mat. 28. 11. *Some of the Watch came into the City, and shew'd unto the Chief Priests all the things that were done.* These were witnesses of Christ's Resurrection, they bore Testimony concerning the matter of Fact, that is, that the Stone was roll'd away from the Sepulchre, and that the Body was gone. This was enough.

I might add in the Sixth place, suppose Christ had been seen by the *Jews* after his Resurrection, and suppose they had thereupon believed him to be the True Messias, yet this Faith would not have avail'd them. The Devils so believe, because they can't help it.

And Lastly, this may be said with great Truth, that the Founding and Propagating of the Christian Church on the Testimony of a *Few*, is a greater Argument of God's Wisdom and Power, than if *Multitudes* had been converted, and brought into the Church by the Testimony given by *vast numbers* of Men.

4. This consideration may be added, that the Apostles and Disciples had no design of purchasing Wealth, or Honour, or Fame, by attesting what they did. They Suffer'd Disgrace and Poverty, and exposed themselves to all Dangers, and to Death itself. They were Honest and Innocent Men, and were never observed to be Ambitious or Covetous: And therefore there is no probability of their being corrupted by Sinister Ends: And consequently what they delivered was very Credible and Authentick.

And thus I have shew'd what Foundation there is, for our belief of this great Article of our Religion, *the Resurrection of Christ*, and how reasonable it is to Defend and maintain it against all gainsayers, of which there hath been always a great number in the World. Some of the *Jews*; namely, the *Sadducees*, would not be persuaded that there is any *Resurrection* at all: And the rest of that Nation look upon *Christ's Resurrection* as a False and Ridiculous Story, as a mere Cheat and Imposture. In the First times of the Church, this Doctrine was call'd in Question by *Simon Magus*, and *Cerinthus*, and by other Hereticks afterwards. The *Turks*, tho' they have a fair opinion of Christ as a great Prophet, yet they agree with the *Jews* in their judgment concerning his Rising from the Dead: And therefore these Infidels laugh at the *Crucified God* (as they scoffingly call our Saviour) thinking That to be a sufficient Reproach to us, that our God Died, and never came to Life again. And so indeed it would be, if it were True. The *Gentile Philosophers* (to mention them also) could make nothing of this Mystery; the very Name ἀνάστασις seemed strange and prodigious to them, as St. *Luke* relates in the *Acts of the Apostles*. So generally was this Doctrine of the Return of our Saviour to Life disown'd. And there is an herd of Atheistical Spirits among us at this Day, who tho' they go under the general Name of Christians, yet cavil at this Fundamental Article of our Religion, and pretend to offer Arguments against it. Wherefore with regard to these Men especially, I have endeavoured to shew, that this Article challenges our firm assent and belief. I appeal to those great pretenders to Reason, (for such they would be reckoned) whether there can be greater assurances given them of a matter of Fact, than those that I have propounded. Wherefore we ought confidently to acquiesce in this Truth, and to think it our concern to Defend and Vindicate it from the Cavils and Calumnies of Wicked and Unreasonable Men.

And let us ever esteem this Article as most necessary and important, and such as is of the very essence of our Faith and Religion. To which purpose I might observe that this Doctrine of Christ's Resurrection hath more emphatically and by way of excellency the very Name of εὐαγγέλιον, the *Gospel*, given unto it in 1 *Cor.* 15. 1. *Moreover, Brethren, I declare unto you the Gospel which I preached unto you.* Which, if you consult that Chapter, is spoken of the *Resurrection of Christ*. And to this we may refer 2 *Tim.* 2. 8. *Remember that Jesus Christ of the Seed of David was raised from the Dead according to my Gospel.* But why doth he call it *his Gospel?* would he be reckon'd a Fifth Evangelist? Some have gathered hence, that St. *Paul* was the Penman of a certain *Gospel*. But * St. *Jerom* saith it is meant of St. *Luke*'s Gospel, who was St. *Paul*'s Disciple and Companion, and Penn'd his Gospel by St. *Paul*'s instigation. *Tertullian* is of the same Opinion, and † *Origen*, and ‖ *Eusebius*, who tell us, that St. *Luke* had his *Gospel and the Acts of the Apostles* Dictated to him by St. *Paul*. But, with Submission to these

* Catalog. Script. Ecclesiast.
† In Psal. 1.
‖ Eccl. hist. l. 3. c. 4.

Learned Writers, I conceive that these Words *according to my Gospel*, are no more than if he had said, *according to the Gospel which I preach*: And it is a form of Speech which the Apostle often uses in this Sense, as in *Rom.* 2. 16. *Gal.* 1. 1. *Tit.* 1. 3. in which Places he calls it *his Gospel*, for this Reason only, because *he* preach'd and deliver'd it. *According to my Gospel*, is equivalent with *according to the Tenour of the Gospel which I have taught you*; *According to the glorious Gospel of the blessed God, which was committed to my Trust*, as the Apostle more fully expresses himself in 1 *Tim.* 1. 11. But this is that which I observe at present, that the Doctrine of Christ's *rising from the Dead* in that fore-mentioned Place is styled the Gospel on this Account, because it is so necessary an Article of the Faith, and the very Substance of all the Evangelical Doctrine. It is of such a Nature, That if it be denied and destroy'd, the whole Fabrick of Christianity tumbles to the Ground, and is buried in the same Grave with Christ. For this Reason, I have endeavour'd to evince the *Truth* and *Certainty* of this Article: So that it must not only be impious, but irrational to doubt of it after so clear Evidence.

I proceed now to the Second Thing I took Notice of in the Words; namely, the *Virtue* and *Power* of this great Article of our Faith. We must know then, that every Thing in Religion is *Powerful*: And therefore the Apostle in another Place speaks of the *Power of Godliness* in general. Particularly we are told by him, That *the Word of God is quick and powerful*, and that the Weapons of the Christian Warfare are *mighty through God*. But among the rest the *Power* and *Energy* of Christ's *Resurrection*, are not the least remarkable. And that I will now endeavour to make good, after I have premised that there are these Three main Things in Religion; 1. *Principles* of Faith and Doctrine. 2. A Holy *Practice* fitted to those Principles; and 3*dly*, *Comfort and Joy* resulting from both. I will make it appear then, That Christ's Resurrection is *powerful* and *effectual* in respect of all these three great Concernments. It hath Power first to confirm our Faith in the main Principles of the Christian Religion. 2. It hath Vertue to raise us from the Death of Sin to the Life of Righteousness, and the Practice of all Godliness. 3*dly*, It hath Power and Efficacy to comfort us in the greatest Calamities and Distresses. And all these being put together, will abundantly demonstrate the *Power of our Saviour's Resurrection*, which I am to treat of.

First, Let us see what the Power and Energy of his Resurrection is, as to the *Confirmation of our Faith* in the great Principles of our Religion. And here I will shew, That the Doctrine of Christ's rising from the Dead establishes our Faith; 1. By begetting this Perswasion in us, That Jesus Christ was the true Messias, the Son of God, and sent from Heaven. 2. It convinces us of the Veracity of God, and the Faithfulness of our Blessed Redeemer. 3. It assures us, That Christ hath made a full and complete Satisfaction for our Sins, and hath purchased the Divine Favour for us. 4. It confirms us in the Belief of *our Resurrection* at the last Day. 5. It ascertains us of the Immortality of our Souls, and of Eternal Glory.

I. Christ's Resurrection must needs settle and confirm our Faith by begetting and maintaining this Perswasion in our Minds, that Jesus Christ was the true Messias, the Son of God, and sent from Heaven. For, as the Apostle tells us, *Christ was declared to be the Son of God with Power according to the Spirit of Holiness, by his Resurrection from the Dead*, Rom. 1. 4. As if the Apostle had said, there is no greater, nor more convincing Argument to prove Christ to be the Son of God than this, That he rais'd himself from the Dead. This, if any Thing, assures us of his Divinity and Omnipotence. To which may be referr'd that Passage in St. *Peter*'s Sermon, *whom God hath raised up, having loosed the Pains of Death, because it was not possible he should be holden of it*, Acts 2. 24. Had Christ been a meer Man, there had been a Possibility of his being still kept in the Custody of the Grave; but being Omnipotent, he could easily grapple with Death, and vanquish the Power of Hell and the Grave, and shew himself to be the Lord of Life, and the God of Power. For we are not to listen to what *Socinus* suggests; namely, That Christ rose not again by his own Power and Strength. Yea, * he ridicules the contrary Assertion, and † *Smalcius* calls it a Fable.

* Quid magis vel risu dignum, vel à veritate alienum, aut videri aut esse potest, quam cum qui mortuus sit seipsum in vitam revocare? *Disp. de unius fil. exist.*

† *Resp. ad nova monst. par.* 2.

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But notwithstanding the Blasphemous Confidence of these Men, it is evident in the Sacred Writings, that the Resurrection of Christ is not only the Work of the *Father*, *Rom. 6.* 4. *Eph.* 1. 19, 20. but also the Work of the *Son*; that is, of himself, *John* 2. 19. *Jesus said unto them, destroy this Temple* (and *he spake of the Temple of his Body*, v. 21.) *and in Three Days I will raise it up.* And again, *John* 10. 17, 18. *I lay down my Life, that I may take it up again.* ——*I have Power to lay it down, and I have Power to take it again.* Nothing can be more plain and express than this, and nothing can more effectually baffle the *Socinian* Error; for Christ assures us, that he would *himself* rear up again the fallen Temple of his Body, if the malicious *Jews* pull'd it down: and he tells us, That he had *of himself Power* to do this. Now, That this is of sufficient Weight and Force to evince the Divinity of Christ, the reasoning of the very *Jews* (the inveterate Adversaries of our Saviour's Doctrine) doth demonstrate, as is clear from *Mat.* 27. 39, &c. *Save thy self, if thou beest the Son of God, and come down from the Cross.* Or, which is all one, if thou submittest to that accursed Death, exert thy Power in raising thyself from the Dead. That will give us an infallible Proof of thy being a Divine Person, and sent from God. This then I lay down in the first Place, as an undeniable Instance of the *Power of Christ's Resurrection*, that the Assurance of this in our Minds, doth beget in us a Belief of this great fundamental Truth, That Jesus came from Heaven, and was the Messias, and the true God.

2. The *Power of Christ's Resurrection* is evidenc'd in the Confirmation of our Faith concerning the Veracity of God, and the Faithfulness of our Blessed Redeemer. For behold, Christ being risen, all the Prophecies that concern'd the Exaltation of the Messias are fulfilled: All the Predictions and Promises of his glorious Rising are accomplished. Such is that in *Hos.* 6. 2. *After Two Days will he revive us, in the Third Day he will raise us up, and we shall live in his Sight.* And that of the Psalmist, *Thou wilt not leave my Soul in Hell, neither wilt thou suffer thy holy One to see Corruption.* And the whole 118th *Psalm* treats of Christ's Resurrection, and may well be made use of as a *Paschal Hymn* in the Church. St. *Paul's* Words are remarkable, *Acts* 13. 32. *The Promise which was made to the Fathers, God hath fulfilled the same unto us their Children, in that he hath raised up Jesus again*, as it is also written in the Second *Psalm*, *Thou art my Son, this Day have I begotten thee.* And not only St. *Paul* here in his Sermon at *Antioch*, but St. *Peter* in his at *Jerusalem*, takes Notice of the Accomplishment of these Prophecies, *Act.* 2. 29, *&c.* Our Saviour himself bespoke his Resurrection in his mystical Speech of *destroying the Temple, and raising it in Three Days.* And there is another Prophecy of his which is free from all Cavils and Ambiguity, in *Mat* 16. 21. *From that Time began Jesus to shew unto his Disciples, that he must suffer many Things, and be kill'd, and be raised again the Third Day.* Which likewise he foretold almost in the very same Words, in *Mat.* 17. 23. And this also he foretold in his Application of that which befel *Jonas* in the Belly of the Whale, *Jonas* 2. 10. *Mat.* 12. 40. Yea, the *Jewish* Doctors make this and other such Instances in the Old Testament (as King *Hezekiah* revived and recovered the Third Day, 2 *King.* 20. 5.) Types and Significations of the Resurrection of the Messias. Unto these Predictions undoubtedly our Apostle alludes when he saith, *Christ was buried and rose again the Third Day according to the Scriptures*, 1 Cor. 15. 4.

Thus the *Truth* and *Faithfulness* of the Divine Prophecies are established, and consequently the whole System of Christ's Religion is authorized and confirmed. The *Jews* look'd upon our Saviour as a vile Impostor and Magician, who did strange Things indeed when he was alive: But they perswaded themselves, That if once he was condemned, (as the Wretches that practise in Art Magick, are presumed to lose all their Power when the Law hath passed on them, so they thought) if he were but once sentenced to Death, and they could get him under Ground, there would be an End of him, and the whole Christian Religion should be buried in the same Tomb with him, and all his Promises of a Resurrection would prove false. But our Blessed Lord rose again, and so at once baffled and confounded his malicious Adversaries, and asserted the Truth and Reality of all that he had foretold. *Mahomet* promised at his Death to revive himself within Four Days: But his Disciples at last were forced to bury him when they saw he kept not his Word. But it was not thus with our Blessed Master: he foretold his Resurrection within Three Days, and it actually and really came to pass. And whereas some vile and pro-

profligate Wretches have been so Impudent, as to ascribe this and other miraculous Actions of his to his dealing with some evil Spirit, and holding Correspondence with Hell (*thou art a Samaritan*, said they, *and hast a Devil*) it is utterly impossible he could do these on such an Account; for then Mankind can never have a Demonstration of the *Truth* and *Certainty* of any Thing. There must needs be an utter despair of being assured, if Heaven thus dallies with Men, and (to speak plainly) deludes them: Yea, this would introduce *Scepticism*, and downright *Atheism*.

But before I proceed to the next Head of my Discourse, I will answer an *Objection* which some may raise against what I have said, How doth the Doctrine of Christ's Resurrection confirm us in the Belief of God's Veracity, when one of the chiefest Prophecies concerning it is not fulfilled; namely, That of our Saviour himself, *As Jonas was Three Days and Three Nights in the Belly of the Whale, so the Son of Man shall be Three Days and Three Nights in the heart of the Earth*, Mat. 12. 40. This seems to be inconsistent with Truth, and irreconcileable with what is delivered in the Gospel concerning Christ's Rising: For though it is plain, That Christ was in the Grave *Two whole Nights*, viz. *Friday* and *Saturday* Nights (to speak after the Way of our giving Names to the Days of the Week) yet Christ was not in the Grave the least Part of a *Third Night*. So that instead of being Three Nights in the Heart of the Earth or the Grave, he was there but Two Nights. And then, as to his being Three Days there, it is impossible to make that out in true Rigour of speaking; for (as St. *Augustin* among the Ancients, and *Aquinas* among the Moderns assert) Christ's Body lay in the Grave but *one Day* only, if we speak properly. How then shall we solve this Difficulty?

I find that some of the Learned bid us have recourse to the *Hebrew* Accompt which *Moses* used in the History of the Creation. The Three Days and Three Nights in St. *Matthew* are equivalent to Three of those *Evenings* and *Mornings* which made up half of the Six Natural Days wherein the World was created. The Evening was in order of Time before the Morning; and hence it was, That the *Hebrews* began their Natural Day from the Vespers or Twilight. *The Evening and the Morning were the First Day*, Gen. 1. 5. *and the Second, and Third Day*, and so on. The Meaning is, Heaven and Earth were created in Six Days and Six Nights, which is express'd here by *Mornings* and *Evenings*. But then according to this Accompt, to be Three Days and Three Nights in the Grave, is to be there Three Evenings and Three Mornings. And how this will solve the Difficulty, I cannot see; for Christ took up his Lodging in the Sepulchre but One Day and Two Nights.

The common Answer that is given to the Objection is this, That by a Figure called *Synecdoche* a Part is put for the Whole, and Two Pieces of Days are counted for whole Days: So in the fore-mention'd Text 'tis said, *The Evening and the Morning were the First Day*; that is, the Beginning of a Day and the Beginning of a Night, are put for the whole Day and Night. Thus *here* Three Days and Three Nights, are by a *Synecdoche* to be interpreted *Part* of Three Days, and Part of Three Nights. But then let it be considered, that though our Saviour was in the Sepulchre part of Three Days; namely, *Friday* and *Saturday*, and the Day which he rose, or rather part of the Sixth Day, all the Seventh, and part of the First, yet no Man can pretend to prove that he lay there *part of Three Nights*; for it was only on the Nights of *Friday* and *Saturday*, that he was confined to that Place. A *Synecdoche* is thought by some Persons to satisfie this Scruple, but for my Part I cannot rest there, for that must be a bold and wild Figure which puts a Part for the Whole when there is no Part at all. How can there be a Part of a Third Night supposed when there were but Two Nights and no more?

The only Answer that I can satisfie myself with is this, That though Christ foretold he should be in the Heart of the Earth Three Days and Three Nights; yet if he was pleased to be there a shorter Time, it was no Violation of his Word, but rather it is to be look'd on as a singular Kindness done to his Disciples, that they might the sooner be comforted and refreshed by his Return to them. Christ's Promise was certainly made good; nay, bettered by this early Rising of his. If a kind Friend acquaints me, that after Three Days are pass'd, he will bestow such a Boon and Favour upon me, and yet shall think fit to confer it upon me within a Day after his Promise, shall I complain that my Friend kept not his Word, or rather

rather shall I not thank him for hastening his Courtesie. You know how to apply this to the present Purpose. And to back this Answer I might remind you, That you may find in Scripture that God hath shortned the Times of some Prophecies and Predictions, to comfort and encourage his People; nay this shall be true of the very Day of Judgment, and that *for the Elect's sake*, as our Saviour himself tells us. The Three Days and Three Nights in which Christ was to be in the Grave, were reduced to Forty six Hours, as might be proved if I should set the whole Matter clearly before you. The short of all is this, That Christ foretold he should be Three Days in the Heart of the Earth; that is, in the Grave: And so he was for the Day on which he died and was buried is reckon'd for a whole Day, and so is the Day on which he rose, There are *Two Days*, and the *Third* was the middle one, of which there is no dispute. So he was *Three Days* in the Grave. But he remained there but *Two Nights*, because he would not over-grieve his Disciples by his Absence. He staid not to the *utmost Extent* of the Time which he had mentioned, but thought fit to anticipate his Return, that his disconsolate Flock might be the more cheared by his early coming. When Christ said he should be Three Days and Three Nights in the Grave, his Meaning was, that he would not *exceed* Three Days and Three Nights: He would return to his Disciples in such a Time at *farthest*, and it may be *sooner*.

If any one alledge those Words in *Mat.* 8. 31. where Christ tells his Disciples, That [the Son of Man must *after* Three Days rise again,] and if *after* Three Days, then surely the whole Three Days must be taken in: I answer, it doth not absolutely follow, for these Words may be understood *inclusively*, not *exclusively*, as is usual in Scripture. This Way of speaking is the same with those Expressions in *Luke* 1. 59. and *Luke* 2. 21. In the former Place 'tis said, *On the Eighth Day*, in the latter, *When Eight Days were accomplish'd.* So 'tis said, *Joseph* and *Mary after Three Days* found Christ in the Temple, *Luke* 2. 46. which they are said to do *on the Third Day* in another Place. Thus, notwithstanding the aforesaid Objections, the Doctrine of Christ's Resurrection stands firm and impregnable, and the Truth of those Prophecies and Promises which are concerning it, is not in the least impaired.

3. The *Power* and *Vertue* of Christ's Resurrection is discovered in this, That hereby we are established in this comfortable Perswasion, That Jesus Christ hath made a full and complete Satisfaction for our Sins, and hath purchased for us the Divine Favour and Acceptance. [*Christ was delivered for our Sins*, saith the Apostle, *and rose again for our Justification.*] Rom. 4. 25. By this latter we are assured of the Efficacy of the former; we know that his *being delivered for our Sins* proved effectual, because Death could not get the Mastery of him: He soon returned to Life again, and thereby ascertain'd us, That God is well pleas'd with his Undertakings in the Behalf of all Believers, and that they shall be *justified* from all their Sins. God the Father deliver'd his Son to Death, and in doing so, condemned our Sins in him as our Surety: But lo! this Condemnation is our Absolution, and we are henceforth discharged from all the Guilt of Sin. It is evident, That our Blessed Surety *paid our Debts*, for otherwise he could not have been *releas'd*: If he had not fully satisfied for these, he had been held in *Prison*, i. e. in the Grave. But being freed thence, we conclude, That his meritorious Death made a perfect Atonement for our Sins. We are now certain that his Sacrifice on the Cross was accepted, that the incensed Majesty is pacified, that our Guilt is expiated, that our Debts are cancelled, and our Persons justified; in a Word, That our Salvation is fully and compleatly wrought.

More *particularly* to shew you how the Doctrine of *Christ's Resurrection*, confirms our Belief of the full and perfect Satisfaction made for our Sins; and to further evince that all Things are now absolutely finished and compleated in order to our Recovery and Salvation, consider with me,

First, It is by the Resurrection of Christ, that the infinite Vertue and Merit of his Passion is applied to Believers, and consequently becomes advantageous and efficacious to them. Hereby it is that our Redeemer is enabled actually to conferr upon us all those Gifts and Gratuities, all those Benefits and Privileges which he purchased for us by his Death. By this it is that we partake of the Fruit of the Cross, and feel the Effects of his meritorious Sufferings. Had he only *died* for Mankind, and so descended into the *Grave*, and laid there for ever, the *Fatal*

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Knell must have been rung out for all Mankind, and the *Funerals* of all the World had been the dismal, but unavoidable Consequence of it. For what Help could have been expected from a *dead Saviour*? Instead of his *Consummatum est*, it is finish'd, we must have heard of *Conclamatum est*, we are utterly undone. It had been eternal *Night* with us, unless Christ the *Sun* of Righteousness had risen, and brought the Day with him, and cleared our Doubts, and dispelled our Darkness. If he had not risen, that might have been truly objected to him which his Adversaries did falsly when he hung on the Cross, *he saved others, himself he could not save.* Or rather indeed he could not have been in a Capacity of saving others, for if he had remain'd in the Grave, there could have been no Benefit of his Passion: He that could not overcome Death when himself was concern'd, how should he be able to do it for and in us? But blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath raised up his Son from the Dis-honours of the Grave, and hath at once restored him and us to Life. Our Almighty Redeemer hath broken the Bars of Death, and hath brought with him Life and Eternal Happiness to all that believe in him and obey him.

Secondly, Being risen and ascended he was in a Capacity to perform his Promise of the Effusion of the Holy Spirit: And hereby we are assured of the Assistance of the Blessed Comforter, who is the Author of Spiritual Life and Action. There is nothing successfully effected in Religion without his Aid and Help, nothing that will be acceptable to the Almighty: Wherefore it is evident, That this is an extraordinary Blessing which is vouchsafed us by Christ's rising from the Dead. This must needs be another Confirmation of our Faith concerning the Success and Prevalency of Christ's Undertakings, the rising of Christ being the Basis of all.

Thirdly, If he had not enfranchised himself from the Dominion of Death, he could not have been capable of interceding for us with his Father, which is one principal Part of his Priestly Office, and is so serviceable to all true Believers when Temptations environ and assault them. We receive great Benefit by our Prayers and Supplications at the Throne of Grace, but they would be wholly ineffectual without the Intercession of our High Priest. Wherefore this lets us know the Vertue and Efficacy of Christ's Resurrection, whereby he is enabled to appear for us at the right Hand of God.

Fourthly, By his Recovery from the Grave, he is capable of taking on him the Government and Guidance of his Church, of over-seeing and managing the Affairs of the World for the good of his faithful Servants.

Thus the *Resurrection* of Christ doth manifest it undeniably, That his Sacrifice on the Cross was really propitiatory for our Sins, that it was accepted by God, and was effectual to Salvation; that whereas the Apostle's Inference had been undeniable, [*your Faith is vain, and ye are yet in your Sins*] if Christ had not risen; now, blessed be the God of our Salvation, our Faith is confirmed, and our Sins are atoned and expiated.

4. The *Power* and *Strength* of Christ's Resurrection is yet further manifest as to the Confirmation of our Faith, because hereby we have all the Reason in the World to believe that we also shall rise again; that though for long Periods of Time we may lodge in the Dust, yet we shall one Day be awakened by the Voice of God. *Our* Resurrection is an infallible consequent of Christ's: We may be throughly perswaded that *we* shall rise, because our Saviour did, as that great Doctor and Apostle argues most solidly and convincingly in 1 *Cor* 15th Chapter, and in other Places. I will sum up all his Arguments in these Four; *viz.* that as Christ is *the First-Fruits*, as he is our *Representative*, as there is an *intimate Relation* between him and Believers; and Lastly, as he is the *Cause or Principle* of our future Life and Resurrection, we must needs rise again from the Dead.

First, Christ's rising is the *Fore-runner* and *First-Fruits*, the Pledge and Earnest of the General Resurrection. This is the Apostle's Logick in the *v.* 20, 23. of that Chapter, *Now is Christ risen from the Dead, and become the First-Fruits of them that slept. Every Man in his own order, Christ the First-Fruits, afterwards they that are Christ's at his coming.* To understand the Meaning of the Apostle in these Words, and why Christ is called the *First-Fruits* we must know that among the *Jews* a little Quantity of their Corn consecrated, *i. e.* offered to God as the First-Fruits of the Year, derived a Blessing upon all the rest, even the whole Harvest:

[*If*

[*if the first Fruit be Holy, the Lump is also Holy; if the Root be Holy, so are the Branches*] as he speaks in another place. This being applied by the Apostle to the Doctrine of the *Resurrection*, proves unquestionably that Christ's Rising was the Beginning and Earnest of ours. As the whole Years Fruits were Sanctified in the first Offering of some of their kind, so in Christ's Rising all Believers have an assurance of Rising. To which purpose it is not inconsiderable and unworthy of our Observation, that we are told in the Gospel that *many of the Bodies of the Saints arose out* of their Graves with Christ, *and appear'd to many*, Mat. 27. 52. as an Intimation of the near Connexion between Christ's Resurrection and ours. And to this we may refer *Col.* 1. 18. *Rev.* 1. 5. where Christ is call'd *the first-born, and first begotten from the dead*; the first that was Born from the Dead, *i. e.* the first that rose by his own Power, and by Virtue of whose Resurrection we shall be raised; tho', (as I have shewn in another place) the *First-born* here doth also signifie the *Excellency* and *Dominion* of Christ thus raised from the Dead.

Secondly, Christ in his Undertakings for us was a *Publick Person*, and a *Common* Representative of all Mankind; and on that account likewise *we* may be confident of a future Resuscitation of our Bodies, *He* being already rescu'd from the Grave. As his Death was in our stead, so in his Rising too he represented us, and sustain'd our Persons; which is the Argumentation that is made use of by the Apostle in the fore-nam'd Chapter, *v.* 22. *As in Adam all died, so in Christ shall all be made alive.* By Virtue of Christ's Resurrection they shall be raised to an Immortal State and Life. But this more especially concerns those that are true Believers, and *Mystically* United unto Christ, which leads me to the next Head.

Thirdly, It must be remember'd and consider'd what an intimate *Relation* there is between Christ and the Church; *He is the Head of the Body, the Church*, Col. 1. 18. The *Head* being Glorious, 'tis rational to think that the *Members* shall partake of that Glory in due time. *Ye are dead*, saith the Apostle, *and your life is hid with Christ in God; when Christ, who is your life shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him*, Col. 3. 3, 4. Look how the Life of a Plant lurks and lies hid all the Winter long, shrunk as it were into its Root, and buried wholly under Ground, but when the Spring once arrives, this Vegetable begins to shoot forth, and to display its more retired Essence in visible and apparent Operations, and actual Assurances of Life, letting us behold the Effects of that Life in Budds and Blossoms, and all other Tokens of Vegetation. So fares it with the Servants of the most High, their Life for a while is hid, hid here in the Obscurities of their mortal State, hid hereafter in the dark Retirements of the Grave; but it is hid *with Christ*, in whom being grafted, and belonging to him as their Head and Root, they also shall live, and partake of his Life, and at his Appearance at the General Resurrection of the Dead, they shall appear with him in Glory, and the Exertments of their Life shall be more visible and conspicuous than ever they were.

Fourthly, We are to look upon Christ as the *Cause* and *Author* of our future Life and Resurrection, and that these two ways: 1. More remotely, by taking away our Sins which are the Cause and Procurers of Death, for *the Wages of Sin is Death.* 2. More nearly, by giving us his Spirit, which is the Cause and Principle of *Life. If the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the Dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the Dead, shall also quicken your mortal Bodies by the Spirit that dwelleth in you*, Rom. 8. 11. Which words, tho' they are usually understood of the Life of Grace, which chiefly exerts it self in our *Souls*, but discovers it self also in outward and bodily Operations; yet they seem to me to intimate also to us, and acquaint us with the *Principle* of our *Resurrection. Chymists* tell us pleasant Stories of their *Reviving* of *Plants* and *Flowers* after they have been as it were Buried and Entomb'd in their own *Ashes*. Man, in *Job's* Language, *comes up like a Flower*, he looks Gay and Goodly for a while, but then sinks and droops by little and little, and at last decays and withers, drops into Dust and Ashes; but he is, (as I may so speak in the Phrase of those Men) *Hermetically Seal'd* and shut up in the Grave, secured there by Divine Providence, and at length when the great general Conflagration shall have *Calcined* the whole Mass of the World, (as St. *Peter* foretells) then this *Flower* revives, and springs out of its Bed of Ashes fresh and spritely; it spreads it self to more perfect Dimensions, and at last arrives to a Consummate Glory and Immortality. So that we may with greater Reason than those ancient *Grecians*, στεφανῶν τὸν τύμβον Crown the Sepulchre with Garlands and Victorious Lau-

tels; and we may *Solace* our selves at the Death of our Friends, and at our own; as the Apostle excellently applies this Doctrine of the Resurrection in 1 *Thes.* 4. 13, 14. *I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those that are asleep; that ye sorrow not even as others who have no hope*, (i. e. Heathen Men, who are not acquainted with Christ and the Gospel) *for if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also who sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.*

Every good Christian Man may confidently take up the words of Holy *Job*, *I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth; and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God, whom I shall see for my self, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another*, Job 19. 25, 26. Our Bodies shall resume their pristine form by the Power of him that first bestow'd it upon them. Tho' they be never so alter'd, they shall by his Almighty Hand who restor'd himself to Life, return to what they were, and shall be far more Active and Vigorous, more strong and durable than before. Many Arguments, (and those of a different kind) are made use of to prove that our Bodies shall rise again; but who sees not that too many Philosophical Subtilties are mingled with them, which render the thing doubtful and disputable? But when all is done, this is the most solid and impregnable, and must be concluded to be the greatest Demonstration of the Point. This *Power of Christ's Resurrection* solves the Matter clearly and plainly; this wipes off all Cavils and Objections. Christ *being the Resurrection and the Life*, (as he styles himself) that is, the Author of his own and our Resurrection; he gives us all Assurance possible, * that he can and will rear up those Mortal Bodies again, and rouze us out of our Ashes.

5. The *Power* and *Virtue* of Christ's Resurrection is seen in this most evidently; that it confirms us in the Belief, not only of our rising again, but of the Certainty of the Immortality of our Souls, of Heaven and Eternal Glory; for these are the Purchase of our Saviour's Rising from the Dead, 1 *Pet.* 1. 3, 4. *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to his abundant Mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the Resurrection of Jesus Christ from the Dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in Heaven for us.* This is the Tenure by which we hold our Hopes of enjoying a never-failing Life after this; this is the surest Ground, and the firmest Foundation of a Future and Immortal State. For though it is true there be several Arguments and Reasonings of ingenious Spirits about the Immortality of the Soul; yet some of them are of that nature that ordinary People cannot be satisfied from them in this important Truth, and others are so precarious that a serious and deliberate Mind cannot acquiesce in them; which is one Reason why some of the most improved Heathens speak so doubtfully of the Future State of the Soul; as if the Reasonings they made use of, and the Topicks from whence they Argued were not satisfactory to their Minds. * *Tully* and others, by the rational Guidance of their Thoughts arrived to a strong Perswasion of an Immortal State hereafter, but the Light of Reason was not able to conduct them to an absolute Assurance of it. This is the Prerogative only of *Christianity*, and particularly the Result of our Saviour's *Resurrection*; for the serious Contemplation and Remembrance of his Rising again, and after that Ascending into Heaven is more Perswasive and Demonstrative, more Powerful and Effectual to this Purpose than any Suggestions that the Wittiest and most improved Philosophers can dictate to us.

* De Senectute.

It is Convictive to any intelligent Man, that all the Promises of our Saviour concerning Eternal Life and Happiness were really true, because he rose from the Dead, and ascended to those Mansions which he had assured his Followers were prepared for Godly Souls. No wonder then that St. *Paul* in his Sermon at *Athens*, before that Great and Learned Auditory, builds the future Judgment, and consequently a State of Woe or Happiness after this Life, on this firm bottom of the Resurrection. *He hath appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness by the Man whom he hath ordained, whereof he hath given assurance unto all men in that he hath raised him from the dead*, Acts 17. 31. as much as to say, that Christ's Resurrection is an Assurance to us of the Day of Judgment, and of the Effects of it.

And thus I have briefly shew'd how great the *Power of Christ's Resurrection* is in reference to our *Belief*, or the *Grounding us in the main Principles of the Christian Faith*; which was the first thing to be proved. We see that this great and miraculous

culous Action is a Confirmation of our Faith in all the necessary Articles of our Religion. It apparently demonstrates Christ's Divinity, the Transcendency of his Office, the Power, Dignity and Merit of his Person, the Authority of his Commission, and the Excellency of his Doctrine. It ascertains us of the Truth of all he deliver'd; it is a clear Conviction of the Innocency of his Life, of the Truth of his Miracles, and of the All-sufficiency of his Satisfaction. It demonstrates the Certainty of our future Return to Life, and of our Immortal subsisting with him in another World.

I now proceed to the *second thing* proposed, to speak of the *Power* and *Efficacy* of Christ's Resurrection, in order to a *Holy Life*, and the Practice of all Religious Duties: Though what I have said already, hath in some part clear'd that Particular, the *Principles* of *Christian Faith* having so direct an Influence on our Manners. Now, the Rising of Christ from the Dead is very serviceable to a Godly Life, and the Mortifying of Sin in us, and that these two ways: *First*, In the way of *Resemblance*, or as it is a *Pattern* and *Example* for us to follow. *Secondly*, As it suggests to us the most *forcible Motives* and *Encouragements* to a Virtuous Conversation.

First, It is plain that Christ's Resurrection was intended as a Pattern for us; what else can be the meaning of the Apostle's Words in *Rom* 6. 4, 5, 6. *Therefore we are buried with him by Baptism into Death, that like as Christ was rais'd up from the Dead by the Glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of Life; for if we have been planted together in the likeness of his Death, we shall be also in the likeness of his Resurrection.* In that Fourth Verse we have a most apposite and elegant Similitude, which is to this effect; The Immersion, or Plunging into the Water, which was then used in Baptism, represents unto us the Death and Burial of Christ; and by this Symbol is also signified, that those who were Baptiz'd, and as it were buried under the Water, undertook to die unto Sin, and to all carnal Inclinations; for that is to be *buried with Christ*, and to be *Baptized into his Death*. And then on the other hand, the coming out of the Baptismal Water represents unto us the *Resurrection of Christ*, and also that *we* ought to rise unto Righteousness, and a Holy and Godly Life. *Likewise, reckon ye also your selves to be dead indeed unto Sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord*, v. 11. of the fore-nam'd Chapter. *Likewise ye also*; the Similitude and Analogy are exact, and therefore made use of by the Apostle in other places. *Ye are buried with him in Baptism; wherein also ye are risen with him thro' the faith of the operation of God who hath rais'd him from the dead*, Col. 2. 12. Christ's Resurrection is an Hieroglyphick of our Spiritual Rising out of the Grave of Sin; it is a fit Emblem of our Rising to Newness of Life. And thus we see that by way of Resemblance and Representation Christ's Rising hath an Influence on our Lives.

Secondly, It's Power and Operation is seen in this, that the serious Consideration, and Meditation of it suggests to us the most *forcible Motives* to live well. This calls and commands us to quit all our Lusts, and to abandon our Sinful Courses, and to betake our selves seriously to the Exercise of Religion. For when the awakned Soul shall consider and weigh the Benefits of Christ's Resurrection, it must needs feel it self wonderfully wrought upon, and even charm'd into the Love and Practice of all Goodness. As

1. When it shall reflect and ruminate upon the All-sufficient Satisfaction made for Sin, that full and perfect Atonement, that compleat Reconciliation and Propitiation wrought by the Blood of the Eternal Lamb, and the Evidence which is given of its Acceptance by the Rising of Christ from the Dead; when the Soul shall throughly ponder this, I cannot see what greater Encouragement it can have to a Holy and Blameless Life. It is now assured that God's Wrath is appeased, and that he will graciously accept of our sincere Endeavours for the sake of his prevailing Merits, who once offer'd himself upon the Cross to reconcile us unto God.

2. When the Soul being conscious to it self of its own Weakness and Sinfulness, and consequently seeing its utter inability to perform the least good Action by its own Power, shall perceive that by the Rising of Christ from the Grave, that gracious Promise of sending the Holy Spirit was fulfill'd after his Ascension; and ever since that Holy Comforter is ready to assist us, and help our Infirmities, and furnishes us with Strength to perform the Will of our Heavenly Father; this Consideration too is another great help to a Holy Life, and will inspire the Soul with Courage in its Spiritual Warefare.

3. When it shall be consider'd by the pious Soul that Christ is now Interceeding for him and all faithful Persons, that Christ having overcome Death is seated at the Right-hand of God, and there offers up his own Merits with the Prayers of all Believers, he cannot but upon such Reflections as these find himself encourag'd to be extraordinarily Devout, to take especial care that he lift up Holy Hands unto God, and that all his Prayers at the Throne of Grace issue from a pure and upright Conscience.

4. When the sincere Christian shall Meditate on the Resurrection of his dear Lord, and shall fix this Contemplation on his Mind, that his Head, his Husband, his Redeemer, his Saviour hath left this Earth for Heaven, and is there encircled with ineffable Glory, will not the devout Soul be impatient to leave this World, and to go to a better? Will not this Consideration engage him to despise the World, and to breath after Heaven, and to desire to depart and to be with Christ who is Enthroned there already? Have we so mean Affections for our Saviour as to be content to stay behind him? Shall we not follow him with our Devout Prayers, and Holy Thoughts, and Pious Wishes? Can we think of Happiness, and of the Author of it, and both in Heaven; and shall we not impetuously desire to be there, and to be swallow'd up in Contemplation and Fruition of our Lord? This is the natural Consequence of that Doctrine.

5. The Assurance which Christ's Resurrection gives us of our Glorious Resurrection, and also of his coming at the last Day to Judge us according to what we have done in the Flesh, whether Good or Evil, and the Certainty too of a Reward in Heaven for pure and upright Souls; these must needs have a mighty Influence and Power upon us to make us Holy and Religious, to make us careful of our Duty, and to enable us to do it with Pleasure and Alacrity. For let us put these Questions to our selves, Doth the Crucified Jesus Live, and shall we too after these Bodies are dissolved? Nay, Shall both Souls and Bodies live in Eternal Woe or Happiness? Are these things thus? then what manner of Persons ought we to be in all holy Conversation and Godliness? This is the wholsome Application which the Great Apostle makes of the Doctrine of Christ's *Resurrection*, in the close of the 15th Chapter of *Ep.* 1. to the *Corinthians*, wherein he had been all along insisting on the *Resurrection*. *Therefore*, saith he, (it is an *Inference* you may perceive from what had been said, for so this first word acquaints us) *Therefore, my beloved Brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the Work of the Lord; forasmuch as you know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.* As much as if he had said, Our Lord being Risen, we shall rise also; and our sincere, though weak Endeavours of Piety in this Life, shall through the Merits of Christ Jesus be recompens'd with an immarcessible Crown of Glory in the Life to come. Therefore let us be excited to Stedfastness and Perseverance in a Holy Life.

He that believes that Christ is risen from the Dead, ought to lead a Godly and Upright Life; he is obliged by way of natural Consequence to be immoveable and stedfast in his Religion, and to abound in the Work of the Lord, and to behave himself as one that hath a Sense of this Great Doctrine of Christ's Resurrection. If Christ be risen from the Dead, this should excite him to all Holy and Virtuous Enterprizes, this should inflame his Mind with the Love of Goodness, and an impartial Conformity to the Will of God. Let then this animate us to do all the Good we can, and to do it with all our Might. Indeed it is a wonder how any Man that is truly perswaded of the *Resurrection* of Christ can live Wickedly and Prophanely. One would think this Belief should put him upon aspiring after Eternal Glory in another World; and, in order to that, should force him into Contrition and Repentance for his Sins, and should draw off his Mind from the Love of all unlawful Pleasures, and should have Power to make him change his Course of Life, and wholly addict himself to the Will of his Redeemer, who died and rose for him, that he might be Holy, and who will never receive him into Happiness without his being so.

Lastly, I will enlarge upon that remarkable *Inference* of the Apostle in *Col.* 3. 1, 2. *If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.* This is another rational Deduction which this holy Man makes from the Doctrine of our Saviour's *Resurrection*. If ye be risen with Christ, *saith he*, i. e. 1. If ye firmly believe the Resurrection of Christ, and the Benefits that accrue to

you

you by it. And, 2*ly*, If ye, according to Christ's Example, be risen, *i. e.* if you are become real Christians, and copy out his Resurrection in your Lives, then *seek those things which are above*, then be Raised and Elevated in your Minds and Affections, be employ'd about Great and Heavenly Matters, not about those which are Little and Mean, Earthly and Sensual; for the Apostle had been speaking in the former Chapter, (the latter end of it especially) of the *Jewish* Ceremonies, and legal Rites; and such like mean Observances which some in those Days busied their Heads about, and so neglected the weightier Matters of their Souls. But, *if ye be risen with Christ*, saith he, you must *seek* other things, *viz.* the *things that are above.* If you call and profess your selves *Christians*, and believe the Resurrection of Jesus, and all the Advantages that flow to them from it; but especially if you be Spiritually Risen with Christ; there are other Cares much more Significant and Material wherein you are to be concern'd; namely, the Study and Practice of a Divine and Heavenly Life, such as Christ now liveth, being placed next in Glory to his Father in Heaven. Let it be your Task whilst you live to imitate the Purity and Holiness of Jesus Christ, and do not sully and debase your Souls with those Terrestrial and grosser Matters. *Seek the things that are above*, that are Heavenly and Spiritual, and be not sollicitous about things of a low and sordid Nature.

We may here more particularly and distinctly consider both the *Object* and the *Act*: First, the *Object*, *the things that are above*; that is, the things that come from above, the things that lead us to the place above, and also those things that are enjoyed above. Of the first sort are Pardon of Sin, the Favour of God through Jesus Christ the Blessed Mediator between God and Man, the Justification of our Persons by the Application of Christ's Meritorious Righteousness, Adoption, and all other Privileges vouchsafed to us by the unparallell'd Bounty of Heaven. These all come from above. Of the second sort are Sanctification, Regeneration, the Purging and Cleansing of our Natures by the Operation of the Holy Spirit, Faith and Repentance, and all other Graces of the Holy Ghost; and accordingly (if we cast our Eye on this whole Third Chapter to the *Philippians*) we shall find there an Accumulation of several Christian Precepts and Rules for the ordering of our Conversation aright; there he exhorts us to the Exercise of Mortification and Self-denial, and putting off the Old Man, and putting on the New; and the Practice of all Christian Graces whereby our Souls and Bodies are Renewed and Sanctified. These fit us for Heaven, the Place *above.* Of the third sort are Glory and Eternal Felicity, the Rewards of Righteous Souls, the Crown of Life laid up for them, the Beatifick Presence and Vision of God, at whose Right-hand there are Pleasures for evermore. These are the things that are *enjoy'd above.*

And all these we are oblig'd to *seek*, and *set our Affections upon*: These are the *Acts* that belong to the *Objects*, and they comprehend

1. The Acts of the *Understanding*; and so the meaning of the Apostle is this; First, be *Instructed* in those things above, those Heavenly and Divine Matters attain to a sufficient Knowledge of those Spiritual Mysteries; see that ye be no Strangers to such Great and Weighty Concerns. It is good that your Minds be establish'd with a right Judgment of these things. Secondly, Think of, often call to Mind, and Meditate upon the Things of Religion and another World. Take some time seriously to ponder and consider these Matters; revolve them often in your Thoughts, let your Minds be busied and taken up with these things. Contemplate and Study them with great Attention and Earnestness. *Give your Minds* to them, that is the Import of the * *Greek* word which is here used. * φρονεῖτε.

2. The Act of the *Will*, no less than of the Understanding is here comprehended. *The things above* are to be the Object of our Free Choice. The Elective Power of our Souls is to exert it self here. We must deliberately choose these things for our Portion: Here we ought to shew what is our full Design and Purpose, what are our settled Intentions and Resolves.

3. The *Affections*, as well as the Understanding and Will, are comprised here. Our *Desires* and *Wishes* must sally forth towards these Heavenly Objects, in imitation of that Holy Man, *O that I had the Wings of a Dove*, &c. and in another place, *O when shall I come and appear before God!* And, again, *Who have I in Heaven but thee, and there is none on Earth that I desire besides thee?* Our *Love* and *Delight* must be fixed on these, and our *Hope* and *Joy* must be exercised about them.

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In short, our *Hearts* must be in Heaven whilst we Sojourn upon Earth, we must affectionately breath after the things above, we must savour and relish nothing in comparison of them.

4. To give the full and compleat Sense of these Words, they do moreover imply the *Outward Actions and Endeavours*. *Seek* these Heavenly and Divine Things be careful about them, prosecute them with all Diligence, use the best Means to accomplish and bring into Act what you know, will, and affect; live Spiritual and Angelical Lives; let these acquaint the World that you seek the things that are above. If Christ be risen, and you with him, walk as those who have arrived to that Exalted State. Let your whole Life and Conversation shew that you are lifted above the World, and all the things of it. So much for the *Apostle's Inference* from the Doctrine of Christ's Resurrection, which I have exspatiated upon, because it is of so great Moment and Importance.

It remains then that we reduce all that hath been said to Practice, and that we endeavour to find experimentally the *Vigour and Power* of that Enlivening Spirit which raised up Christ from the Dead. *When* did we feel and fully experience the Truth of Christ's Words, *John* 5. 25. [*The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live?*] Have we heard this quickning Voice of the Son of God, and are we by the Power of it passed from Death to Life? Have we really felt this Great and Stupendous Change in our Souls? Can we unfeignedly say with the Apostle in *Eph.* 2. 4. [*God who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickned us together with Christ, and hath raised us up together, and hath made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus?*] This is the Result of our Saviour's Resurrection in all true Believers; this is the Spiritual Effect of it in all faithful Souls.

But alas, how few are there that have the Gladsome Experience of it on their Hearts, and in their Lives? How few of us that make a Rehearsal of our Creed, and publickly confess and own *this Article* among the rest. [He Rose again from the Dead] find in our Souls the Influence and Operation of this great Principle of Christianity? How few are there that discover the *Efficacy* of it in their Converse in the World? How seldom is it learnt from the *Practices of Christians*, that this Article is useful to such Holy Purposes as we have spoken of? Nay, how many thousands confess and believe this Proposition, and yet seem to derive thence Conclusions of a wicked Life? They say that Christ is *Risen*, and they will not forget to keep *Easter* when it comes; no, by no means. They should be no *Christians*, they think, if they did. And truly so far they are in the right that a solemn remembrance of Christ's Resurrection is an inseparable Attendant of *Christianity*, and to set some Time apart for this Purpose is very requisite. But how do these Persons Celebrate this Season, (for that is the thing I find fault with them for?) This is their way, they spend this Time in vain Disports and Pleasures, they overcharge their Hearts with Surfeiting and Drunkenness, they indulge their Follies and Wanton Appetites, they are Idle and Dissolute, and wholly neglect the Design of Christ's Rising from the Dead; which was that they should Die unto Sin, and live unto Righteousness. So they are devoid of the Divine and Spiritual Life, by which every true Christian should be actuated and informed; they are not acquainted with the Power and Spirit of Godliness, the true Origin and Principle of Evangelical Life. Where do we espie the happy Fruit of the Doctrine we have been treating of? Where do we not see the Spiritual Ends of it frustrated and disappointed in the Lives of Men? Their Forgetfulness of God and Religion, their Stupidity and Senselessness under the Judgments of Heaven, their Besotting themselves with Sensual and Carnal Pleasures, proclaim aloud to the World that they are resolved for their part to disanul the great Design of Christ's Resurrection, and that the most important Undertakings of the Redeemer shall have no effect upon them.

It is high time then that we rifle our Thoughts and Affections, and strictly survey our Lives and Manners, and, if we find this Degeneracy seizing upon us, that we Manfully strive against it, and by earnest Prayer endeavour to dispossess this Evil Spirit. If we call our selves Christians, and hope to enjoy the Happiness of Christians, we must strive to *attain to the Resurrection of the Dead*, as the Apostle hath express'd himself in *Phil.* 3. 11. Which tho' it may be understood of Rising

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to Everlasting Life and Glory, yet I am perswaded by the Context that it is rather to be understood of our Spiritual Rising to Newness of Life, which is the Subject of our present Discourse. Let us be careful that Christ's Resurrection may be ours, that our Saviour, our Head being restored to Life, we who are his Members may really partake of that Benefit; and that we may evidence it by visible Acts and Exertments of a new Life, by lifting up our Souls from the Earth, and by conversing with, and conforming our selves to our Head in Heaven. Let us imagine, among all the Earthly Enjoyments we are possessors of, we heard a Voice like that of the Angel, saying to us, *He is risen, he is not here*; he is not here in the vain Delights of this World, he is not here in the greatest Applause, Honours, and Preferments we can be masters of; he is not here in all the Wealth and Riches that can be heaped upon us. Why seek we the Living among the Dead? Why look we for Christ in any of these? He is Risen, and is Ascended far above all these; and so must we too, conforming our selves to his Pattern, and endeavouring to feel the Virtue of his Rising again, which hath Power to exalt the State of our Souls, and can enable us to attain to that life which is Divine and Heavenly. And thus I have finish'd the Second Proposition, and shewn how Christ's Rising from the Dead doth furnish us with effectual Means and Helps of Sanctification.

The *Third* and *last Proposition* is still behind, (which I shall more briefly dispatch) and 'tis this; That the Power of our Saviour's Resurrection is discover'd, (not only as to the Confirmation of our Faith, and promoting a Holy Life, but) in *Chearing* and *Comforting* our Minds, and supporting them under the Crosses we meet with both Spiritual and Temporal. If I should speak of the former, it might easily be demonstrated that this Article I have discours'd of Administers abundant Joy and Consolation. For certainly if it confirms our *Faith*, (as we have heard it doth) it will strengthen our *Hope*. If it be the Foundation of the greatest Truths, it must needs be an unspeakable Support to us in our greatest Troubles and Anxieties of Mind about our Eternal State and Happiness; for the Benefits of our Saviour's Birth and Passion being actually applied to us by his Rising again, we are assured that the whole Work of our Redemption and Salvation is fully accomplish'd, and on that account we must needs feel an admirable Chearing and Refreshing, notwithstanding all the malicious Suggestions of the Evil Spirit, whose Employment it is to sollicit us to Sin, and then to create Trouble and Torment in our Consciences. But Christ is risen who vanquish'd the Tempter, *and through Death destroy'd him that had the Power of Death, that is, the Devil*, Heb. 2. 14.

But besides this, the Virtue of his Resurrection appears in its fortifying us against all *Outward* and *Worldly Crosses*, be they Sickness, Disgrace, Poverty, Persecution, or any Calamities whatsoever; any withdrawing of Earthly Conveniencies, or the arrival of sad Accidents which concern either our selves or others. To this purpose I conceive are the Apostle's Words in 1 *Cor.* 15. 17, 18. *If Christ be not raised, if in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable.* And *v.* 30. *Why stand we in jeopardy every hour?* As if the Apostle had said, it is to no purpose for us Christians to expose our selves to Dangers; 'tis foolish and irrational to undergo Persecution, unless we are assured of this, that Christ is risen, and that we shall rise with him in Glory. This Perswasion and Assurance will make us triumph over all Hardships. Another Life is to come after this, and that will make amends for all.

But more particularly to shew how the Resurrection of Christ hath this Power of Administring *Comfort* to us in all our Adversities, it must needs be so; because

1. It assures us that God is able to raise us out of the lowest and meanest Condition, as he did our Blessed Saviour, after he had been Despised and Rejected by the World, after he had been Abused, and shamefully Treated, after he had been Persecuted, and at last Crucified. When he had been numbred amongst Transgressors, and look'd upon by his Adversaries as a Vile and Wretched Person, as a Deluder and Impostor, he was miraculously restored to Life; he approv'd himself *to be really* what *he said he was*, and he triumph'd over the impotent *Malice of his Enemies*. That glorious Sun set, and in a Cloud, but it rose again with greater Brightness and Lustre; and *we* may comfort our selves in hopes of the like Goodness

ness of our Heavenly Father. *He hath deliver'd, and he doth deliver*; and (therefore in the Apostle's way of Arguing) *we hope that he will yet deliver*. Sorrow may indure for a Night, but Joy comes in the Morning. In that happy Morning of Christ's Resurrection, universal Joy arrived to the World. Let us then with those early Visitants at our Saviour's Sepulchre step in, and behold the Proofs of his being Risen again; hearken to the Voice of the Angel confirming it; see the *Exuviæ* of our Lord's Body, the Grave-cloaths left behind; take that Linen and wipe the Tears from your Eyes; solace your Minds in your heaviest *Pressures and Afflictions* with this *comfortable Reflection*, that *they*, like those of our Saviour, shall not be of any duration. These things will not last long, said Bishop *Jewel* of his own Banishment, and of the common Calamity of the Church in his Time. So that good Father *Athanasius*, when he was Banish'd by *Julian*, and things went very cross with the Orthodox Christians, used to relieve his own Sorrows, and refresh his Friends with that Prophetick Motto, This is but a thin Cloud, and it will soon blow over. And so it did, and Light and Joy succeeded in its room. This comfortable Hope in Distress is Administred from the Consideration of our Blessed Saviour's Rising again. Excellently therefore the Apostle in 2 *Cor.* 4. 14. *Knowing that he who raised up the Lord Jesus, shall raise us up also by Jesus.* Which words referr to what he had before said of the Afflictions and Sufferings of the Christians, *We who live* (saith he) *are always deliver'd unto Death*, v. 11. But from Christ's Rising the Apostle gathers the certain Knowledge and Assurance of the speedy rescuing of the Christians from their Tribulations and Sufferings.

2. This Article must needs afford us solid Consolation, because it assures us that our Redeemer now having overcome Death, is ready to Compassionate us in all our Troubles, from the Sense and Experience he had of the *like*, but *far greater* than any that we can endure. Certainly this is a most refreshing and ravishing Consideration, that we have now a Mediator in the highest Heavens, who assumed our Flesh and Blood, and underwent the Calamities here on Earth which we are incident to, and therefore cannot but intimately Sympathize with us in our Sorrows, and resent all our Hardships and Miseries with an unexpressible Pity and Compassion. But only to Pity and Commiserate our adverse Condition, would be but an insignificant Relief to us.

3*dly*, And lastly, therefore this Compassionate Mediator is able to Help and Succour us in all our Distresses, he being Risen, and made Lord both of the Quick and Dead, and having all Power given him both in Heaven and in Earth. He being Exalted by the Right-hand of his Father, is enabled to deliver his Church in the greatest Straits and Extremities, and to confound its Opposers and Adversaries, be they Bodily or Ghostly, Men or Devils, be they never so numerous, Potent, and Malicious. What greater Comfort than this can be suggested to all true Christians in their sharpest Agonies, in their bitterest Desertions, in their sorest Temptations, in their heaviest Crosses and Afflictions? They cannot serve a better Master than this Compassionate and Omnipotent Redeemer. He will ever be mindful of their Tears and Groans, and be Afflicted in all their Afflictions. He will likewise rescue them from their Sorrows and Grievances, he will raise them out of their Graves, and with his mighty Hand deliver them from the most fatal Evils into which they were plunged. And thus I have sufficiently, (though briefly) proved the last Proposition, *viz.* that the *Power* of our Saviour's *Resurrection* is seen in its wonderful supporting us under all Distresses and Calamities whatsoever.

To shut up all, we see how serviceable this *Article* of *Christ's Resurrection* is to the great Ends of Religion; we see what a mighty Power and Efficacy there is in it, (if seriously weigh'd and consider'd) to confirm our Faith, to reform our Lives, and to solace our Consciences. And this is true, and might be made good of all the other Actions and Undertakings of Christ Jesus. There is the *Power* of his Incarnation and Circumcision, the Power and Virtue of his Baptism, Fasting, and Temptation; the Power of his Life, Death and Sufferings, and of his Ascending into Heaven, and his Session at the Right-hand of God; and if we deliberately enquire into the other Transactions and Mysteries of the Christian Religion, we shall find that they have all a vast Influence on our Minds and Manners, and are fraught with more pregnant Consequences, more weighty and useful Conclusions than we commonly imagine. All of them, if duly consider'd, and rightly made use

uſe of, are of ſingular Vertue to promote the Deſign of the Goſpel, which is Holineſs of Life.

May we then all of us make it our great concern, not to fruſtrate thoſe Noble and Excellent Ends of Chriſt's Undertakings by perſiſting in our Sins, and thereby trampling under Foot the Blood of the Covenant, and bidding defiance to the Spirit of Grace: But may we all in good earneſt thankfully embrace the offers of Mercy in Chriſt Jeſus, and ſpeedily renounce the Follies of a Sinful Life, and by Purity and Holineſs fit ourſelves for that Happineſs, which our Saviour Died and Roſe again to purchaſe for us. Let what I have ſaid concerning this great Article of our Chriſtian Faith, excite us all to Holy and Pious Meditations, to Ardent Prayers and Petitions at the Throne of Grace, to all Endeavours of Godlineſs and an Upright Life, and in a particular manner to the Study of *Love* and *Charity*, *Good-will*, and *Brotherly Affection* to one another. I remember I have read of a good Ancient Chriſtian, who meeting his Enemy on *Eaſter* Day, accoſted him in this charming Language, Chriſt our Redeemer is Riſen; Oh! let us forget our former Animoſities and Quarrels, let us lay aſide our Heats and Feuds, let us joyn Hands and be Friends, let us agree and Love one another. And Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtory acquaints us, that this was the uſual Form of Greeting, and Salutation in the *Eaſtern* Churches among the Old Chriſtians, Ἀνέστη, *He is Riſen.* It paſs'd with them for the language of Friendſhip and Love. Chriſt's Reſurrection ſhould inſpire us with an Univerſal Philanthropy, with an hearty Affection for all Mankind. Chriſt hath left the Grave; let not any Chriſtian wiſh his Enemy there. Let us make it manifeſt in our Lives and Actions, that we are indued with this true Primitive Spirit, *i. e.* the Loving and Peaceable Temper which becomes all the Followers of Chriſt: Let Unity and Concord be the Guide of our Undertakings, let Good-Will and Amity be viſible in all our Enterprizes, let us be kind one to another, as thoſe who had ſo kind and indearing a Maſter; that hereby our Religion may grow into Credit even among thoſe, who are Enemies to it, that it may be ſaid of us, as 'twas ſaid of thoſe Primitive Chriſtians, *See how they Love one another!*

THE VI ARTICLE.

He Ascended into Heaven, and sitteth at the Right Hand of God, the Father Almighty.

First, concerning the former Clause, *He Ascended into Heaven.*

A Discourse on Acts I. 9.

While they beheld, He was taken up, and a Cloud received him out of their Sight.

Here the *Manner*, the *Reasonableness*, and the *Necessity* of *Christ's Ascension* are treated of: Together with the true meaning of his *Session at the Right Hand of God.*

THIS wonderful and eminent Action, the *Ascension* of Christ, which I am now to speak of, hath met with none yet to parallel it. The Translation of the Holy Patriarch *Enoch*, comes infinitely short of it; and the Sacred History, hath not been pleased to relate so much as one Circumstance, to acquaint us with the manner of it. *Elijah*, that zealous Prophet, was rapt up in a Fiery Chariot, and snatch'd away in a Whirlwind: Which was far different from the Assumption of our Lord, who was carried up gently in a placid Cloud. Perhaps from these two Examples (which questionless were talk'd of among the *Heathens*) it was lookt upon as a great token of Divine Favour to be snatch'd up to Heaven; and thence *Ganymed* is feign'd to be taken up thither by *Jupiter*, and to be employed in an Office about him there. So *Romulus* is said in Roman Story, to have been carried off the World with a kind of *Apotheosis*, or *Consecration* (as *Florus* calls it) being hurried away suddenly whilst he was making an Harangue to the People, in a full Assembly. And a flattering *Roman* soon Reported, with confidence, that he appeared after that time to him, in a more glorious shape than usual, and commanded him to take care, that he should be listed into the number of the Gods. If ye remember of what Quality those Persons were who cried out at Christ's Passion and Stupendous Death, *truly this was the Son of God*, we shall be apt to believe that those *Romans* (for such they were, the Centurion and Soldiers with him) thought of our Saviour as they did of *Hercules*, *Bacchus*, the *Castors*, *Asculapius*, especially that those Words referred to the noted passage of *Romulus*, at whose Death Thunder and Darkness, and a mighty Tempest happen'd, in the midst of which one *Procurus* with others affirm'd, he was conveyed away out of their Sight, and snatch'd away to Heaven. Thus they exalted some Persons to Divine Honour, and they became *Sons of the Gods*, upon mere fabulous Stories and Reports.

Perhaps

Perhaps it was in imitation of *Christ*, that they feign'd *Ascensions* of other Persons. Thus 'tis said that when *Apollonius* of *Tyana*, whom *Hierocles* compares with our Saviour, and makes him his Rival, was arraign'd before *Domitian*, he vanish'd in the midst of the Court, to the amazement of the Emperor, and the rest of his Judges. Which undoubtedly was effected by Art *Magick*, as *Philostrat*, (who Writ the Life of this Impostor) gives us to understand of him, when he relates that he extremely affected the Study of *Judiciary Astrology*, and dealt in *Strange Ceremonies*, whence there is a shrewd hint that he was (as most of that Crew were then) a *Wizard*, and atchieved those wondrous things, which are reported of him, by some *Diabolick* Contract. But the aforesaid Author goes on, and tells us that he not only vanish'd in an unspeakable manner, and that a little time after he came to his Friends *Damis*, and *Demetrius*, who were at *Puteoli*, a great distance from the place, but at last was taken up to Heaven in a wondrous manner, with this Voice to him as of some Nymph or Virgin, * *Leave the Earth, and Ascend to Heaven.* All this is Fiction, invented merely to rival, and in the consequence, to render Improbable the History of our Blessed Lord, as several Learned Writers have Demonstrated.

* [illegible] Lib. 8. cap. 12.

It can't be thought impertinent to mention *Mahomet*, (a greater and more dangerous Cheat) who often used to cajole his Disciples, with the Assurance of his being rapt up to Heaven in the close of his Life. Accordingly they expected when his Body should mount to Paradise, but having waited a long time, that they might not altogether fail of his Prediction, they counterfeited a kind of petty Ascension, and made some poor Pilgrim *Turks* believe that he hangs in the Air, held up there in an Iron Chest or Coffin, by the powerful charm of Load-stones. Which is all Fabulous, for his Tomb (which indeed is of Stone) lies on the ground, as † Eye-witnesses testify. So that this Pendulous Tomb is a Romance: Besides, 'tis in the nature of the thing almost impossible to be of any Duration, for upon the agitation of the Air, and the Body waving on either side the position must needs be lost, and consequently that *Suspension* too. But they would have something like an *Ascension*, they would have it at least approach to it. If he can't Mount so high as Heaven, they'll be content that he hang between that and the Earth. Thus there is a great pretence to *Ascending*: And the *Gentiles* and *Mahometans* agree alike in this gross delusion.

† Gabriel Sionita & Johan. Hesronita, two Maronites.

I am sorry that another party in the World, who lay claim to Christianity, seem to emulate them, I mean some of the Church of *Rome*, who talk of the *Assumption of the Virgin Mary*, and make it a corrival with Christ's Ascension, and deem the ‖ Festival which commemorates the one to be as venerable as that on which the other is celebrated. For this they produce the Testimonies of *Simeon Metaphrastes*, *Damascen*, *Nicephorus*; though the Feast of her Assumption was not begun to be kept in the *Roman* Church, till the Days of *Charles* the Great. And an Eminent * Writer of that Church concludes that it is uncertain, whether the Virgin *Mary* was taken up to Heaven with her Body, and that those who first asserted it, had it only from common Fame. Some of that Communion would persuade us that *Ignatius Loyola*, the Founder of the *Jesuits*, was seen when he was alive, to be beset with Rays and Splendor about his Head, and was taken up from the ground where he stood, and was seen hovering in the Air: And that in the same moment he died, he appeared to a Noble Woman of *Bononia*, with Rays about his Head, and acquainted her that he had left this World. So that he was pretty near his *Assumption*, but it could not be perfected.

‖ *The 15th of August.*

* Durand. Rational. *lib.* 7. *c.* 24.

But I leave these credulous Men to their fond Fictions, whilst we in the mean time concern ourselves in the Real and Undoubted Ascension, in the visible and personal Assumption of our Blessed Saviour, whereby Life and Immortality and Eternal Glory are insured unto all those that believe in him, and obey him. This is infallibly true and undeniable, and hath nothing of Fraud and Fiction, of Superstition and blind Devotion to disparage it. *Tertullian* in defence of the Christian Religion against *Paganism*, speaks thus of our Saviour, with reference to some of those Impostures before mention'd, *The glorious Susception of Christ, saith he, is a much truer Story, than that of your fawning* Romans; *concerning* Romulus. Or rather indeed he might have said, (which was his true meaning) that the latter was false and feign'd, but the former was most certainly true, and cannot but be own'd to be so, seeing it is

attested by Witnesses of unexceptionable Faithfulness and Integrity, and recorded by the infallible Penmen of the Sacred Writings.

Yea, this was foresignified even under the Old Legal Dispensation, as is clear from St. *Paul's* arguing in *Heb.* 9. 9, *&c.* where he tells us, that *the High Priests entring into the Holy of Holies was a Figure for the time then present, the Holy Ghost foreshewing thereby that our great High Priest should by his own Blood enter once into the Holy place,* (*i. e.* into Heaven) *having obtain'd Eternal Redemption for us.* Thus was this Remarkable Action typically represented of Old. And afterwards the inspired Poet and Prophet gave some intimation of it in his Incomparable Song, *Psalm* 24. *Lift up your Heads, O ye Gates, and be ye lift up, ye Everlasting Doors, and the King of Glory shall come in:* v. 7. and so again, v. 9. which very Judicious Expositors have applied to our Saviour's Triumphal Ascending into Heaven. As they do likewise a great part of *Psalm* 118, and particularly the 19 and 20 Verses, *Open to me the Gates of Righteousness, I will go into them, and I will Praise the Lord,* &c. This also was prophesied of in *Psalm* 68. 18. *Thou hast Ascended up on High, thou hast led captivity captive* (an Hebraism *for making many Captives*) *thou hast received Gifts for Men.* The bare litteral Sense of which Words, the Apostle waves in his 4th Chapter of his Epistle to the *Ephesians*, and applies them in a Mystical meaning to the glorious Exaltation of our Redeemer to Heaven. The 47th *Psalm* is a Mystical Prediction of the same thing. And so is the last Verse of the 16th *Psalm*, *Thou wilt shew me the Path of Life: In thy presence is fulness of Joy, and at thy Right Hand there are Pleasures for evermore.* Which Words are primarily applicable to *David*, and proportionably may be understood of all the Faithful Servants of God: He vouchsafes to shew them the Path of Life, and Everlasting Bliss, he safely conducts them to those Joys and Pleasures in the Regions above which are immense and endless. But by the Suffrage of the best Interpreters of this Text, it is ultimately spoken of *Christ*, as he was restored from Death and the Power of the Grave, and exalted to the Kingdom of Heaven, the Place of God's peculiar Presence, the Path of Life, the Seat of Joys and Pleasures that are both full and everlasting. This likewise was foreseen by the Prophet *Daniel* in his Vision which is related in *Chap.* 7. v. 13, 14. Behold, *one like the Son of Man came with* (or *in*) *the Clouds of Heaven* (as he is described in the Text) *and came to the Ancient of Days, and they brought him near before him: And there was given him Dominion and Glory, and a Kingdom:* ——— *And this Dominion is an everlasting Dominion, which shall not pass away, and his Kingdom is that which shall not be destroyed.*

Thus our Lord's *Ascension* being prophetically and typically delivered to us of old, we come to consider the real and actual Accomplishment of it in the Words that are before us. When our Saviour had for Forty Days after his Resurrection openly conversed with his Disciples, and now on the last of them had assembled them together on Mount *Olivet*, and there upbraided them with their Unbelief and Hardness of Heart, and corrected their fond Mistakes and erroneous Apprehensions concerning himself and his Kingdom, and given them Instructions about the great Affairs they were to be employed in, and had authorized them to travel over the whole habitable World, and to preach the Gospel to every intelligent Creature, and had endowed them with a Power of working Miracles to vouch their Doctrine, and assured them, that he would in a short Time send the Holy Ghost to be with them, and assist them, and fully enable them to discharge the Work which he expected of them, when he had in this Manner entertained them (as you may gather from the dispersed Relations in the *Gospels*, and the *Acts*) he left them, and took his flight to Heaven. *When he had spoken these Things, as they beheld, he was taken up, and a Cloud received him out of their Sight.*

From which Words I shall speak, 1. Of the *Ascension itself*, and the *Manner* of it. 2. I will discover the *Reasonableness*, *Expediency*, and *Necessity* of this Ascending. 3. I will shew what *Effect* and *Influence* these Things should have upon our Lives and Practices.

First, As to the Ascension itself, and the Manner of it, it is briefly and plainly set down in those Words, *He was taken up, and a Cloud receiv'd him out of their Sight.* The Word ἐπήρθη may more properly be render'd, *he was lifted up*, and so it is generally used by the *Septuagint*. St. *Luke* in his Gospel, *ch.* 24. *v.* 51. expresses

presses it by the Word ἀνεφέρετο, *he was carried up.* St. *Mark's* Word is ἀνελήφθη, *ch.* 16. *v.* 19. *he was received up.* All which express the same Thing; namely, our Saviour's leaving of this Earth, and going to the Regions above.

It is added, That *a Cloud received him out of their Sight*, or according to the *Greek*, *took him from their Eyes.* Which our renowned Dr. *Hammond* thinks is to be understood of the *Angels*; for he is of Opinion, That these Heavenly Messengers are meant by this *Cloud.* And his Interpretation is not unagreeable to the Style and Phrase of Holy Scripture, where the Appearance of those Glorious Creatures is sometimes described by *Clouds.* But whether this be the import of the Word here, and consequently whether our Lord was carried up to the Mansions of Glory, in the Arms of those heavenly Envoys, it is past the Skill of any Man to determine. But it is certain, That we cannot err in adhering to the *proper* and *usual* Signification of this Term: And who sees not that it is agreeable to the Manner of the Divine Majesty's declaring itself at other Times, as in *Mat.* 17. 5. *A bright Cloud over-shadowed them, and behold, a Voice out of the Cloud which said, this is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased, hear ye him.* And this shall be the Manner of the appearing of the Son of God at Doomsday, as he himself saith, *Ye shall see the Son of Man coming in the Clouds*, Mat. 24. 30.

What I have further to say concerning the Nature and Manner of Christ's Ascension, may be comprised in these Three Corollaries; (which are partly the result of what hath been said already, and may partly be gathered from other Parallel Places, that gives a Narrative of Christ's Ascension.) First, That he *truly* and *really* left this Earth upon which he lived. We have all the Reason in the World to believe this, it being related here and in other Places as absolute *Matter of Fact.* So that unless we understand it Literally and Historically (as the Words import) we enervate all Scripture-History, and shall never be able to make any tolerable Sense of any other Relation of Fact in the Sacred Writings: Upon which would follow the greatest Absurdities imaginable. This I mention here to confront the wild Extravagancies of some Enthusiastick People of our own and former Ages, who love to turn all the Historical Part of Christ's Actions into Mystery and Allegory. Their Way is to defie the dead Letter, and construe all they meet with in a Spiritual Sense. These hold Christ was taken up *in a Cloud* indeed, in a dark, abstruse and mystical Meaning only. Than which nothing can run more counter to common Sense and the Tenor of the Gospel: For from these we are ascertain'd that Christ really left this World, and went up to the Cœlestial Mansions.

Secondly, Christ's Ascension was *Local* and *Bodily*, maugre the Heretical Assertion of the *Montanists* and *Carpocratians*, and others who maintained that our Saviour's Soul only was taken up into Heaven, but they would not allow that he went thither in his *Body.* Whereas the contrary is undeniably evident from the plain Testimony of the Evangelists, *while they beheld*, saith the Text, *he was taken up.* It was a Matter which their *Senses* were capable to judge of. And there was no likelyhood of their being deceived and imposed upon, for *they look'd stedfastly towards Heaven, as he went up*, as St. *Luke* adds in *Acts* 1. 10. They with great Intenseness and Earnestness view'd that last Scene, so that they could perfectly judge of it. And the same Holy Writer assures us in this Chapter, that there were no less than *Sixscore Witnesses* to attest this, *v.* 15. His going up to Heaven being thus *Visible*, it follows, That it was *Corporeal* and *Local.* *He was parted from his Apostles, and carried up into Heaven*, saith the same inspired Writer; *Luke* 24. 51. He really quitted the Place he was in, and the Company he was with, and passed from Earth to Heaven. Hence the infallible Records acquaint us, That the Blessed Martyr St. *Stephen*, even when he was here on Earth, saw the Heavens opened, and, as by some strange and miraculous *Telescope*, discovered Christ at the right hand of God. And by as wonderful, but as certain Opticks, St. *Paul* and St. *John* saw him enthroned in his heavenly Majesty, though they themselves were not enter'd into the State of Glory. We are sure then, That the Son of God by a Local Translation of his Body properly ascended.

Thirdly, He ascended into the *highest Heavens*, the Seat of the Blessed. This we are assured of from the particular Relation of this last Action of our Saviour, in *Mark* 16. 15. *He was received up into Heaven, and sat at the right Hand of God*, which must be acknowledged to be in the Supreme Heavens. And the Apostle

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lets us know in *Eph.* 4. 10. *That he ascended up far above all Heavens*, i. e. above the visible and starry Heavens; and therefore 'tis fitly said in *Heb.* 7. 26. *that he was made higher than the Heavens.*

This is contradicted by a bold * Writer of late, who would perswade us, That when 'tis said *Christ ascended into Heaven*, the Meaning only is, That he ascended to the uppermost Part of the Airy Regions, which is not above Forty-five or Fifty Miles off of us. He holds the *Heaven of the Blessed*, where Christ and the glorified Saints are, is this Air or Atmosphere which environs the Earth. Which plainly disagrees with what the Holy Scriptures have delivered concerning that glorious Seat of Bliss and Happiness, which in several Places is call'd *the Heaven of Heavens*, Deut. 10. 14. 1 Kings 8. 27. 2 Chron. 2. 6. — 6. 18. Psa. 148. 4. to distinguish it without doubt from the Lower Heavens, the Atmosphere which this Writer speaks of, which incompasses this Earth. We learn from *Psa.* 8. 1. That God *hath set his Glory above the Heavens*, and again from *Psa.* 113. 4. That *his Glory is above the Heavens.* Which is explained by what follows, *Who is like unto the Lord our God, who dwelleth on high, who humbleth himself to behold the Things that are in Heaven, and in the Earth?* v. 5, 6. It is here reckoned by this devout Man, as a signal Instance of God's Condescension, That though he dwells on high, even above the Starry and Airy Heavens, yet he vouchsafes to take Notice of Things in these Heavens. This plainly proves the Difference between the highest Heavens, the Place of the Divine Residence, and the lower Heavens which are nearer the Earth. The Psalmist also mentions *the Heavens, even the Heavens* (or the Heaven of Heavens) *Psal.* 115. 16. and tells us, That *they are the Lord's: but the Earth hath he given to the Children of Men.* As much as to say, the highest Heavens are God's Court, the Seat of his Glory, but the Earthly Globe with the Air and the Sea belonging to it, and the Creatures in it are for Man's use. In 1 *Kings* 8. 27. there is a plain Difference between *the Heaven*, that is, those Regions of Air and Clouds which are below, and *the Heaven of Heavens. Behold*, saith *Solomon, the Heaven and the Heaven of Heavens cannot contain thee*; that is, as these Lower Heavens or Regions of Air can't possibly contain thee, who art infinite and immense, so neither can those spacious Heavens which are far above those. These are properly and strictly call'd *the Heaven above* by God himself, in *Jer.* 31. 37. And he propounds it as a Thing wholly impossible that this *Heaven above should be measured*, Jer. 31. 37. which shews that it is not the same Heaven which our late Author talks of, for he hath *measur'd that*, and tells us, That the utmost Height of it is about Forty-five Miles from the Earth. We have seen, from what hath been cited out of the Sacred Writings, That the Beatifick Heaven, the Throne of the Divine Majesty, is of much vaster Dimensions.

* Whiston on the Accomplishment of Scripture Prophecies, p. 288, &c.

And I will further confirm it from that Passage in *Job* 22. 12. *Is not God in the Height of Heaven? and behold the Height of the Stars, how high they are.* As if it had been said, we may gather from the wonderful and amazing Height of the starry Bodies, that the Heaven where God and the Blessed Spirits are, is much higher, for this is far exalted above those Luminaries. The invisible Heavens, where the Blessed are seated, are beyond the largest Spheres or Orbits of those Fixed Lights. It is no Wonder then, that this ancient *Arabian* Philosopher doth here signally mention the *Height of Heaven*; and that another Learned and Religious Man of that Country speaks it as in a Proverbial Way, *as high as Heaven*, *Job* 11. 8.

And in the New Testament * *the height* and † *the Highest*, are proper Terms chosen out to express the exalted Heaven of the Blessed, because it is far remote from any Regions neighbouring on the Earth. And for this Reason 'tis call'd *the Third Heaven*, 2 Cor. 12. 2. to distinguish it from the Heaven where the Stars are placed, and from the Heaven where are the Clouds and Meteors. Yet our Mathematick Author is so groveling in his Thoughts and Conceptions concerning the Third Heaven (the same with *Paradise*, v. 4.) that he extends it no further than the uppermost Regions of the Body of the Air. According to him the Birds and Fowls are in Heaven, as well as God and Christ, and the Angels and Saints. Yea, Men and Devils, good and bad Angels, the Souls of the Blessed and of the Damned, are all in the Air; that is, according to him in Heaven. Thus he confounds the Kingdom of Light and Darkness, Christ and Satan. St. *Jude* (*v.* 6. of his *Epistle*) tells us, That *That the Angels kept not their first Estate, but left their own Habitation*,

* ὕψος, Luk. 1. 78. — 24. 49.
† ὑψίστοις, Luke 2. 14.

tion, τὸ ἴδιον οἰκητήριον, their *proper* Habitation which God had prepared for them, as fitteſt for thoſe glorious Creatures before their Apoſtaſie. But how can it be ſaid to be their *proper* Habitation, if it is *common* to the Damned? And how can they be ſaid to *leave* this Habitation, when they are ſtill in the ſame Habitation that they were in before? For this Author holds that there is one and the ſame Receptacle for all Spirits, good and bad. St. *Peter* acquaints us, That *God ſpared not the Angels that ſinned, but caſt them down to Hell*, Epiſt. 2. chap. 2. v. 4. but can any ſober Man think that Hell is the ſame Place with Heaven, if the Angels were caſt down from Heaven to Hell, as here we are aſſured? Can any one poſſibly ſubmit to this ſtrange Notion, which places the good and bad Angels in the ſame Region? Is it not undeniably evident, that theſe Two Places are diſtinct; namely, the Place of the Angels *firſt Eſtate* and *proper Habitation*, and the Place which they were afterwards *caſt down to*? Yet, though they are caſt down, yet they are ſtill above, according to the Hypotheſis of Mr. *Whiſton*: Which I don't ſee how any Man of Senſe and Sobriety can allow of.

This may ſuffice to be ſpoken in Confutation of that wild Notion, and in Defence of our Interpretation of *Chriſt's aſcending into Heaven*. It is true, a Cloud receiv'd him, but did not detain him: He ſtopp'd not in any Region of the Air; nor ſtaid he in thoſe next and higher Stories (though more calm and ſerene) where the *Stoicks* placed the Souls of their Wiſe-men; nor took he up his Lodging in the Sun, where the ſilly * *Manichæans* held Chriſt's Body was depoſited, and quoted for it the *vulgar Latin* Verſion of *Pſal.* 18. 5. *In ſole poſuit tabernaculum ſuum.* But he made his Paſſage through all the ſpacious Circles of the Upper World, and haſten'd to the great Rendezvouz of Glorious Spirits. He pierced into the Heaven of Heavens, into the inmoſt Sanctuary of the Divine Majeſty: His Flight was to the Throne of God to the Seat of Bliſs and Conſummate Glory. Thus we have a brief Account of the *Manner* and *Quality* of Chriſt's Aſcenſion, which was the Firſt Thing I propounded.

* Theodoret. Hæret. Fab. Auguſtin. de Hæreſib. cap. 59.

If it may be proper under this Head to add any Thing concerning the *Place* of his Aſcenſion, it ſhall be this, That as on a Mount, he *preached*, he often *prayed*, and was *transfigured*, and was *crucified*, ſo at laſt he *aſcended* on a Mount, that of *Olives*. This was a Place which he repair'd to frequently in the Days of his Humiliation, and juſt before his Paſſion: And therefore, it was not unfit that his Exaltation ſhould commence there likewiſe. And how ſignal this was, may be gather'd from that Remark which Divine Providence put upon it, for St. * *Jerome* and † *Sulpitius Severus* tell us, That the exact Print of our Saviour's Feet remain'd in their Time on that Mount, and could not be effaced, and that over it *Helena* the Mother of *Conſtantine* the Great erected a Chapel, call'd the *Chapel of the Aſcenſion*. And with theſe ancient Writers, the modern Travellers, (not only of the *Roman* Church, but thoſe of a contrary Perſuaſion, among whom *Sandys* in the *Third Book of his Travels* is one) do concurr, aſſuring us, That theſe Sacred "Footſteps are ſtill ſeen in that Place, and cannot be obliterated.

* De Locis Hebraicis.
† Hiſt. Sac. lib. 2.

But having ſhewed *how* Chriſt was taken up to Heaven, I muſt proceed to tell you *why* he was, which is the next General Head of my Diſcourſe. The *Reaſonableneſs* and *Expediency* of this will appear by conſidering, 1. The Quality of Chriſt's Body and Soul after his Reſurrection, and the Union of both with his Divinity. 2. By weighing the Grounds and Reaſons mention'd by himſelf, why he was to go from Earth to Heaven. 3. By conſidering how great a Confirmation this was of the Chriſtian Religion.

Firſt, The Exaltation of our Lord to the Heavenly Habitations, is very accountable and reaſonable to him, that ſhall conſider the great Change made in his Body after his riſing from the Dead. It was now in a Manner become *Glorious* and *Heavenly*, and (as the Apoſtle ſtyles the Bodies of the Bleſſed) *Spiritual*: which is eaſily proved from ſeveral Paſſages in the Evangelical Hiſtory, and eſpecially from *Luke* 24. 31. where it is ſaid, ‖ *He became inviſible*, or *he vaniſh'd out of Sight*. Whereupon *Origen* affirms, That Chriſt's Body for thoſe Forty Days after his Reſurrection * appeared (or diſappear'd) when, and to whom he pleaſed. It was in a middle State, he thinks, partly Mortal, and yet placed in the Confines of Immortality. it ſtill remained a real Body, and by no Means is to be thought a Ghoſt or Spirit, as that learned Father proves from our Saviour's own Words, *A Spirit hath not Fleſh and Bones*: And yet it was ſo active and volatile, that

* Ἀφανὴς ἐγένετο.
‖ Ὅθεν τὸν ὅτι ἐκάλυψε καὶ ἐξέβαλετο. Contra Celſum.

that it hugely differed from what it was before. Now if we grant this (and there is good Ground for it) the Necessity of Christ's *Ascension* will easily appear; for a Glorious and Spiritualized Body (as we may call it) is presently on the Wing, and ready to fly away. It is so agile and active, That it cannot be pinion'd and ty'd down. It is grown too fine for Earth, and would be conversing with its Æthereal Acquaintance.

Perhaps those Words of Christ referr to this, *touch me not, for I am not yet ascended*, John 10. 17. but I must ascend as fast as I can. He forbids not the touching of his Body, for the Disciples and others (particularly this *Mary* to whom these Words were spoken) touch'd and felt it, and closely embraced it. But *to touch* here, is so to lay hold on him and hang about him, as to hinder him from going to his Disciples at this Time to tell them of his Resurrection. Thus *touching* is taken in *Luke* 7. 39. for it comprehends in it that Woman's washing Christ's Feet, and wiping them with the Hair of her Head, and kissing his Feet, and anointing them. All this is meant by *touching*: And so in the fore-cited Place, it signifies such a detaining of him as was inconsistent with his then present State, *I am not yet ascended*, saith our Saviour, but I am in a Tendency to it, I cannot stay long here, I must suddenly be gone, I must return to my Father; therefore hinder me not by your too officious Embraces and Caresses. This I apprehend to be the Meaning of this Passage, but I submit to the Judgment of the Learned.

But we are to remember also, That by Vertue of his glorified *Soul*, as well as *Body*, his ascending to Heaven was become necessary. This Internal Power and Principle actuated his now obedient Flesh, and had Power to transport it whither it pleased. This Candle of the Lord, this Immortal Light tended upwards, and the obsequious Body follow'd its Inclinations: And so both Soul and Body moved towards Heaven as their proper Center and Place of Abode.

But if we consider the *Union* of both these with the *Divinity*, his Ascension will be yet render'd more accountable. Thither he went whither his Godhead carried him. Having assumed the Humane Nature, and joyn'd it to the Divine, it was consequent on this, That the former should be taken up to the Cœlestial Kingdom, the more Special Seat of the Glorious Deity.

Secondly, There are particular Reasons given by Christ himself of this Action of his. As in *John* 14. 2. *I go to prepare a Place for you.* For though as God, he always filled all Places, and needed not any Translation or Removal to visit the Places that are above, yet, as he was Man, it was expedient that he should change his Situation which was here on Earth, and go to take Possession and Seisure of those Heavenly Dwellings which he had purchased by his meritorious Passion. The actual Entrance into them settles that right which he had gain'd already: And thus also they are confirmed unto the Faithful, and (as he here saith) *prepared* for them against their Arrival in that better World.

Another Reason is suggested to us in those Words, *I go to my Father, and ye shall not see me*, John 16. 16. and those in *John* 20. 29. *Blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed.* As if our Saviour had said, you have seen me, and conversed with me often, but now I am withdrawing myself from you. I am leaving this Earth, and advancing to Heaven. This, I intend should exercise your *Faith*, which is conversant about invisible Things. Now you will have Time to act that noble Grace; that is, firmly to believe and confide in me though I am not present to your Bodily Eyes. I see my Presence hath not met with that Esteem it should have had. I will try what Effect my Principles, in my Absence, will have on the World. I expect that all my Followers should relie upon that Saviour whom they do not see, and look for that Heaven which is now invisible.

Again, Christ lets us know that his Ascension was necessary on this Account, That the Christian Church might offer their Prayers to God the Father in his Name. To which Purpose let that Passage in *John* 16. 24. be observed, *Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my Name: Ask and ye shall receive, that your Joy may be full.* Where our Saviour Comforts his Disciples from the Consideration of the Benefit of his Ascending: When I am ascended and glorified, saith he, and set at God's Right-hand to intercede for you, then you shall offer up your Petitions to him in my Name, and I will offer them up also in my own Name, which I could not do before my Ascension, I having not then taken upon me the Office of Intercessor

terceſſor. This is to be done when I enter into the Holy of Holies, the higheſt Heavens. This, I conceive, is the true import of the Words; ſo that he aſſures us, by Vertue of his *Aſcenſion*, that the Prayers of Believers made in his Name ſhall be acceptable to his Father. This is one Reaſon of his Aſcending.

Our Saviour ſhews it to be yet further reaſonable that he ſhould leave the World, *John* 17. 4. *I have glorified thee on Earth, I have finiſhed the Work which thou gaveſt me to do: And now, O Lord, glorifie thou me with thy ownſelf.* And *v.* 13. *Now I come unto thee.* It was fitting and reaſonable that he ſhould return to Heaven, when he had diſpatched his whole Work. He had done as much as he could, and as he intended, for the Recovery of Mankind. By his exemplary Life, and holy Doctrine, and convincing Miracles, and meritorious Death and Paſſion, and miraculous Reſurrection he had finiſhed what he came to do here upon Earth. He had purchaſed Life and Immortality, Heaven and eternal Glory, why then ſhould he not enter upon the Fruition of them, why ſhould he not repair to the Place of Immortality, the Regions of eternal Bliſs, the Receptacle of incorruptible Souls? Why ſhould he tarry any longer here below? Why ſhould he, of whom the World was not worthy, make his Reſidence in it? Had he not done enough to oblige his moſt harden'd Enemies, and had not they moſt unworthily rejected him? And was it not high Time now to abandon the Earth, and to mount to Heaven, leaving his incorrigible Enemies to deſpair, and preparing for his Friends and Followers, thoſe Receptacles of Glory which he had ſolemnly promiſed them?

There is another Reaſon alledged by our Lord of his relinquiſhing this Earth, and viſiting the Cœleſtial Habitations; *it is expedient*, ſaith he, *for you, that I go away: for if I go not away, the Spirit, which is the Comforter, will not come unto you: but if I depart, I will ſend him unto you*, John 16. 7. Taking our Fleſh up, he ſent down his Holy Spirit. It was neceſſary that Chriſt ſhould aſcend, in order to this Deſcent of the Holy Ghoſt. Ask me not *why*: Be not over-nice and ſcrupulous. Divine Myſteries muſt not be levelled to our ſhallow Underſtandings. What God doth is every Way reaſonable. It is enough, That the Diſciples could not receive and entertain the Holy Ghoſt as long as Chriſt was carnally among them. And yet we may venture to ſatisfie the moſt Scrupulous and Inquiſitive, and at the ſame Time to clear that Place, *John* 7. 39. *The Holy Ghoſt was not yet given, becauſe Jeſus was not yet glorified.* The Meaning is, the Holy Spirit was not ſo abundantly beſtowed at that Time, as he ſhould be afterwards, becauſe Chriſt was then upon Earth, and in a State of *Humiliation*: But ſoon after he was to be exalted and glorified, and then it would be moſt decorous and proper, that greater Largeſſes of the Holy Spirit ſhould be given. And ſo it was, for when Chriſt aſcended up on high, he gave Gifts to Men, *even to the Rebellious alſo, that the Lord might dwell among them*, as was foretold of the Meſſias, *Pſ.* 68. 18. And the Apoſtle acquaints us, That *he aſcended up far above all Heavens, that he might fill all Things*, Eph. 4. 10. that he might furniſh and repleniſh his Church, and all the faithful Members of it with his Gifts and Graces. Accordingly Ten Days after his Aſcenſion, he accompliſhed the Promiſe he made of ſending his Holy Spirit, and hath ever ſince bleſſed the Church with plentiful Effuſions of thoſe Divine Endowments which flow from that Sacred Fountain.

Add to all that hath been ſaid, That Chriſt's Aſcenſion was expedient and even neceſſary, to confirm the Belief of the whole Chriſtian Religion. Whatever the Founder of it ſaid or did, is hereby proved to be infallibly True and Authentick, the Veracity of our Evangelical Law-giver is eſtabliſh'd, the certainty of the Chriſtian Religion is unexceptionably demonſtrated, for the Aſcenſion of Chriſt being added to his Reſurrection, proclaims aloud to the World that our Salvation is compleatly wrought, and that Immortality and Glory are the certain acqueſt of Chriſt's Undertakings, he giving an evident and undeniable Proof of it in his taking his Farewel of this World, and going to take Poſſeſſion of that endleſs Life and Happineſs which he had purchaſed. This Triumph gives us aſſurance of the foregoing Conqueſt and Victory. Nothing can ſhake our Faith, and diſturb our Confidence, while they are fixed upon this viſible and apparent Demonſtration of our Religion. And thus if we conſider this happy Effect, and Reſult of this cloſing Action of Chriſt's Life (as alſo the other Grounds before-mentioned) we muſt needs conclude, that it was reaſonable, expedient, and neceſſary.

The Third and last Part of my Discourse is yet behind, which offers to our Thoughts such useful and practical *Inferences* as naturally may be drawn from this Doctrine.

First then, be we ascertain'd hence of the Future State of Souls. What greater Assurance can there be, in the general, of their Subsistence and Duration after this Life, than this visible passing of our Saviour into Heaven? And what more particular Confirmation could we desire of *our* subsisting hereafter and of the Translation both of *our* Bodies and Souls, to a better State than that which we know and are convinc'd hath happened to our Saviour; For he ascended in the stead of all Believers. He representing all the Elect, died for them, and may be said to enter into the Mansions of Glory for them, till their Time of going thither was arrived. The Head being exalted, the Members must partake of the same Felicity. And therefore he is gone before to set open as it were the Gates of Glory, that we may enter in after him. Thus according to that excellent Anthem which is used by our Church daily, we acknowledge this concerning our Saviour, That *when he had overcome the Sharpness of Death, he opened the Kingdom of Heaven to all Believers*, not as if none were receiv'd into that Place before he went thither: That is a fond Mistake of some Men, who shut up all the Saints before Christ's coming in their *limbus Patrum*, and will not believe that they were let loose till he went and released them. But there is not any solid Argument to sway us to such a Belief. All that the fore-cited Passage in that Hymn seems to suggest to us is, That by Christ's signal Undertaking of our Salvation on the Cross, and by his vanquishing Death and Hell by his rising from the Grave, he did actually and conspicuously Purchase for all Believers, that Kingdom of Glory which was allotted them before the Foundation of the World. This is *opening the Kingdom of Heaven*. So when it is said in *John* 3. 13. *No Man hath ascended up to Heaven, but he that came down from Heaven, i. e.* Christ; we can't gather thence, that none before had gone to Heaven, but only this, That none ever went thither by his own Power but our Lord Jesus Christ, none ascended to that Place in that Manner that he did. Others before had gone thither, but by Vertue of his Merits. To quit this first Particular, the *Philosophers* were puzzled about the Future State of Souls, and the *Jews* had very obscure Discoveries of Eternal Bliss: But it is the Christian Institution (and that only) which makes these plain and evident to us, and by nothing so much as by the Resurrection and Ascension of our Lord, who left this World to make Provision for us in another, and assured us he would come once again, and take us up with him into Glory. Which leads me to the

Second Inference, namely, That his Ascension should remind us of his Last Coming to Judgment. That it was designed as a Representation of this, may be gather'd from what those Angels spoke to the gazing Apostles in the Verse but one after the Text which is now before us. *This same Jesus, who is taken up from you into Heaven, shall so come in like Manner as ye have seen him go into Heaven:* This speedy Flight of his to Heaven, should present to our Thoughts and Meditations his certain Return thence: And because we are wholly ignorant of that Time, let us be ever preparing ourselves to receive the Tidings of it. Our Lord will appear again in the Clouds, and before the Face of Angels and Men Summon us to render a strict Account of our Behaviour when he was absent: O then let us be so wise in this our Day, as to take an exact Survey of our Lives, and by judging of ourselves before-hand to prevent the Severity of the Last Judgment.

Thirdly, From Christ's Ascension we are ascertain'd of the Efficacy of the Ministry of the Church. Which is a Deduction which St. *Paul* makes from this great Article, *Eph.* 4. 11. applying the fore-mentioned Words of the Psalmist to this Purpose, *When he ascended up on high, he received Gifts for Men*; which Translation though it be according to the *Hebrew* and *Greek*, yet the Apostle makes use of the *Syriack Version*, which renders it, *he gave Gifts unto Men:* The *receiving* of Divine Gifts from his Father being in Order to the *distributing* of them to the Church. And this is done by Vertue of Christ's *Ascension*, which is justly compared here to some solemn *Triumph*, at which they used not only to expose their Enemies, to drag along their chain'd Captives (*leading Captivity Captive* it is call'd by the Apostle) but to scatter Money among their Friends, here expressed by *giving Gifts unto Men*. And what these *Gifts* were is expresly set down in the next Words, *he gave some Apostles, some Prophets, some Evangelists, some Pastors*

Pastors and Teachers, for the Work of the Ministry, and for the edifying of the Body of Christ. The Ministerial Function was made effectual by the Ascension of our Lord. And therefore it may be observ'd that one of the Heads of Christ's Discourse just before he Ascended, was the Apostles *going into all the World, and Preaching the Gospel to every Creature.* Now it was that he most signally constituted a *Sacred Order* of Men in his Church to Officiate in Holy Things; he Establish'd a Divine and Evangelical Priesthood which shall be of perpetual use to the end of the World. And the Efficacy of all its Administrations for the Good of the Church is assured to us by our Lord's Ascending.

Fourthly, This calls upon us to mind Heaven, and to set our Affections on those things that are above. *Lift up your Hearts* is the proper Devotion on this occasion. To which purpose is that most sublime Meditation of the excellent *Seneca,* * O what a sorry contemptible thing were Man, if he did not raise himself above this Earth, and converse with Spiritual and Heavenly Objects! Let us then render our selves Considerable and Noble, by fixing our Thoughts and Desires on the glorious things that are above. Let us no longer grovel upon the Earth, but mount upwards, and soar aloft, being daily and hourly rapt up to Heaven in Devout Contemplation and Fruition of Jesus. Where our Treasure is, where our Head, our Bridegroom, our Saviour is, there let our Hearts be also. We ought to make every place a *Mount Olivet,* every where by Pious Thoughts and Ejaculations to raise up our selves to Heaven, and to hold Correspondence with the Church Triumphant. Which we must needs do if we call to mind our Blessed Lord's Ascending up on high, whither he will call up all Believers to him.

* O quàm contemptà res est homo, nisi supra humana se erexerit? *Præfat. ad Nat. Quæst.*

Fifthly, The Doctrine of Christ's Ascension should be our *great Solace* in all the Distresses of this present Evil World. It ought to be made so to us, because we are encourag'd by Christ's Example to undergo with Patience whatever is Afflictive to us. *We have heard of the Patience* and Sufferings, the bitter Agony and Passion of our Lord, and *we have seen the End of the Lord*; we know what was the Issue and Event of those dreadful things which he underwent. Affliction was his Passage to Glory. His Humiliation and Abasement Usher'd in his Advancement and Exaltation. From which Consideration *we* may be invited to banish all Despair, and not to be dejected in the lowest Condition. Poverty may make way for our Promotion, Sickness and Diseases for a happy Plight of Body, Disgrace and Dishonour for a clear and lasting Reputation. However, these Calamities we labour under shall by the Goodness of our Merciful Father inhanse our future Felicity, and make our Crown of Glory more massy and weighty. And if this shall be the happy Issue of the Evils of this present Life, (as we are assured by the Apostle, who tells us, that *our light Afflictions, which are but for a moment, shall work for us a far more exceeding and Eternal Weight of Glory*) we have no reason to sink under these Grievances, and to despond of the Favour and Mercy of Heaven. And to animate and encourage us, the Captain of our Salvation hath led the way before us. He trod in Steps of Blood, before he arrived to undisturbed Happiness. He himself went not up to Joy, till he had first suffer'd Pain; he enter'd not into Glory, before he was Crucified. So truly *our* Way to Eternal Joy is to suffer here with Christ, and our Door to enter into Eternal Life is gladly to die with Christ, that we may rise again from Death, and dwell in Everlasting Life with him. This is the Language of our *Church* in her *Pathetick Exhortation* to the visited with Sickness. And it cannot but Administer solid Comfort and Quiet to the Soul in *whatsoever* Calamities and Distresses we are; whilst we consider that Christ's Death and Burial were but the Harbingers of his Glorious Resurrection and Ascension. His being lifted up upon the fatal Cross was but the Presage and Forerunner of his being taken up into Glory. The Gloominess and Darkness at his Crucifixion were only to set off the brighter *Cloud* which afterwards took him out of his Apostles sight.

Sixthly, Christ's Ascension is incomparably useful to a Holy and Strict Life. And that these two ways: 1. In that it calls upon us to *fit* our selves for Converse with the Holy Jesus, and to *prepare* our selves by Purity and Innocency for those Heavenly Mansions to which he is Exalted. No unclean thing can enter there and therefore we fondly and grosly mistake, if we think we shall arrive to that

Place of Blessedness, tho' we take no care to qualifie our selves for it by a blameless and unspotted Conversation, by a Life of Righteousness, Sobriety and Godliness. 2. This Article promotes the Design of a Godly Life, by suggesting this to us, that it will be Shameful and Disingenuous to do any thing unworthy of that nature, which is now so highly Exalted and Dignified in Heaven. Christ hath taken up our Flesh with him, and placed it in Glory; he hath advanced it above Angels, and Arch-angels by setting it at the Right-hand of God; and shall we degrade and abase it by every Vile and Vitious Act? Shall we dare to do things so unbecoming those who have been so highly Honour'd and Advanc'd?

The

The Latter Clause,

He sitteth at the right Hand of God the Father Almighty.

Mark XVI. 19.

He sat on the right Hand of God.

IN

This Discourse is shew'd the *True Meaning* of Christ's *Session* at the right Hand of God, together with the *Advantages* of it.

CHrist's *Session* in Heaven follow'd his *Ascension* thither, and accordingly this is adjoyn'd in the *Article*. The Great Apostle mentions both these together, *Heb.* 1. 3. *When he had by himself*, (i. e. by his own Blood) *purged our Sins, he sat down on the right-hand of the Majesty on high.* The sitting in Heaven follows upon that Satisfaction and Expiation made by him on Earth. And the word *sitting* is emphatical here; for when he was on Earth he *went about* doing Good, and continually expos'd himself to Dangers and Sufferings: But now he is said to *sit* after all his Pains and Fatigues, and he rests from his Labours. Not that it is to be taken in a strict Sense, as if our Saviour now uses such a Posture as *Sitting*; for St. *Stephen* had a Representation of *the Son of Man* in Heaven *standing at the Right-hand of God*, Acts 7. 55. Nor are we to think that 'tis properly said that he is placed at the *Right-hand* of God; yea, we know the *Right-hand* is improperly attributed to the Almighty, seeing he is a Spiritual and Incorporeal Being, and therefore no Parts or Members can belong to him. Seeing then the *sitting at the Right-hand of God* is not to be taken in the strict and proper Sense, let us enquire what the Import of it is.

First, It signifies the *Esteem* and *Honour* which Christ is promoted to. He is said to be at *God's Right-hand*, as he is said to be *in his Bosom*, John 1. 18. that is, highly esteem'd and valu'd, intimately and entirely beloved by him. And we may observe that it is said that Christ shall *sit on the Right-hand of God*, even when *he comes in the Clouds of Heaven* at the last Day, *Matth.* 26. 64. that is, he shall at that time be honour'd by his Father in an extraordinary manner, it shall appear then that he is in his Favour above all Persons whomsoever, and accordingly he shall come in State and Glory, he shall be invested with unspeakable Grandeur and Majesty. This Expression is after the manner of Men, and is an Allusion to what is common among Princes; that is, they place those on their *right Hands* whom they extreamly Esteem and Respect, and this is an high Honour and Dignity bestow'd upon them. Thus *Solomon* set his Mother at his Right-hand, in token of the high Regard he had for her. So in condescension to our Capacities the Scripture speaks with relation to this Usage, when it acquaints us that Christ is exalted to the Right-hand of his Father. It denotes the Preeminence and Dignity of his Person, and that he is infinitely advanced above the highest Rank of Cherubims and Seraphims. Which is thus in few words express'd by the Apostle; *The God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of Glory, set him at his own right-hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality and power, and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come, and hath put all things under his feet*, Eph. 1. 17, 20, 21, 22.

Secondly, As the *Right-hand* is most Honourable, and the *sitting* there expresses that Divine Honour and Glory which Christ hath gain'd, so it denotes his *Power* and *Soveraignty*. The Right-hand signifies Might and Force, as well as Dignity; hence

hence *the Son of Man* is said *to sit on the right-hand of power*, Mat. 26. 64. Luke 22. 69. He is now endued with Supream Authority, and he is in full execution of his Kingly Office. If after his Resurrection, but before his Ascension, *all Power was given unto him both in Heaven and in Earth*, as he himself declar'd, *Mat.* 28. 18. Then surely now that Power is in its full and utmost Vigour, it is now arriv'd to its Perfection. When 'tis said, Christ *sits at God's Right-hand*, we are thence to assure our selves, that he is Lord of all, and Absolute Soveraign; so that he is able to effect any thing which may tend to the Good of his Church, and the suppressing of his Enemies; of which I shall speak further under the next Head but one.

Thirdly, Christ's sitting at God's Right-hand signifies his *Intercession* for his Church. Therefore these are joyn'd together as explicatory one of the other, *Rom.* 8. 34. *He is risen, and is even at the right-hand of God, and even maketh intercession for us.* The word καὶ, *even*, in both places explains the Passages to which it is annex'd. *Christ is risen*, and to what purpose? namely, *to sit at the Right-hand of God.* And why doth he sit there? namely, *to make Intercession for us.* This is his great Office now in Heaven, and it will be worth our pains to make a particular enquiry into the nature of it. In order to which it is necessary to know that there are two parts of Christ's *Princely Office*, to wit, *Satisfaction* and *Intercession*. His Priesthood was exerted in Offering up Himself a Bloody Sacrifice, and in laying down his Life for us upon the Cross; and it is likewise exerted in presenting himself before his Father in Heaven, and there interceeding for us. These are the distinct parts of Christ's Sacerdotal Function, and both were necessary. His Death, or Sacrificing himself was but one part of his Priesthood, the other he finishes in Heaven. Both these were shadow'd forth in the *Mosaick* Dispensation, the *Levitical* Priesthood being a solemn Type of the Priestly Office of Christ. We find that the High-priest's Office according to the Law consisted of *Oblation* and *Presentation*; that is, he was to offer the Sacrifice, and then he presented it in the Holy of Holies with Prayer and Intercession to God, to accept of it for the Sins of the People, *Lev.* 16. 11, 15, 16. *In like manner it was of necessity that Christ our High-priest should have somewhat to offer*, Heb. 8. 3. And accordingly, (as the same Divine Author adds) *He put away Sin by the Sacrifice of himself*, Heb. 9. 26. And after that, *he entred into the Holy Place*; to wit, Heaven, Heb. 9. 12. there to present before his Father the Sacrifice which he had offer'd, and to make Intercession for us.

It is of this latter part of his Priestly Office which I am now to speak, Christ's Intereeding for us in Heaven, which is call'd here his *sitting at the Right-hand of God.* Intercession, properly speaking, is Supplicating for another, and it is one of the great Offices of a Priest. It is required that he recommend the People unto God, and Intreat for them. This Task our Saviour now takes upon him; he is said to Intercede for his People, in as much as he recommends their Condition to his Father, and offers their Prayers and Desires to him. His Blood interceeded on the Cross, and himself now in Heaven seconds the Cry of his Blood. Not that he Prays for them in that manner which he Pray'd for Believers here on Earth, (which is partly the meaning of that in *John* 16. 26.) He doth not put up Oral Petitions for them, and so Beg and Pray for them in that Sense, which was proper only to his State of Humiliation. But he doth that which is as effectual, he intercedes in that manner, which is as prevalent and efficacious, as if he prostrated himself before God, and besought and supplicated him with all Humility.

Christ then is said to *Intercede* for us in Heaven; *First*, By *Presenting* himself to his Father in our behalf, which is thus express'd by the Apostle, *Heb.* 9. 24. *He is entred into Heaven it self, now to appear in the presence of God for us.* He appears there to exhibit his Sufferings and Death to his Father, and to claim the happy Purchase made by them. He continually represents to him that great effectual Sacrifice which he offer'd on the Cross for the Expiation of the Sins of his chosen People. *Secondly*, He *Intercedes* in Heaven by his *applying* his Sacrifice to them; for tho' their Redemption was compleated and consummated on Earth, when he Expired on the Cross; yet the Application of it is to be afterwards, in the Court of Heaven. There he doth actually consign over to them the Merits of his Death, and thereby procures God's Favour, Pardon of their Sins, and Eternal Life.

This

This is a brief Account of Christ's *Intercession* in Heaven at the Right-hand of God. And this is his Incommunicable Office and Dignity; for tho' it is true the *Spirit* is said *to make Intercession for us*, Rom. 8. 26. In as much as he indites our Prayers and Petitions to God, yet it is Christ that Personally and properly makes Intercession for the Faithful, and is their Cœlestial Advocate that appears for them before the Father, and commends their Prayers to him. And this part of his Priesthood is perpetual, as we learn from *Heb.* 7. 24. *He hath an unchangeable Priesthood*; and in the next Verse it is added, *He ever liveth to make intercession for us*; that is, till his coming to Judgment, and the consummate Salvation and Happiness of the Faithful.

Fourthly, Christ's *sitting at the Right-hand of God*, signifies the Wise and Successful *Administration of his Kingdom.* For he is justly said to sit Enthroned at the Right-hand of the Majesty on High, because he is Constituted by him the Ruler and Controller of all Affairs both in Heaven and in Earth. Especially, his *Church* feels the blessed Effects and Influence of it, for now in a signal manner he is *the Head of the Body the Church*, *Col.* 1. 18. which is what the same Inspired Author had said before, *Eph.* 1. 22. *God hath given him to be Head over all things to the Church.* And tho' he hath taken up his Glorious Residence above, yet his Gracious Presence and Influence is here below, like the Sun stirring not out of the Heavens, but yet scatters his benign Rays throughout the World. He sollicits our Cause, he consults our Good, he obtains Grace and Favour for us; for it is through Jesus that the Father is propitious to us. He sends down to us the Spirit in a plentiful manner, who becomes our Teacher and Instructer, our Guide and Director, our Supporter and Comforter. It is from Christ's Session at the Right-hand of God that we have Protection against all our Enemies Spiritual and Temporal; for he hath undertaken our Cause, and will maintain it, and will blast all the Attempts of those that oppose it. We may assure our selves that the Work of our Salvation shall be compleatly transacted and finish'd, and we shall not fail of Continuance and Perseverance in Grace unto the End. For so saith the Apostle, *Heb.* 7. 24. *He saveth to the utmost them who come to God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.* And in a word, by Virtue of Christ's Intercession we receive innumerable Benefits, and the Church hath Blessings shower'd down upon her to endless Ages.

Wherefore from the whole it is proper to *inferr*, First, That we ought firmly to *believe* and *assert* this necessary Point of the Christian Faith, the *Session* of our Blessed Lord at the Right-hand of God, and his Intercession there for his Church. Especially we are obliged to maintain this Doctrine, since we find it opposed and contradicted by ill Men, and particularly the followers of *Socinus*, who deny that Christ made Satisfaction for our Sins by offering up a Propitiatory Sacrifice for us; and consequently they hold that he doth not present himself, and his Sacrifice now in Heaven before the Father.

Secondly, Our *Behaviour* ought to be suitable to this Great and Excellent Truth, which may be comprised in these three Particulars.

First, We should make our Addresses with great Boldness and Confidence when we approach to God in Prayer. This is the Apostle's Inference in *Heb.* 4. 15, 16. *We have a High-priest, let us therefore come boldly unto the Throne of Grace.* Let not the devout Soul be afraid to pour forth its Desires, and to send up its Petitions to Heaven, when it fixes its Thoughts on Christ's sitting at the Right-hand of God, where he receives our Prayers, and offers them up unto his Father; so that we cannot doubt of Audience and Acceptance.

Secondly, We may hence derive Comfort to our selves in all our Distresses, whether Spiritual or Temporal. We have no Reason to be dejected because of our Guilt, supposing our hearty Repentance, for we have these comfortable words to relieve us; *If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous*, 1 John 2. 1. And if he be our Advocate, our Mediator, our Intercessor with the Father, the Pardon of our Sins shall certainly be granted us. Or, if they be Bodily and Worldly Grievances that we labour under, we know where to have Redress. Christ is at the Right-hand of God, and from him we may expect, upon our hearty Applications to him, either a Release from our Troubles, or a Support under them.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, Let this Doctrine have an effectual Influence on our whole Lives, and encourage us to persevere in our Duty. *Seeing we have a great High-Priest who is passed into the Heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our Profession*, Heb. 4. 14. *Seeing we have such a High-Priest, who is set on the Right-Hand of the Throne of the Majesty in the Heavens*, Heb. 8. 1. let us discharge all the Offices of our Religion with Diligence and Chearfulness, as knowing that our powerful Advocate and Patron will assert and maintain our Cause, and will constantly vouchsafe us the Aids and Assistances of his Holy Spirit, and will at length exalt us to himself in endless Glory and Happiness.

Finally, Let us with exalted Hearts magnifie the Glories of this Transaction which this *Article* hath invited us to treat of, Our Lord and Saviour's Triumphant Entrance into Heaven. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath redeemed his Son from the Dishonours of the Grave, and placed him at his Right-Hand in Glory. *O Lord our Governor, how excellent is thy Name in all the World, thou that hast set thy Glory above the Heavens! Be thou exalted, O Lord, in thy own Strength, so will we sing and praise thy Power.* Sing we then on this Occasion a *Song of Degrees* or *Ascension*: Praise we God in the Height, praise him in the Firmament of his Power; with the greatest Emotion and Exultation of Mind praise him, who was pleased to make his glorious Passage to the Heaven of Heavens, and there sits encircled with the Rays of Majesty. O how blessed a Change is this that we now celebrate! How unlike is he to that Jesus who hung on the Cross, disfigur'd with Wounds and Gore! Now we contemplate him crown'd with Glory, and in Triumph making his Way to the Celestial Mansions, and then sitting down at the Right-Hand of the Majesty on high. Wherefore let us exert the warmest and most passionate Acts of Devotion and Thanksgiving, and let us ever think ourselves concerned to have this Last and Glorious Atchievement of our Saviour deeply imprinted on our Hearts and affections. To conclude all with the devout *Doxology* of our Church, on this Occasion, "It is very meet, right, and our bounden Duty, that we should at all "Times, and in all Places give Thanks unto thee, O Lord, Holy Father, Al-"mighty Everlasting God, through thy most dearly beloved Son Jesus Christ our "Lord, who after his most glorious Resurrection manifestly appear'd to all his "Apostles, and in their Sight ascended up into Heaven, to prepare a Place for "us, That where he is, thither we might also ascend, and reign with him in "Glory. Therefore with Angels and Archangels, and with all the Company of "Heaven we laud and magnifie thy Glorious Name, evermore Praising thee, and "saying, Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of Hosts: Heaven and Earth are full of "thy Glory. Glory be to thee, O Lord most High.

ARTI-

ARTICLE VII.

From thence he shall come to judge the Quick and the Dead.

A Discourse on Acts XVII. 31.

Because he hath appointed a Day in the which he will Judge the World in Righteousness, by that Man whom he hath ordained.

IN THE

Discourse on this Article, the *Nature*, *Reasonableness*, *Certainty*, and *Fore-runners* of the General Judgment are treated of. Whether the Day of Judgment be near at Hand. Whether the *Conflagration* of the World be a Fore-runner, or a Consequent of it. The Universal *Influence* which this Doctrine should have on Men's Lives and Behaviour.

FROM these Words, I intend to treat of the Seventh Article of the Creed; and in them there are these Four Things remarkable, 1. The Doctrine of the *General Judgment* asserted. *God will judge the World.* 2. The *Manner* or Qualification of it, *in Righteousness.* 3. The *Person* by whom it shall be transacted, *viz. By that Man whom he hath ordained.* 4. A *certain Time* set apart for that Purpose, *He hath appointed a Day.*

I. I begin with the First, The Doctrine of the *General Judgment.* God will call all the World to an Account. A Future Judgment is to pass upon all after this Life. In discussing this Fundamental Article of Religion, I will undertake these Two Things, First, To establish the *Truth* of it: *Secondly*, To represent to you the more *particular Nature* of it.

First, The *Truth* and *Reality* of it appear from the General Suffrage which it hath gain'd in the World. This is a Doctrine which hath been constantly received in all the Generations of Mankind. Even in the Infancy of the World *Enoch* Prophesied of this, saying, *Behold! The Lord cometh with his Holy Myriads*, (or, as we render it, *with Ten Thousand of his Saints*) *to execute Judgment upon all*, Jude, v. 14. *He cometh*, is spoken in the Present Tense to denote the Truth and Reality of the Thing: As much as to say, It is as sure as if it were now present: Which is a Way of Speaking not unusual in the Holy Scriptures; as likewise we may observe, That some Things are there delivered as if they were past; namely, to shew the *Certainty* of fulfilling them in due Time.

And as a *Future Judgment* was the Notion of the People before the Floud, so it was no less of those who were after it. Let the wisest and most knowing Man that ever was, speak in Behalf of the *Jewish Church*, *know that for all these Things* (saith he) *God will bring thee to Judgment*, Eccl. 11. 9. And again, *God shall bring every Work into Judgment, with every secret Thing whether good or evil*, Eccl. 12. 14. And that these Places speak principally of the Judgment of the Last Day, is unanimously acknowledged by the *Jewish* Doctors who have glossed upon them. This is that which *Ezra* was bid to write down as a Doctrine established in the Heavens, * *After Death shall Judgment come, when we shall live again: And then shall the Names of the Righteous be manifest, and the Works of*

* 2 Esdr. 14. 35.

of the Ungodly shall be declared: Which is a plain and brief Description of the Transactions of the Last Day.

And as this was the Faith of the *Jews*, so it was the Sentiment of the *Gentile World*, as we may perceive from the Writings of their *Poets*, who were the *First Divines* they had, and in a Way proper to themselves, delivered very considerable Truths concerning God and Religion. These Men talk'd of an Inquisition and Tribunal erected in Hell, and they constituted *Three Judges* of that black Court, to examine and punish Offenders. What was this (if you strip it of its Poetick Dress) but that Men shall be strictly judged at last for the Behaviour of their past Lives? The very Scoffing *Lucian* (who commonly passes for an Atheist) hath these notable Words, * "God brought Man out of "nothing to something, and is in Heaven beholding "the Just and Unjust, and Writing down in Books "every Man's Actions: And he will recompense all "Men according to their Deeds in that Day which he "himself hath appointed". How near doth this approach to the Style of the Apostle in the Text, who tells us, That *God hath appointed a Day in which he will judge the World.* But if we shall look into more serious Arthors, we shall find them frequently building on this Notion, or rather we may perceive that the best of the Pagan Moralists *suppose* this in all their Discourses, it being the great Foundation of an honest Behaviour, and that indeed which gives Life and Vigour to all vertuous Actions.

* Ἀνθρωπον ἐκ μὴ ὄντων θεὸς ἐς τὸ εἶναι παρήγαγε, καὶ ἔστιν ἐν οὐρανῷ βλέπων δικαίους τε καὶ ἀδίκους, καὶ ἐν βίβλοις τὰς πράξεις ἀπογραφόμενος· ἀντιποδώσει δὲ πᾶσιν ἣν ἡμέραν αὐτὸς ἐνετείλατο. Philopatr.

And as this is naturally implanted in Men's Minds, and so came to be the Creed of the very *Heathens*, so it is worthily inserted among the Articles of the *Christian Belief* that Christ will come from Heaven *to judge the Quick and the Dead.* This is often urged and inculcated by those eminent Apostles, St. *Paul* and St. *Peter* in their Sermons and Epistles, and St. *Jude* makes mention of * *the Judgment of the great Day*, as a known Article of Faith. And as the *Time* set for this Judgment, is called by him *the Great Day*, so the fore-named Apostles frequently speak of *the Day of the Lord, the Day of Christ, the Day of God*, and thereby signifie to us *the Day of Judgment*, as it is called at other Times: And once it is called * *the Day of Wrath and Revelation of the Righteous Judgment of God.* And no less than Four Times in † One Chapter it is called by our Saviour *the Last Day.* Nay, in ‖ Four or Five Places it is emphatically called *that Day*; and in another ‡ Place it is styled *that Night.*

† Jude v. 6.

* Rom. 2. 5.
† John. 6.
‖ Mat. 7. 22. Luke 17. 31. 2 Tim. 1. 12. & alibi.
‡ Luke 17. 34.

And here now we must know, that though the Notion of a General Judgment was entertained by the *ancient Patriarchs*, and the *Jewish Nation*, and the *Pagan World* (as we have heard) yet it was never so clearly delivered, and so fully assured to Mankind as by the *Christian Revelation.* Now therefore, under this Oeconomy, the Doctrine of *Eternal Judgment* (for so the Author to the *Hebrews* styles it, either because it shall continue very long (as we shall hear afterwards) or rather because it is an Introduction to Eternal Punishments or Rewards) this Doctrine, I say, is justly reckoned by that inspired Writer among * *the Principles of the Doctrine of Christ*, the very First and Essential Rudiments of the Evangelical Institution. He acquaints us that it is no less of the Foundation of Christianity, than *Faith* and *Repentance* are.

* Heb. 6. 2.

I might alledge other Texts which ascertain us of this Fundamental Point of our Religion; as namely, some of those which speak of the *Coming of Christ*, for though some Modern Expositors (as *Grotius*, and our own *Lightfoot* and *Hammond*) whenever they meet with *Christ's Coming* in the New Testament, presently interpret it of his Coming to destroy *Jerusalem*, yet I doubt not but it sometimes signifies the *Final and Last Coming of Christ.* One may plainly see, That these Learned Men prosecute their beloved Notion too far, and are resolved on it to run down the contrary Opinion; when they are on the Pursuit, they'll carry all before them, and make every Thing serve their Turn. Thus according to them, That *so great Salvation*, mentioned by the Author to the *Hebrews*, *ch. 2. v. 3.* is the Destruction of the *Jews* at the Siege of *Jerusalem*, whereby the Christians were *saved* or *delivered* from their Enemies. And this Deliverance is meant by *entring into God's rest*, Heb. 4. 1. This is *Jude's common Salvation*, *v. 3.* This St. *Peter* meant when he told those he writ to, that they should *receive the End of*

of their Faith, even the Salvation of their Souls, i. e. saith our *Annotator*, the Deliverance and Preservation of their Lives, when *Jerusalem* was sacked and destroyed. Thus they imagine they every where meet with that Temporal Deliverance of the Believers, which was by escaping the Miseries that happened at the overthrow of *Jerusalem*. But the *Coming of Christ to judge the World*, is sufficiently established by many of those Passages of Scripture which they wholly wrest to his *other Coming*, some of which I shall have Occasion to produce in the Sequel of this Discourse. But the Suffrage of Holy Writ which hath been *already given*, is enough to confirm us in the Belief of this Doctrine.

The next Thing which I am to undertake under this First Head, is to display unto you the *Nature* of this Final and Universal Judgment. Now, if we speak properly, there are in *Judgment* or *judicial Proceedings* these Three main Things considerable, 1. An *Indictment* or *Accusation*. 2. An *Examination* and *Trial* upon the Articles of that Indictment: And, 3*dly*, A *Decision* or *Sentence* according to that Trial. All these are really to be found in the *Last and General Judgment*.

1. The *Indictment* is no other than a free exposing of the several Misdemeanors and black Crimes of the Malefactors that then stand at the Bar. The *Charge* is the whole Course of every Sinners Life; I mean of every Sinner that continues in his Impenitence, and goes out of the World unpardoned. For as for such whose Sins are forgiven them upon Repentance, there shall be no Charge or Accusation drawn up against them. The Sins and Defaults of the Holy and Regenerate shall not be exposed, and repeated at that Great Day of Accounts, unless it be so far as there may be *some Occasion* (as there will be) to remember them in the *Trial* of the Wicked and Reprobate. *Who* shall then lay any Thing to the *Charge* of God's Elect? *Not the merciful Judge*, who hath already quitted them, having cast all their Iniquities behind his Back, and blotted out their Transgressions. And being thus absolved and justified they have Peace with God, and are *called forth* only to an *open Absolution* (of which afterwards.) *Not the blessed Angels*, who have been Ministring Spirits sent forth to Minister for these Heirs of Salvation, and therefore will not now be subservient to their Condemnation. *Not the Angels of Darkness*, whose Power and Dominion, as to them, is expired, the Great Day of Compleat Redemption being now come. *Not the wicked World*, who being Conscious to their Exemplary Lives will rather clear and justifie them. *Lastly, Not their own Consciences*, they being Purified and Sanctified by the Holy Ghost, and consequently are void of all Pollution and Guilt. Thus it is impossible a *Bill* should be presented against the *Righteous*. But the *Ungodly are not so*, the *Charge* will run full and high against them, and the aggravated *Indictment* will be preferr'd by God and good Angels, Men, and Devils, and their own Consciences. It remains then that they be brought to their *Tryal*; which is the

Second thing observable in this *General Judgment*. And here 'tis likely they will at first attempt to evade the Charge and Imputation by pleading not guilty, by denying, or at least excusing the Crimes objected against them. Indeed, one would think that they should be utterly confounded at the very Reflection on their former Behaviour, that *some* of them should be convinced of their Sins by what they suffered already, and that *all* of them should be Abashed at the first sight of that General Assembly, and Convention of the World; and therefore that they should not assume so much Confidence as to endeavour to elude the Charge, but that they should forthwith confess their multiplied Follies, and fall down at the Feet of the Judge. But these Wretches who spent their whole Lives in offending God, will be so hardy, it seems, as to defend their Doings, and (as the last and dying Effort of their Impiety on Earth) to contrive Excuses to palliate their Misdemeanors. Some will alledge the Weakness and Frailty of their Natures which they were invested with, and which would not permit them to effect what was commanded them; others will plead the unhappy Circumstances and Crosses of their Lives, which made them unfit for any Pious and Virtuous Undertakings: A third sort will impeach Satan, and a fourth perhaps Indict God himself, accusing his Decrees to excuse their Sins. These, I conceive, will be the Pleadings of the Court, though they will continue no long time.

And this is no bare Conjecture, but may be solidly inferr'd from the latter part of the 25th Chapter of St. *Matthew*, which is a description of the manner of the General Judgment of the last Day; where you read that those who were Arraign-

* V. 44. ed for Acts of Uncharitableness Apologized, saying, * *Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee?* I confess this Apology is made here by the Wicked *after* their Sentence of Condemnation; but then we are to consider that if those Persons defended and justified themselves after the Judgment, it is not to be question'd but that they did so much more before it. Yea, the Wicked at that Day will not only excuse themselves for their ill Deeds, but they will plead their good ones, if I may call them so. *Many will say unto me*, saith our Saviour, *in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name, and in thy name have cast out devils, and in thy name have done many wonderful works?* Mat. 7. 22. Thus the Criminals of the last Day, some of them at least, will not by any means acknowledge themselves to be obnoxious to the *Accusation* brought against them.

But as in Courts of Human Judicature the whole Process of the Tryal is chiefly by *Witnesses*; so it shall be at the *last Day*. Sinners shall be proceeded against *secundum allegata & probata*, according to the *Testimony* brought in, and the *Proofs* that are made against them. And here, contrary to what is in *other Judicatories*, the *Judge* may be a competent Witness and Evidence against the Criminal, as appears from the place before cited; where we read that the Heavenly King or Judge testified openly against the cruel and unmerciful disposition and practice of some Sinners, telling them to their faces, that although he was hungry and naked, and every way distressed, yet they would not extend their Compassion towards him, and after the Guilty had excused themselves, by replying, that they never did any such thing, he renews his Testimony against them afresh, and lets them know, that inasmuch as they were guilty of Hard-heartedness, and Unmercifulness towards his Servants, he looks upon it as if they were so to him. Expect not that I should acquaint you in what Manner and Method the Great God of Heaven and Earth will convict the forlorn Sinners of the last Day, and confound them in their several Excuses. Whether this will be effected by Voice, or otherwise, I presume not to determine; but this I am sure of that it will be done with such a Power and Energy that the Guilty shall not be able to continue and persist in any Reply and Defence that they attempt to make.

Again, the *Glorious Angels and Ministers of Heaven* shall come and evidence against those wretched Miscreants; for they have been Witnesses (though invisible ones) of the Conversation of the Wicked. It is probable that this is part of their Office, to take notice of, and set down the Actions, not only of good, but bad Men; and at the last Day they appear and produce their Register, and thereby give ample Testimony of the Vile and Besotted Carriage of the Wicked. This is clear from several Passages in Holy Scripture, as that in *Eccl.* 5. 6. *Say not thou before the Angel that it was an Error.* And St. *Paul* urgeth a decent and becoming Deportment in the Publick Assemblies *because of the Angels*, 1 Cor. 11. 10. These Blessed Messengers of Heaven take notice of Men's Actions and Behaviour, when they (alas) imagine that there is none to observe them; and on this account it is plain that those Divine Spirits may be *Witnesses* against the Ungodly at the last Day. They are privy to the most secret Actions of Men, and therefore may be made use of to appear against them.

Besides, the *Devils*, who before were *the Accusers of the Brethren*, shall now come in and bear witness against the *Wicked*. They are able to rehearse long Catalogues of their Crimes, they can bring to light their secret and unseen Practices, and they have Malice enough to urge them home against them. Now the Devil *accuses* those whom before he *Tempted*; and he who sollicited Men to Vice, now appears and proves against them the Commission of it. Such Madness is it to give ear to Diabolical Suggestions; for this false and treacherous Fiend, after he hath prevail'd with Souls to commit Sin, makes good the Charge which is brought against them for it, and at last Torments them for what they have done.

But *Men* as well as *Devils* shall witness against the Malefactors at the Bar; for to prove some Violent and Outragious Acts upon them, their Neighbours and Companions will appear, as being conscious to, if not guilty of the Fact. The *Righteous* also shall now come forth with an unwilling Willingness, and upbraid the Generation of the Ungodly. They shall rehearse the several Circumstances which prove their hearty Desire and Endeavour to have had them Reclaimed and Reformed; they shall repeat the Advice and Counsel they once tender'd them, they shall relate how often

ten they Reproved and Rebuked them, how earnestly they Intreated and Beseeched them, and how Affectionately and Importunately they Pray'd for them. Yea, the honest moral *Heathens* shall rise in Judgment, and condemn many *Christians*; the Pagan Philosophers, such as *Socrates*, *Cato*, *Seneca*, and others, who were famous for Sobriety, Chastity, and the like Virtues, shall appear and shame those vile Men who made Profession of Christianity, and yet were Strangers to those moral Virtues. Nay, I have good Reason to assert this in general, That those who were *less Wicked* shall Judge others that were *more so*; for our Blessed Instructor, who cannot err, hath assured us that † *the Men of Nineve shall rise up in Judgment with the Generation of the* Jews, *and shall condemn them, because they Repented at the Preaching of* Jonas, *when as a greater than* Jonas *Preach'd to the* Jews. Even the *Ninevites*, who made but a Semblance of Repentance, (for that they were not truly Penitent, or at least that they continued not so, is apparent from the Threats and Menaces denounced against them by other Prophets afterwards, and from the Destruction which overtook them in a short time) these *Mock-penitents*, I say, shall serve to convince the Obstinate and Stiff-necked *Jews* of their unparallell'd Sottishness, in not being moved at all by the Preaching and Miracles of the Son of God.

† Luke 11. 32.

Men that made but a Shew of Righteousness and Holiness, or were good for a Time only, shall bear Testimony against those who openly defy'd Heaven by their scandalous Living, and never entertain'd any Thoughts of doing otherwise. Thus one Rank of Sinners shall bear witness against another. Besides, there will be innumerable others who will appear against Offenders of their own kind; whether because they may imagine it will partly excuse them that others are as guilty as themselves, or whether they may think it some Mitigation to have Associates in their Punishment; or, (which is most certain) because the Great Governor and Superintendent of the World, will have it to be so, *viz.* that they shall testifie against one another, that thereby the Justice of the Divine Proceedings at that Day may be made more manifest.

I am to adjoyn this likewise, that every Sinner's *Conscience*, (which is a thousand Witnesses) shall bear Testimony against him. For though, it is true, at first Sinners may strive to excuse and palliate their Guilt, yet their Consciences are fully awakened at last; and being so, they set their Sins in order before them, and bring in clear and undeniable Evidence against them. This may be the meaning of what you read in the *Prophecy* of ‖ *Daniel*, and in the ‡ *Revelation* of St. *John*; namely, that when the Thrones were placed, and the Judgment was set, forthwith *the Books were opened, and they were Judged out of those things which were written in the Books*. Some, I know, will have these *Books* to be the Eternal Decrees, wherein the Names of the Elect are as it were written, and there it will be seen who were Predestinated. But I am apt to think that they mistake *one Book* for *another*, and that by *the Book of Life*, (mention'd in the *Revelation*, and other places of Scripture) is meant the *Divine Decrees*; but it is probable that *these Books* here are the Volumes of Mens *Consciences*, which are the faithful Registers of their Actions. These Books may deserve the same Title which the Emperor *Antoninus* gave his, τῶν εἰς ἑαυτὸν βιβλία, or what *Cardan* styled one of his Treatises, *De Propriâ Vitâ*. They give a true Account of a Man's *own Self*, and *Life*, and all his proper Concerns. The Characters wherein these Books are written seem *now* somewhat difficult, but *then* they shall be fair and legible, and he that runs may read them.

‖ Chap. 7. v. 10.
‡ Chap. 20. v. 12.

The *Opening* of these Books is every Man's Rifling of his Conscience, to which will be very much conducing the assistance of the *Memory*, whose Office it is to keep all the Records of Men's Doings. This Faculty shall then be wonderfully rouzed and recruited; it shall discharge its Duty with more Readiness and Officiousness than it is said to have done when *Themistocles* was able to repeat the Names of all the Citizens of *Athens*, or when *Cyrus* could call over the whole List of the Soldiers that were in his vast Armies. And now the Malefactors of Doomsday are in a manner in Hell already; there needs no more to render them Unhappy and Wretched, than to let loose their *Memories* and *Consciences*; for by help of these they will be furnish'd with such dismal Representations and Images of things, that they will be fill'd with unspeakable Anguish and Torment, and nothing will be found able to divert and qualifie their extream Grief. But I must remember I have con-

confined my self in this Discourse to speak of the *Judgment*, not of the *Infernal Punishment* of the Wicked.

In prosecution of the Head I am now upon, I add this in the next place, that not only the *Consciences* of the Wicked shall witness against them, but their own *Mouths* at last shall confess their Guilt. They shall then acknowledge and proclaim to the World their own Madness and Sottishness; which is represented in very lively Expressions in the 5th Chapter of the Book of *Wisdom*, v. 4, &c. *We have erred from the ways of truth, we have wearied our selves in the way of wickedness and destruction, but as for the way of the Lord, we have not known it. What hath pride profited us? or what good have riches with our vainting brought us?* &c. Thus they shall utter their real Sentiments at the last Day, whatever their Thoughts and Speeches were before. Hitherto I have spoken of the *Trial* of the last Judgment which is to pass upon *wicked Men*.

The *Devils* too, it is likely, shall have their share in this *Judicial Proceeding*; these must be brought before the last Tribunal to be Judg'd. Which I take to be part of the Apostle's meaning in those words, 1 *Cor.* 6. 3. *Know ye not that we shall judge Angels?* That is, *Evil Angels* (as well as others, of whom anon.) I am prone to believe that many particular and eminent Instances of *Satan's* Malice towards good Men shall then be expos'd to view by them; his many Wiles and Devices, his Snares and Stratagems shall be laid open, the various Foldings and Windings of this Old Serpent shall be made known, and those very Mischiefs which he design'd against the Just, but could not bring to effect, shall all be detected, and made apparent to the World, which will add much to the lustre of the last and universal Tryal.

Next, I am to speak of the Judgment of *good Angels*, and *good Men*; the Ministries and Offices of the former shall come under *Examination*, that they may receive due Commendation; for those fore-mention'd words in 1 *Cor.* 6. 3. seem to include these. But especially the Lives and Behaviour of the latter shall be narrowly scanned. For although it is to be granted that *these* are not concern'd in that last Days *Tryal* so as to have any *Charge* drawn up against them, (as I said before) yet I doubt not but before they are finally absolved, some of their former Actions will be look'd into and ransack'd. We are to know then that the Proceedings of the last Day will be in this Order; namely, those who sleep in Jesus will *God bring with him*, 1 Thes. 4. 14. The Saints must come from Heaven, where they have been in Glory, to the Judgment here on Earth. As soon as they are reunited in their Bodies, (which are now become Spiritual and Glorious) they, together with the Righteous who are alive on Earth at Christ's coming, (who shall be *changed*, and put on Incorruption and Immortality) shall appear before the Judge, and then, as soon as they are acquitted, they shall be taken up to the Judgment-seat, and become Assessors with Christ, and the Holy Angels, 1 *Cor.* 6. 2. 1 *Thes.* 4. 15, 16. So that hence it appears that the Wicked shall be Judg'd in the sight of the Good, yea, and by them, before whom all their Sins shall be laid open, but the Faults of the Good shall not in a formal manner be expos'd to the Wicked; for the Good are Judg'd first, and by themselves, and afterwards the Wicked are Tryed. An *Examination* must pass even on the Good, *they* must give an Account as well as the worst of Sinners; for the Apostle speaking of himself and Fellow-Christians, saith, *We shall all stand before the judgment-seat*, Rom. 14. 10. *We* who are Righteous, as well as others that are Wicked. And again, *we shall every one of us give an account of our selves to God*, v. 12. And though, (as I said under the former Particular) no *Accusation* or *Impeachment* shall be preferr'd against the Righteous, and tho' there shall be no *formal Tryal*, (like that of the Wicked) yet it is probable their Evil Actions shall be reproved upon occasion of Trying the Wicked, with whom some of them had Converse, and for a time were partakers with them in their Guilt. Then that which St. *Paul* saith shall be actually verify'd, *some shall be saved, yet so as by Fire*, i. e. (as some interpret it) very hardly. And *if this Judgment begins at God's House, and the Righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the Ungodly and Sinners appear?*

But I am speaking at present of the *Godly* and *Righteous*, there will be an Opportunity at that last Tryal to call their *Sins* to remembrance, though this will be by the bye only; that is, as they have held Correspondence some time with the Wicked, whose *Tryal* is the grand Business of that Day. And as for their *good Actions*,

ons, and their worthy Behaviour, these shall be made known in the face of all the World; and no signal and eminent thing that ever they did shall be kept close. Neither do I say this upon mere Conjecture and Surmise, for the 25th of St. *Matthew's* Gospel, (where we have decypher'd the Judgment of the last Day) informs us that the pious Actions of the Saints shall then be mention'd and express'd with Honour. *I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink*, &c. Works we see of Charity and Compassion shall be Celebrated at Doomsday. And there is the like reason to believe the same concerning all other good and Religious Actions; there is not one worthy and excellent Atchievement, of what sort and quality soever, but shall be solemnly remembred at that great Day of Commemoration, to the Glory of the Author of all Grace, and to the Confusion of the Degenerate and Apostate Race of the World. And I conceive that the *good Angels* will be serviceable to this purpose; these who were Conscious to so many of their Good and Holy Actions, will at that Day publickly and solemnly recount them, and proclaim them to the World.

Thus, not only the manners of the *Ungodly*, (as was proved before) but those of the *Holy* must undergo a strict Inquisition. Here we shall see the Lives and Manners of Men *compared* together; now, those Contraries, being directly set one against another, will the more evidently appear, and be discover'd to the World. Thus much for the *Tryal* or *Examination*, which is a very considerable part of the Universal Judgment, and reaches good and bad Men, and good and evil Angels, who are all comprehended in this large Term *the World*. [*He will Judge the World.*] The *Doom* or *Sentence* follows *Examination*, which brings me to the

Third thing propounded, *viz. the Final Decision, or Determination*, which is by giving of *Sentence*, and that either in way of *Condemnation* or *Absolution*. The Condemnation of the Wicked is begun first in their own Breasts; their *Consciences*, which before acted the part of *Witnesses*, now discharge the Office of *Jury* and *Judge*, i. e. they bring in Verdict against them, and according to that pass Sentence on them. We may imagine the Self-condemned Sinner to breath out his free and disinterested Thoughts, and to give Glory to God in the Sentence to be pronounc'd against him, in such Language as this; I cannot but proclaim before Men and Angels that the Misery which now overtakes me is the just Reward of my Folly: I have destroy'd my self by my own Mad, but deliberate choice; I have preferr'd the gratifying of my Lusts before the Service of God, who made me to Glorifie his Name, but I have done nothing but dishonour'd it. I was not debarr'd of any thing that might contribute to my Soul's Welfare. I felt many smart Convictions on my Conscience, there arose in my Breast many seasonable and pious Suggestions, which I might have improved to my everlasting Advantage. I must needs say that both God's Mercies and Judgments were employed to procure my Good, but I studied to baffle both of them. All ways were used to recover me, but I neglected them all. I wilfully affronted the whole Method of Salvation, and therefore I must charge my self with my own Ruin. There is no Atonement and Reconciliation but what I have frustrated, and by my own Fault made useless to me; and therefore how can I escape who have neglected so great Salvation? Thus Sinners will *Condemn themselves* at the last Day.

But this is not enough that they are *Self-condemned*, they shall also be Condemned by *others*. The Examples of the Saints shall be the Wicked's Doom. *Enoch* and *Noah* shall confound the Sinners of the Old World; of the latter of those it is said, that *by Faith he prepared an Ark to the saving of his House, by the which he Condemned the World*, Heb. 11. 7. By that eminent Action he Convicted the rest of the World then living of Incredulity and Infidelity. And so shall it be at the last Day; the Godly Examples of the Good shall Condemn the Bad. *Lot* shall Judge and Condemn the Lewd *Sodomites*. The Holy Patriarchs and Prophets shall Sentence the stiff-neck'd and Rebellious People of *Judea*. And the Disciples, and Apostles, and Evangelists, who *left all* and follow'd Christ, and when they came to him, learnt of him, even as it were *to leave and deny themselves, and to take up their Cross*; these by their singular Undertakings and Actions shall Condemn all those, whether *Jews*, *Gentiles*, or *Christians*, who have either refused Christ, or walked unworthy of him.

Neither

Neither is this all, that we may further satisfie our selves, let us consult the 25th Chapter of St. *Matthew* before quoted, where the manner of the Final *Condemnation* is described. We may observe that there shall be a *Separation* which shall precede the *Condemnation*. * *Before the Son of Man*, saith he, who was that Son of Man, *shall be gather'd all Nations, and he shall separate them one from another, as a Shepherd divideth his Sheep from the Goats, and he shall set the Sheep on his right-hand, but the Goats on his left.* Which dividing of the Sheep from the Goats, seems to be taken from *Ezek.* 34. 17. *Thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I judge between cattle and cattle, between the rams and the he-goats.* As a good Shepherd distinguishes between one and the other, and places them not all together, but by themselves. At the Great Day, and *not before*, shall be the great *Separation* between the Sheep and the Goats, the Wheat and the Tares, the Corn and the Chaff. For though as being Members of a visible Church, and making an outward Profession of Religion, some Persons are *distinguish'd* from others; yet it cannot be but that the *Good and Bad* should *here* herd together *Promiscuously*, and the rankest Goats, and fiercest Wolves disguise themselves sometimes in Sheep's Cloathing. But at the Consummation of all things this Masquerade shall be laid aside, and the truly Godly and Righteous shall be *evidently discerned* from the contrary; for besides the *visible Separating* of the one from the other, observe the *solemn Doom* which attends it; [*He shall say to them on the left-hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels*, v. 41.] Which is the same Sentence with that in *Mat.* 7. 23. *Then*, or *in that Day*, (as we read, *v.* 22.) *will I profess unto them, I never knew you; Depart from me ye that work iniquity*, depart hence into Everlasting Punishment.

* V. 32, 33.

And not only *Reprobate Mankind*, but the *Devils themselves* shall receive their Sentence at this time, notwithstanding that Kind-hearted Father's Opinion, who will needs have these Cursed Fiends to be saved at last. But the Day of Judgment was designed for these as well as for those of human Race. As they were concern'd in the *Tryal*, (as I shew'd you before) so are they no less in the *Condemnation* of that Day; for that without doubt is the Purport of St. *Jude*'s words, That † *the Angels who kept not their first estate, but left their own Habitation are reserved in everlasting Chains under Darkness, unto the Judgment of the Great Day*, as St. ‖ *Peter* also testifieth. These cursed Spirits who Apostatized from their Heavenly Station, and have wrought all the Mischief in this lower World, although they have suffer'd so long in Hell, shall be brought forth at the Day of Judgment to be Sentenced to those Everlasting Flames, and to be remanded thither without intermission. This shall be done not only by *God*, but *good Men*; the Devils who now tempt and entice them, disturb and molest them, yea, and endeavour to ruine and destroy them, shall be dragg'd in their Chains before those very Persons who once were so afraid of them, and who were used so unmercifully by them. These malicious and mischievous Spirits shall receive their final Doom and Sentence from the Faithful.

† V. 6.
‖ Epist. 2. Chap. 2. v. 4.

But the second part of the last Days Doom is that of *Absolution* to all the Godly, whether Angelical or Humane. *He that believeth*, saith our Saviour, *is not Condemned*, *John* 3. 18. But that is but a faint *Meiosis*, for the design of Heaven, and the meaning of the words is that he shall be openly *Acquitted* and *Discharged*. The Throne of the Judge is said to be as *flaming Fire*, (Dan. 7.) and *this* (we know) as it *consumes Stubble* and all combustible Matter, so it *Refines and Purifies Gold*, and makes it more valuable. Accordingly the same Prophet ‡ tells us, that at that time *they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the Firmament, and they that turn many to Righteousness as the Stars for ever and ever.* The Form of *Absolution*, or of the taking of the Saints into God's eternal Favour at that Day is thus set down in the Chapter before-cited, * *Then the King shall say to them on his right-hand, Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the World.* And besides this Divine Sentence from the Mouth of the Supream King and Ruler of the World, the Righteous shall also be cleared, and pronounced Innocent by the very Wicked and Reprobate who are at that Day Condemned, as is excellently represented in the 3d and 5th Chapters of the *Book of Wisdom*, to which I referr the Reader, and proceed.

‡ Dan. 12. 3.
* V. 34.

I need not say much more of the *Absolution* which appertains to the *Good Angels*. That these shall be Judged hath been shew'd already, and it is most undeniable, because

cause we have it from the Pen of the infallible Apostle, (as we have heard before) that Holy Men at the last Day *shall judge Angels*. He speaks in *general*, and therefore both Good and Evil Ones must be Judged. As the Saints then shall Doom the *latter* by exprobrating and urging against them their malicious Devices, and also by approving God's Sentence against them, so they shall Acquit and Absolve the *former* by their loud *Euges* and Acclamations, and by their publick consenting to the whole Judicial Procedure. So much for the first Head of my Discourse on this Subject, *God shall judge the World*; where I have particularly explain'd the *Nature* of the last Judgment, and shew'd that it being a Judicial Proceeding, it consists first in an Indictment or Charge, which will be spent in a free exposing of the several Actions and Misdemeanors of the Persons that stand at the Bar. *Secondly*, In an Examination or Tryal upon the Articles of Indictment. *Thirdly*, In the Final Sentence, which is either of *Condemnation* or *Absolution*. Of which latter, tho' I have spoken *after* the other, yet the Natural Order is this, (as we learn from *Mat.* 25. 33, &c.) the Good are Absolv'd *before* the Wicked are Condemn'd. And so likewise the *Tryal* of both is in the same Order, tho' I have not observ'd this Method in Treating of it.

II. The *Manner* of the Judgment follows; for whereas among Earthly Judges and Magistrates Justice is often perverted, it is otherwise here, the Judge of all the Earth will not lie under this Imputation, but he will make it appear to all the World that he will Judge *in Righteousness*. † *Is God Unrighteous*, (saith the Apostle) *who taketh Vengeance? God forbid; for then how shall God Judge the World?* It is an indispensible Qualification of this Judge to be Just. ‖ *We know*, (saith the same Apostle) *the Judgment of God is according to Truth*, i. e. it is Just, and according to the Merit of the Fact. And, again, the same Inspired Writer, ‡ *There is no respect of Persons with God, for as many as have Sinned without the Law shall perish without Law, and as many as have Sinned with the Law, shall be Condemned by the Law*, i. e. *Infidels* and *Jews*, and all sorts of Persons shall be Judg'd at the last Day according to the Rules of exact Justice and Equity. Deservedly therefore is that Day called *the Day of the Righteous Judgment of God*, Rom. 2. 5. And it must needs be so, for the Great Judge of that Day, who when he was here on Earth Admonished the *Jews not to Judge according to appearance, but to Judge Righteous Judgment*; he certainly will take care that all the Proceedings of that Day shall be adjusted to the strictest Laws of Righteousness. *He hath appointed a Day in which he will Judge the World in Righteousness*, i. e. *Universally, Clearly, Impartially*.

† Rom. 3. 5, 6.

‖ Rom. 2. 2.

‡ V. 11. 12.

First, As to the *Universality*, that is twofold, *viz.* of Persons and Things. The Universality of the *Persons* to be Judged is already made good from the fore-named Particulars, in which it hath been proved that Good and Evil Angels, Righteous and Wicked Men, Saints and Glorified Spirits from Heaven, Devils and Damned Souls from Hell, and all surviving on Earth must stand before the Great Tribunal of the last Day. * Some of the Ancients have fondly thought from their reading of those words of the *Psalmist*, Psal. 1. 5. *The ungodly shall not stand in judgment*, that the Wicked shall not rise at the last Day, or that they shall not rise to be Judged: Which they thought was confirm'd by our Saviour's saying *they are condemned already*, John 3. 18. But this is a meer perverting of those Texts, for the meaning of the *Psalmist* is, that the Ungodly shall be *Condemned* at the last Day. And as for the other Text, the *being Condemned already* doth not exclude the Condemnation of the Wicked at that Day. We have reason therefore to assert the Universality of the last Judgment. But this is to be understood concerning those Persons that had attain'd to Years of Discretion before they left the World; and therefore meer *Idiots* and *Naturals*, (as we commonly call them) who have no use of their Reason, and *Children* and *Infants* that died before they came to the use of their Reason, or were capable of doing good Works, are not to be brought before the last Tribunal, for the End assigned by the Apostle of appearing there is *that they may all receive according to what they have done, either Good or Evil*.

* Clem. Alexand. Strom. 2. Cypr. *l.* 3. ad Quirin. Lactant. Instit. *l.* 7. *c.* 20. Theodoret. ad *Psal.* 1. v. 6.

But excepting these Persons that I have named, *all* without any limitation must appear at that Great Day. Which Latitude is express'd in Scripture, by saying that the Judgment is to pass on *the Quick and the Dead*, *Acts* 10. 42. 2 *Tim.* 4. 1. 1 *Pet.* 4. 5. Not only those that shall be *alive* at Christ's coming, or shall be

be *Changed*; but those that *died before*, and had been Tenants to the Grave a long time. The Sea shall disembogue her Dead, the Earth shall give up her Prisoners, the Air, and all other Receptacles shall abandon the Carcasses that belong'd to them. In that Day the Rocks shall not hide them, nor the Mountains cover them. *The Dead, both small and great*, (according to St. *John*'s Vision) *shall stand before God.* The meanest and poorest Wights shall not be forgot to be Summon'd, the greatest and most powerful Monarchs shall bow before that Tribunal. Kings as well as Subjects, Lords as well as Vassals, Masters no less than their Servants must make their Appearance at that General Rendezvous. Nay, they shall be Judged before others who were above others. To which purpose the Author of the Book of *Wisdom* hath these excellent Words, *Chap. 6. v. 5, 6. A sharp Judgment shall be to them that are in high Places; for Mercy will soon pardon the meanest, but mighty Men shall be mightily tormented. For he who is Lord over all shall fear no Man's Person, neither shall he stand in awe of any Man's Greatness; for he hath made the small and great, and careth for all alike; but a sore tryal shall come upon the Mighty.*

Thus he. At that Tribunal *Judges* themselves must be judged; and all those who by their Power and Policy, or other Ways and Methods have escaped the Stroke of Justice, must then hold up their Hands, and undergo an Impartial Tryal.

If any Rank of Persons should be exempted, the *Justice* of Heaven might be impeached, and call'd in *question, and therefore* † *we must all appear before the Judgment-seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things done in his body.* And ‖ *when the Son of Man shall come in his Glory, before him shall be gathered all Nations*; the People not only of one Kingdom or Country, but of all throughout the whole World, *and*, in *these*, Persons of all Degrees, Ranks, and Qualities, ‡ *the Kings of the Earth, and the great Men, and the rich Men, and the chief Captains, and the mighty Men, and every Bond-man, and every Free-man*, i. e. Persons high and low, of every Degree and Condition. Or, if we can suppose, (which it is hard for us to do) that any Persons will abscond for a time, their Sins and Guilt shall soon find them out, and there shall be, (if I may so speak with Reverence) a forcible Bill of *Latitat* to fetch in all those that lurk, and hide themselves, and they shall come in, and obey the unlimited Jurisdiction of that high Court. Thus the Judgment shall be *Universal*, (and consequently *Righteous*) in respect of the *Persons* that are to appear.

† 2 Cor. 5. 10.
‖ Mat. 25. 32.
‡ Rev. 6. 15.

And it shall be so likewise in regard of the *Things* or *Matter* to be discussed in Judgment. * *God shall bring every Work into Judgment*, saith the Royal Preacher. And the Apostle who told us that we must *all* appear, tells us the Issue of it, † *that we may receive according to whatsoever we have done, whether it be good or bad*; which comprehends all the Transactions of a Man's Life of what nature or quality soever. Especially secret Sins shall then be brought on the Stage, those Villainies which were hid from the Eye of the World shall be laid open. When *the Lord cometh he will bring to light the hidden things of darkness*, as the Apostle assures us in 1 *Cor.* 4. 5. Accordingly the Day of Judgment is styled by him *the Day when God shall Judge the Secrets of Men*, Rom. 2. 16. Those vile Enterprizes and Practices which were conceal'd from the Knowledge of Men shall then be no longer kept close, they and their Authors must appear in the face of the World. And not only Men's Actions, but their not Acting shall be accounted for. God will judge them for Sins of Omission, as well as those of Commission. The *unprofitable Servant*, and the *barren Tree* as well as the lewd Servant, and the Tree that bore evil Fruit shall receive their Doom.

* Eccl. 12. 1. v.
† Rom. 2. 16.

Words also, no less than Actions, must be reckoned for at that Day. *I say unto you*, saith our Blessed Saviour, *That every idle word which Men shall speak, they shall give an account thereof in the Day of Judgment; for by thy Words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned*, Mark 10. 35. It is generally believ'd that there is no great Guilt adhering to idle and foolish Talking, to trifling and unprofitable Words; but from what our Saviour saith here, we may be convinced of the contrary; he lets us know that we shall be accountable for our idle and impertinent Speech. For in this there is a plain omitting of our Duty, a wilful neglect of speaking as we should do, therefore we must answer for it. It was Prophesied of by *Enoch*, as the Apostle *Jude* acquaints us, that *the Lord would*

come

come to execute Judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly, not only of their ungodly deeds which they have ungodlily committed, but of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him, Epistle of Jude, v. 15. That of the Apocryphal Writer shall then be verified, *There is no word so secret that shall go for nought*, Wis. 1. 11.

Nor shall *Thoughts* escape the Censure of that Day. These, though they seem to some Persons but trivial and inconsiderable, must be answer'd for before that Great Tribunal. The inward Devices and Contrivances, the Designs and Purposes of wicked Men, (though never brought into Act and Execution) are in themselves Vitious, and therefore they must give an Account even for these. This the Apostle ascertains us of, when he tells us that the Lord at his coming *will make manifest the counsels of the hearts*, 1 Cor. 4. 5.

Secondly, To shew that this Judgment is *in Righteousness*, it shall be transacted *Openly*, *Clearly*, and *Manifestly*, so that all the World shall see the Justice of that Day. ‖ We must all *appear*, saith the Apostle, speaking of the Judgment of that last Day; but our Translation doth not fully express the Sense and Import of the *Greek* word which is here used; for according to our *English* rendring of the word, it may be thought to signifie only that all Men shall *make their Appearance*; that is, be *Present* at the General Judgment; but there is more than this signified here, for the original word is φανερωθῆναι, *to be made manifest*; and so then the Sense is, that tho' Men have kept their wicked Intentions and Designs, as well as some of their wicked Practices from the sight of the World, yet at the last Day all their Intentions and Actions shall be discovered, shall be made manifest. And that it should thus be Translated by us is plain from the following Verse, where the same *Greek* word is twice used, *We are made manifest to God, and I trust we are made manifest to your Conscience*, v. 11. As much as to say, even before the Day of Judgment we are made manifest and fully known, not only to God the searcher of all Hearts, but to your Hearts and Consciences by the faithful Discharge of our Ministry, and by the whole Conduct of our Lives; but much more we shall be made manifest at the last Day, when all Men's Lives and Actions shall be uncased. So that the word here used plainly denotes to us the *Clearness* of those Proceedings. All things shall be transacted with the greatest Perspicuity imaginable. *All things* shall *be naked and open to the Eyes of him with whom we have to do* at that Day, or *to whom we must give an Account*, for so the *Greek* may be rendred. Every thing shall then be made manifest, and laid open to all Men's View, that the Justice and Righteousness of the Judge of all the World may be universally acknowledg'd. In Courts of Judicature here on Earth we find it too often happens that Truth is darkned and obscured; yea, sometimes this is done designedly, and she is Veil'd on purpose that she may be kept from the sight of Men. With great Industry and Intrigue she is blinded, and thereby Justice is perverted. But it is otherwise in that Final Judicature of the World; the whole Procedure will be with great Openness and Freedom, all Veils and Masks shall be laid aside, and every thing shall appear in its own Colours and Proportions, and Truth and Justice shall shine forth with an irresistible Lustre. Not undeservedly therefore is that last Judgment call'd *the Brightness of his Coming*, 2 Thes. 2. 8. and for the same reason it is call'd *the Day of Revelation*; for then all things shall be manifested, and submitted to a Publick Survey, and there shall be no under-hand-dealing to be complain'd of.

‖ φανερωθῆναι δεῖ.

Thirdly, the *Righteousness* of the Final Judgment appears in this, that the Proceedings of it shall be *Impartial*, and without favouring of any for those Considerations which usually biass human Judicatures. It is peremptorily deliver'd by St. *Paul*, speaking of that Day of Recompence, that *there is no respect of Persons with God*, Rom. 2. 11. And the other great Apostle joyns his Suffrage, namely, that *without respect of persons he judgeth according to every Man's work*, 1 Pet. 1. 17. The Just Judge at that Day looks on the Merit of the Cause, not on the *Persons*, i. e. he favours none for their outward State and Denomination, for their Riches, Honours and Greatness, or any other external Quality and Relation whatsoever. This is meant by *respect of Persons* in those Places. Men shall not be consider'd for any Worldly Advantage and Privilege which they had, for those signifie nothing to them now, when they come to be Judged. The rich Man must appear at that Day stript of all his Wealth; he will not be then in a capacity of Bribing the

the Judge, if any such thing could be supposed to be done. The Ambitious and Vain-glorious Man, who so hunted after Credit and Applause, must then stand forth destitute of popular Recommendation, or the Voice of Flatterers and Parasites. The Magistrate shall appear without his Purple, the greatest and highest Men shall stand divested of all their Grandeur and Power, and all Men, like the True-born Sons of *Adam*, naked, and devoid of any thing to commend them. Or, if you could imagine them to appear in all their Ornaments and Habiliments; yet these are of no value in the sight of him who is *no respecter of Persons*.

Which may likewise signifie this, that he respects not the *outward Shew* and *Semblance* which Men make, and particularly of Religion and Holiness. These undoubtedly will never be regarded by him who is the Searcher of Hearts. God will not Judge Men according to the fair Appearance and Figure which their external Actions make, but according to the inward and real Disposition of their Souls. And herein may be seen the vast difference between the Judgment of God and Men; for these judge altogether of the Heart by the Works, and so are deceiv'd and impos'd upon by Hypocrites, but God accepts not the * *Person*, the *Face*, the external Aspect, the Superficies, the Outside of any Man, but searcheth for inward and real Goodness in all, and is only pleas'd with these. God will truly perform what the *Turks* fansie the Angel *Michael* shall do at the last Day; that is, he shall weigh all Men's Souls in a Balance. The Lord shall *weigh the Hearts*, as *Solomon* speaks; he shall see whether these were right towards him, and accordingly shall Judge them. And where there is this *exact Weighing in the Scales*, there cannot but be *True and Impartial Justice*.

* πρόσωπον

I will only add this, in the close, by way of Caution, tho' the last Judgment will be *Just*, yet it will not be *Rigorous*. Which I conceive is the meaning of that Text, 1 *Pet.* 4. 6. *For this cause was the Gospel Preach'd also to them that are dead, that they might be judged according to Men in the Flesh, but live according to God in the Spirit*. The Apostle had said in the 2d Verse of this Chapter that we ought *to live to the Will of God*, and he here assigns the Reason; for this, (*saith he*) was the End and Design of Preaching the Gospel, not only to us, but to our Forefathers who are dead, that when at the last Day they shall appear before the Judgment-seat, and give an Account of their Lives, they may find Favour, and not be Judged as Angels, but Men, who lived in fleshly Bodies, and were subject to many Infirmities and Failings. They shall not be dealt with in a rigorous and severe manner, but according to the Terms of the Gospel, according to the Grace and Favour which the New Covenant entitles them to. Their Weaknesses and Frailties which their fleshly Nature made them liable to shall then be consider'd. They shall live according to God in the Spirit, they shall be rewarded and made happy according to that Sincerity of Heart which God sees in them, notwithstanding their Infirmities. This is the True Sense, I apprehend, of those words, *According to God in the Spirit*, according to the Goodness and Clemency of God who looks chiefly to the *Spirit*, the inward Man. If this be Upright and Sincere, many Miscarriages in our Lives will be overlook'd. Thus this Text sets forth the Nature of the last Judgment. It is an admirable Passage, but hath been little understood by Expositors. But still this is true, that God Judgeth the World *in Righteousness*. And if you ask *by whom* this Great Work is manag'd, you are told in the next words that it is *by that Man whom he hath Ordained*. Which is the

III. Main Head of our Discourse, *viz.* the Person Deputed and Commission'd to be Judge, who is the *Man, Christ Jesus*, whom God the Father hath *Ordained* for this Purpose. It is indeed a received Rule among Divines, that the external Operations of the Sacred Trinity are common to every Person of it, and according to this the whole Sacred Trinity is Judge; and it must be so in regard of the Authority and Power required for such a Work as the Final Condemning or Absolving of the World. But then it is as true that each Person in the Trinity hath his *proper* way of Acting; so that though all the Persons may be said to Judge the World, yet in respect of the visible Exercise of this Power and Authority, the Second Person in the Blessed Trinity is more peculiarly said to be the Judge of the World. Thus that of our Saviour is true, † *The Father Judgeth no Man, but hath committed all Judgment to the Son*, i. e. that Execution of the judiciary Power at the

† John 5. 22.

Last

Last Day is wholly devolved upon him, and therefore it is called ‖ *the Judgment Seat of Christ*: And accordingly St. *Peter*, in his Sermon to *Cornelius* and his Company, declares that it was he who ‡ *was ordained of God to be judge of Quick and Dead.* Unto which perhaps referr those Words of the Apostle in *Heb.* 2. 5. where speaking of the matchless Dignity and Pre-eminence of Christ given him by his Father above all Angels, he tells us, That *unto them he hath not put in Subjection the World to come. The World to come* may be understood of the Judgment at Christ's second Coming, when the whole World shall give an Account of their Works. It is Christ alone that shall manage the whole Trial, and pronounce the Sentence: This is not the Work of Angels, or any other Creatures.

‖ Rom. 14. 10. 2 Cor. 5. 10.
‡ Acts 10. 42.

But doth not Christ himself tell his Apostles, That **they shall sit on Twelve Thrones, judging the Twelve Tribes of Israel*? And lest any should imagine that this Power and Dignity were to be conferred only on the Apostles, he afterwards promised the very same Thing to all his faithful Followers, *to him that overcometh*, saith he, *i. e.* to all the Saints, *will I grant to sit with me in my Throne*, Rev. 3. 21. And we are assured by St. *Paul*, That this is a Privilege vouchsafed in common to all the *Saints* that *they shall judge the World*, 1 Cor. 6. 2. How then is this the peculiar Office of Christ?

* Mat. 19. 28.

I answer, First, The Head and Members are looked upon as one, and therefore what the former doth, the latter may be said to do likewise. This is one Way of solving the Objection. Secondly, I offer this, That it may be Christ will Commission some eminent Saints to *hear* and partly *determine*, or at least to *prepare Matter* for Judgment against the Time when he will appear himself. And who knoweth but that those who were most despised of the World, and were most self-denying and humble in their Deportment, and retired from the vicious Multitude, may be chosen out for this singular Employment, like Dictators fetch'd from the Plough, (if I may compare great Things with those that are of an inferior Nature.) Or if this Conjecture be disliked, *the Saints* may be said to *judge the World*, because they are (as I have before proved) several Ways engaged and interested in the Judgment, and like *Assessors* on the Bench, they may truly be said to *judge* the Malefactors, though there be a particular Person appointed to that Office. Thus the Saints in some Sort judge the World at the Last Day, though Christ alone be the Supreme and Capital Judge; and to that End hath all Power given him both in Heaven and in Earth.

I might observe, for the establishing of this Doctrine, That this judiciary Power which God the Father invests his Son with, was foretold even in the Old Testament, and particularly mentioned by that Royal Prophet in *Psal.* 72. 2. *he shall judge the People with Righteousness.* Which although it was spoken of *Solomon*, yet we are to remember that he was a Type of Christ, and consequently that this is to be understood (in the highest Sense) of Christ and his Kingdom. Accordingly the *Chaldee* Paraphrast referrs it to him, and to the Word *King* in the foregoing Verse addeth *Messiah*; to let us know that it is spoken of our Lord *Christ*. Of this *great Judge*, *Isaiah* prophesieth saying, † *He shall not judge after the Sight of his Eye* (i. e. he shall not have respect to the meer outward Shew and Appearance of Things) *but with Righteousness shall he judge the Poor*, i. e. all that are distressed, and stand in need of true Judgment. *He shall*, when that Day cometh, *smite the Earth with the Rod of his Mouth, and with the Breath of his Lips shall he slay the wicked*, as that Great Prophet there adds.

† Isa. 11. 3, 4.

Now, how *reasonable* this is that *Christ* should be *Judge*, will appear from these following Considerations,

1. This is the Reward of his Sufferings here. It is fit that he who was himself *judged* and *condemned* for the Sins of the World, should be the *Judge* of it. Particularly his Honour is engaged, That those who condemned him, should be condemned by him. This without Question is intended by our Saviour, when being carried before *Caiaphas* the Ecclesiastical Judge, he made no Answer but this, ‖ *Hereafter shall ye see the Son of Man sitting on the Right-hand of the Power, and coming in the Clouds of Heaven*, clearly intimating that his future judging of the World, and especially of his unrighteous Judges, should be the Reward and Issue of his being judged by them. To this Purpose the devout Father St. *Augustin*, " * Then, (saith he) shall he manifestly come among the just to judge justly, " who

‖ Mat. 26. 64.
* Tunc manifestus veniet inter justos judicaturus justè, qui occultè venerat judicandus ab injustis injustè.

"who before came in an obscure Manner to be judged unjustly by the Unjust." So he, after his usual Way of Speaking.

2. Christ Jesus not only by his Sufferings, but by his Resurrection became *Lord*, and consequently *Judge* by a peculiar Right. † *As the Father raiseth up the Dead, and quickeneth them*, saith he, *even so the Son quickeneth whom he will*, i. e. hath the Power of raising the Dead committed to him in chief: And then it immediately follows, ‖ *The Father judgeth no Man, but hath committed all Judgment to the Son.* From the Connection of which Words we are given to understand, That the Right of Judging the World is derived from Christ's Resurrection. Which is explained farther thus, ‡ *As the Father hath Life in himself, so he hath given to the Son to have Life in himself: And hath given him Authority to execute Judgment also, because he is the Son of Man.* From whence nothing can be more obvious (and consequently more pertinent to our present Purpose) than this, that Christ's *Rising* and *Judging* are of a near Affinity, and that this is the Consequent of that. And that of St. *Paul* is a Parallel Place, † *To this End*, saith he, *Christ both died and rose again, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the Dead and Living*, which is as much as *Judge of the Quick and Dead*, as he is styled in another Place. And that this is the Apostle's Meaning, is evident from the next Words, wherein we are forbid to *judge our Brethren* for this Reason, because *we shall all stand before the Judgment Seat of Christ*, which is the Thing he before referr'd to. And the Latter Clause of the Text that is now before us, is a full Proof of this Notion which I have offered to you, for there we have the true Ground and Foundation of God's ordaining Christ to judge the World; namely, because *he raised him from the Dead*, than *which* there cannot be a greater *Assurance given to all Men* that he shall execute that Office.

† John. 5. 21.

‖ v. 22.

‡ Mat. 5. 26, 27.

† Rom. 14. 9.

3. It might be added, That Christ is the only Person that is fit for this Office, and therefore it is reasonable that he should be the Chief Author and Manager of that Day's Work. Who should be *Judge* at that Day but he that last hath all the Properties and Qualifications of a *Judge*, viz. great Prudence, singular Faithfulness, untainted Justice, and unshaken Courage? Besides, being God as well as Man, he is of infinite Knowledge, and therefore he knoweth the Hearts of all Men, and is acquainted with whatever hath been done in the World, and consequently nothing can be hid from him. Moreover, he that judgeth others at that Day must be without Guilt himself, and such only is Christ. * *He did no Evil, neither was Guile found in his Mouth.* And as his whole Life was free from Pollution, so he alone is able to manage that Office without all Fault and Blame. This is the very Account given by *Clemens Alexandrinus*, † He (saith he) alone is *Judge* because he cannot Sin, and is free from all Passions and Perturbations which Men are liable to. Thus the Blessed Jesus is the only Person qualified for this Employment.

* 1 Pet. 2. 22.

† Ὁ μόνος κρίνει εἰς τὸ παντελὲς ἀνθρωπίνων παθῶν· διὰ τοῦτο καὶ μόνος κρίνεται ἀμόρφωτος. Paedag. l. 1. c. 2.

And as I have given the *Reasons* why God the Father hath ordained *his Son* to be *Judge* at the Last Day, so I purpose here (before I pass to the next General Head) to give a rational Account of the *Judgment itself*. Though I have in the foregoing Part of my Discourse interspersed several Things which tend to this, yet, I will now more designedly, but briefly give you the *true Reasons* of a Day of Judgment. And First, the Nature of Humane Souls dictates it, for these being *intelligent* have freedom in their Operations and Actions, and thereupon lie under an Obligation to Punishment or Reward, and if there be *both these*, there must be first a *Condemning* and *Absolving*, and what is that but *Judgment*, which is preparatory to the Last Judgment? Besides, there is in all Men a Sting of Conscience upon the perpetration of what is Evil and Unjust, and thence naturally proceeds a Fear of being called to an Account for it: And that Fear being natural, is not groundless and unreasonable. So that the Light of Nature, as it dictated a Judgment to come, (as in the beginning of this Undertaking was shew'd) so it clearly suggests the Reason of it.

Next the Nature of God (as well as of our own Souls) assures us of a Future Judgment. St. *Paul* informs his *Thessalonians*, That ‖ *the Persecutions and Tribulations which they endured, were a manifest token of the righteous Judgment of God*, they are an Argument that there shall be a Day of Judgment, *seeing*, saith he, *it is a righteous Thing with God to recompense Tribulation to them that trouble you: And to you who are troubled, rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from Heaven, with his mighty Angels.* Thus, *it is a righteous Thing with God* to appoint

‖ 2 Thess. 1. 4, 5, 6.

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a Day wherein he will judge the World: His *Justice* is concerned, that Judgment should pass hereafter upon the Wicked, who have here evilly intreated the Godly. The whole Sacred History acquaints us, That many of the Faithful have been great Sufferers, they have *wander'd about in Sheep-skins and Goat-skins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented:* Therefore there shall be a Day (even that Day in which the *Sheep* shall be separated from the *Goats*) when the Wicked shall be destined to endless Sufferings for the Temporal Ones they inflicted on the Righteous. Observe it, we read under the Vision of the *Fifth Seal* that the Saints were *persecuted:* Immediately in the *Sixth Seal* St. *John* hath the Vision of the *Day of Judgment.* The one follows the other, The Saints Tribulations and Persecutions argue a Time of judging those who were the Authors of them. Hence St. *John* tells us, That * *he saw under the Altar, the Souls of them that were slain for the Word of God, and for the Testimony which they held. And they cried with a loud Voice, saying, how long, O Lord, Holy and True, doest thou not judge and avenge our Blood on them that dwell on the Earth?* This was the Language of the *slain Martyrs,* which you may take to be either the Words of the Saints on Earth, who are *slain all the Day long* (as the Psalmist speaks) or of those in Heaven, who had been slain long before. They both incessantly cry for the Final *Judgment,* as knowing that the just and righteous Nature of God will bring it to pass. * Rev. 9, 10.

But this in General. More particularly to evince this Great Article of our Faith, let us remember and recount the Method of God's proceeding before he destroyed *Sodom,* † *The Lord said, because the cry of Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and because their Sin is very grievous, I will go down now, and see whether they have done altogether according to the cry of it, which is come unto me: And if not, I will know.* What Examination and Trial there was of these abominable Sinners before the dreadful Judgment was executed on them, I pretend not to acquaint you particularly, because the Sacred History is silent: But I question not that they had evident Convictions and Proofs of their Guilt: And though God speaks after the Manner of Men, when he saith he will *go down, and see,* and know the State of their Affairs, yet at the same Time he teacheth us this, That he is wont to use a *methodical Justice* in his Proceedings, and will not punish the World till he hath as it were taken a legal Cognizance of their Crimes by a solemn Trial and Judgment. God might hurry Men presently to Hell: But to give undeniable Instances of his Justice and Equity, even before all the World, he first makes Way for his Indignation by open Conviction. † Gen. 18. 20, 21.

Let us remember also, That the Proceedure of the Last Day is justly appointed by God as a *Compensation* to the Righteous, for that Disgrace and Obloquy which they lay under here from the Ungodly, who never ceased to load them with Reproaches, and to render both their Names and Persons hateful. Who sees not that good Men are abused and affronted, and that ignominious Titles are fastened on them? Yea, they are reproached for their holy and religious Lives: Their best Actions are mis-interpreted by the malicious and envious World, who report that they are done out of Pride and Vain-glory, for evil Designs and sinister Respects (for nothing that good Men do, will please them.) Wherefore 'tis requisite that these Actions be scann'd at the Last Day, that the Servants of God may be found to be sincere and upright: Then their Counsel and Advice, and pathetick Exhortations, shall appear to be the Effect of their Love to Men's Souls. Then their sharpest Reproofs will be discerned not to be the Fruit of Bitterness and Rancour, but of their Zeal for God's Honour, and the Welfare of Mankind. Then the gracious Words which proceeded out of their Mouths, shall prove to be the genuine Result and Issue of that deep Sense of Religion which was imprinted upon their Souls. Thus their Credit and Reputation shall be cleared and vindicated. And though now some busie Flies labour to corrupt and taint this *precious Ointment* (for so a good Name is styled by *Solomon*) yet then it shall smell sweet and fragrant, and spread its perfume round the World. The Fame and Worth of the Righteous shall at that Day be blazoned, and it shall reach as far as the noise of the last Trumpet. Then shall their Renown be known by the *Euges* and Acclamations of Angels, and the whole Choire of Cherubims and Seraphims, and the Approbation and Applause of the Sacred and Undivided Trinity, who will embrace and caress them with a *well done, good and faithful Servants.* Nay, those very Persons who threw Dirt in the Faces of the Godly, shall then with all Industry

dustry wipe it off, and shall publickly profess, That the Men they once aspersed and vilified, and whose Names they blasted, were the most unspotted and innocent Persons in the World. Thus it is reasonable and equitable, That there should be a *publick Acquitting* and *Honouring* of good Men, that there should be an open Vindication both of them and of their Cause, and that Holiness should be patronized in the View of the World, and all Vice and Wickedness receive a visible Reprimand and Disgrace. Seeing bold and daring Sinners do frequently go off the Stage with Applause and great Acclamations, it is but just and requisite that they be hissed and hooted at afterwards, and that the Close of all their Doings be Shame and Confusion.

Again, the Solemnity of the Last Judgment is necessary for discovering the *secret Vertues*, and *private Acts of Religion* which the Godly have performed, and which none but God and themselves were conscious to. These fill up the greatest Part of their Lives, and take up the biggest Portions of their Time. The World's Eye sees not how often they retire and converse with God, how duly they try and examine their Hearts, and scan their Lives, and with Tears and Fasting bewail their Offences. It escapes the Eye of the Vulgar how tender-hearted and compassionate they are, how frequently with a silent Charity they comfort the Widows Heart, and refresh the forsaken Orphan, how more especially they relieve the Necessities of those that are of the Houshold of Faith, and study to do their Alms without sounding a Trumpet. These righteous Souls weep in secret for the open Prophaneness of the World, and mourn by themselves for the publick Dishonour done to God and Religion. But, as our Saviour saith in the like Case, *what is done in secret, shall be declared and rewarded openly.* Their Holy Actions and Exercises shall break forth out of the Closet, and come upon the open Stage, to be commended and recompensed.

Yea, the pious Thoughts and Intendments of their Hearts shall then be discover'd: Their Holy Meditations, Soliloquies, and private Communion with God and their own Souls shall be no longer reserv'd: and they shall be more abundantly rewarded for those secret Acts of Devotion, because they are the more signal Evidences of a sincere Heart. All their holy Purposes and Designs of doing good in the World, though they had not an Opportunity to bring them to Effect, shall be laid open; and they shall be commended not only for what they actually did, but for what they heartily intended. Thus, for the manifesting of the secret Part of their Lives, a Publick Day of Accounts is requisite.

I have yet another Reason to offer, and that of no mean Consideration; namely, That seeing that detestable Sin of *Hypocrisie*, and the Commission of many secret Sins were not taken Notice of by, and fell not under the Observation of the World, it is fitting that these should hereafter be brought into open View, and that the Sinners themselves (who here passed for innocent Persons) should have their Vizors pulled off, and be exposed to Shame and Contempt. The Consideration, I say, of that abominable Sin of *Hypocrisie* is sufficient alone to create in us a Belief that there shall be *a Day of Judgment*, when those painted Sepulchres and whited Tombs shall no longer appear in those Disguises, but shall be seen in their own Colours, and be *known to be* what they *really are.* What great Numbers are there now who appear Righteous in the Eyes of Men, and make a very fair Shew and Profession of Religion? They *outdo* some true and sincere Christians in the outward Exercises of Piety; they *outshine* them in many visible Circumstances of Devotion. They smile within themselves, when they think how they thus cheat and beguile the World, and pass for Holy and Godly Persons. Now, it is requisite there should be a Time when these horrid Impostors shall be discovered: It is fitting that it should appear to the World, to Angels and to Men, that these were meer Pretences and Shews, That whilst these Men drew near to God with their Mouths, and honoured him with their Lips, their Hearts were far from him, that nothing but Rottenness and Stench were to be found in these varnished and beautified Sepulchres. Thus it is reasonable to think that these Holy Cheats, (if I may so call them) these pious Frauds, these Pretenders to Sanctity and Religion should be unveiled in the Sight of all the World, and that universal Scorn and Reproach should be the Penalty of them.

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I could suggest this too as a Surplussage to what hath been said, That *these Sins*, together with *Envy*, and *Malice*, *Pride* and *Covetousness*, and other gross Vices have not been animadverted upon here by the Magistrate, and incurr'd a Punishment, as Theft and Murther, and such like Crimes have done: And therefore it is rational to inferr, That besides the Eternal Punishment to be awarded for these Diabolical Affections and Lusts, the Fosterers of them shall first have their Breasts laid open in the Sight of all Mankind, and that those Sins which escaped all Punishment here, shall meet with Shame and Confusion at that Day.

There is yet another particular Reason given by the Royal Preacher; * *I saw*, (saith he) *under the Sun, the Place of Judgment, that Wickedness was there, and the Place of Righteousness, that Iniquity was there. Then I said in my Heart, God shall judge the Righteous and the Wicked.* Where he proveth from the unjust Dealings of Earthly Judges, that there must be a Judgment to come. Humane Tribunals have oftentimes done evident Wrong, and the Just and their Cause have been condemned: *Barrabas* hath been acquitted, and the Righteous crucified: Things have been carried very perversly in Places of Judicature: And therefore there shall be a Reverse of Judgment, and a Time set apart to try as it were the Causes over-again. In brief, if Things were rightly decided here, and † all Persons received according to their Deserts, the Last Judgment would not be requisite as to those Things. But seeing it is otherwise, there is a Necessity of that Day's Final Decision: Seeing Matters go so disorderly here, there must be hereafter a ‖*just Judgment* to make a Difference between the good and bad, as a wise Pagan long since observed.

I shall add no more but this, That many Mysteries and Intricacies of Providence are to be clear'd and explain'd at the Consummation of all Things, and God's Ways must be proclaim'd Just and Righteous to all the World. Though his Wisdom in many Instances of his different Dispensations here, was unsearchable and past finding out, yet it shall one Day be made clear and accountable to Angels and Men. God shall be justified as to the Methods of his Mercies and Judgments, and all Men shall be throughly convinced of the Equity and Reasonableness of them. Then God the Father, and his Son Christ Jesus, together with the Holy Spirit, shall be ‡*glorified in the Saints, and admired by all them that believe in that Day.* These are the *peculiar Reasons* which prove a *Future Judgment*: For there are *some* made use of generally by Writers, to prove this Doctrine, which more properly belong to another Head, *i. e.* they are Arguments for a *Future State*, or *Future Punishments and Rewards*. They prove a *Life to come*, they prove *Hell* or *Heaven*, but not the Fore-runner of them, a Day of Accounts. I was loth to tread in that Loose and indeed Illogical Way, for though a *Judgment* be in order to Heaven or Hell, yet the Arguments which may convince us of these, do not necessarily inferr that.

I have only a Word to speak of the *Place* of this Judgment, and then I hasten to the last Member of our propounded Method; namely, the *Time*, the *Day appointed*. To be short then, we are assured that Christ shall *come* visibly and locally from Heaven, *in like Manner as he was seen to go into Heaven*, Acts 1. 11. But as for the Spot of Earth on which he shall first Light, or rather the precise Place where the Seat of Judgment shall be fixed, I find it not expressed in the Holy Writ. Indeed the Ancients were of Opinion, That it should be placed in the *Valley of Jehosaphat*, or on the *Mount of Olives*, from which Christ took his Ascent, and which adjoyns to that Valley; grounding their Opinion it seems upon that of *Zachary*, chap. 14. v. 4. *His Feet shall stand that Day on the Mount of Olives*: And on those Words of the Prophet *Joel*, 3. 1, 2. *In those Days I will bring again the Captivity of Judah, I will also gather all Nations, and will bring them down into the Valley of Jehosaphat, and will plead with them there for my People.* As to the former Text, it is a Prediction of our Saviour's Ascension, who took his Farewel of his Disciples on Mount *Olivet*, and fled from thence to Heaven. And as to the latter Place, it speaks not of the Last Judgment, but of a particular one that was to be executed on the Enemies of the *Jews*; namely, the *Chaldæans* and *Assyrians*. There is an Allusion to that signal Vengeance which God shewed in King *Jehosaphat*'s Time, 2 *Chron.* 20. 16, *&c.* Or perhaps the *Valley of Jehosaphat* may signifie *the Valley of Judgment*, *Jehosaphat* being here an

* Eccl. 3. 16, 17.

† Εἰ γὰρ πάντες εὐθὺς ἀπολάμβανον τὰ προσήκοντα, οὐ μόνον τὰς ἀμοιβὰς, οἱ δὲ τὰς ἀπόχρεως, πρόνοιαν ἂν ὁ τῆς χρείας λόγος. Isid. Pelus. Epist. lib. 5.

‖ Διαδικασμός. Plato in Phæd.

‡ 2 Thess. 1. 10.

an Appellative not a Proper Name: And so it denoteth *some certain Valley* where God will *judge* those People.

But although it doth not appear that these Words referr to the Day of the General Judgment, yet I deny not but that it is *probable* there is *something* of Truth in that fore-mentioned Tradition of the Ancients: For what Country is more likely to be made the first Place of Christ's Arrival than *Judea*, from whence he sprang? And in *Judea* what Spot of Ground more likely than *Jerusalem*, where he openly suffered, and gave up the Ghost? But then to think that Christ will not only erect the Throne of Judgment here, but *fix* it in this narrow Place, is very idle and groundless. The whole Transaction of the Last Judgment is not, I conceive, to be confined to one Country or Region. The Universal Judge will go in Circuit, if I may so say, and judge some Offenders at their own Home, and bring Justice as it were to their Doors. That great Court of Judicature may be (for any Thing we know) ambulatory, and adjourn itself from Place to Place, hovering continually in the Air and Clouds over them. But * *wheresoever the Body is, thither will the Carcases be gathered together*: Which the Fathers have interpreted of the gathering of the Saints to Christ's Body at that Great Day. These shall be the first that shall be rouzed from their Graves by the Trumpet of God, as the Apostle expresly tells us, † *The Dead in Christ shall rise first*. And as they shall rise first, so they shall first be judged, for they must sit and judge the Wicked afterwards; therefore they must be absolved first; namely, before the Wicked are brought to Judgment. And St. *Paul* speaking of the Day of Judgment acquaints us, That all *the Saints that slept in Jesus*, and *those* also *that are alive and remain unto the coming of our Lord, shall be caught up together in the Clouds, to meet the Lord in the Air*, 1 Thess. 4. 14, 15, 16.

* Luke 17. 37.

† 1 Thess. 4. 16.

Not only the Saints in Heaven (whose Bodies slept here below) shall come with Christ from Heaven, but the rest who were here on Earth shall accompany him at that Day, and both shall be carried up into the Region of the Air, the common Receptacle of the Blessed at that Time. For Christ shall sit in the Air or Clouds, as on a Tribunal, and there judge the World, they being called up thither by the Voice of the Arch-Angel. The Saints being once caught up, shall never return to the Earth again; for the Apostle tells us, That *so they shall ever be with the Lord*. They shall, whilst the Judgment lasts, stand round about the Throne of the Judge; and afterwards he will carry them with him directly to Heaven. But I question whether the Wicked shall be *caught up* at all, for the Apostle mentions *that* as the singular Privilege of the Saints. I therefore rather think that they shall remain here on Earth, and be judged by the Lord from Heaven, as Malefactors stand at the Bar, whilst the Judge who takes an Account of them, sits on the Bench in a higher Place. Or, if they shall be taken up for a Time into the Air, they shall, as soon as the Judgment is over, be sent back and thrown down to Hell. This is the best Account that I can give of the *Place* of the General Judgment, the Summ of which is, That though the Last Judgment may be partly held and transacted upon *Earth*, yet the chief and most solemn Scene of it will be in the *Air*, between Heaven and Earth, that being the Place where the Judge shall be seated in his Majesty, and where the Angels and Saints shall encompass his Throne; whilst both Earth and Air in the mean Time ring aloud with the Noise of that General Convention of Mankind, that Universal Assembly of the World.

IV*ly*, and *Lastly*, We are to speak of the Time of this General Judgment. *He hath appointed a Day*. It may seem rightly to be called the *Day* of Judgment, when in the Style of the New Testament *Day* and *Judgment*, are the same, as in 1 *Cor*. 3. 13. 1 *Cor*. 4. 3. St. * *Jerome* saith it was the Style of the *Cilicians*, of whom St. *Paul* was one. And so among the *Latins diem dicere* is to *implead in Judgment*: And among *us* a *Days-man* is an *Umpire* or *Judge*, as the learned *Hammond* hath observed. It is not then unfitly said here, *he hath appointed a Day*. A *Long Day* indeed! For though I will not be positive with Mr. *Mede*, in extending the Day of Judgment to a Thousand Years, and making it the whole Time of the Millennary Reign, tho' I do not assert it to be of so vast Extent and Duration, yet I doubt not but it will last many Days and Years: For a very great Length of Time will be taken up in the executing that judicial Power. It is fitting that the whole Process should be very *August* and *Solemn* (as I have in Part evinced) which

* Epist. 181. ad Algas.

which it cannot be if it be not of some continuance; all the mysterious Trains of Providence must be unfolded, all necessary Difficulties must be cleared, that Riddling Problem concerning the Sufferings of the Righteous, and the Prosperity of the Ungodly shall be fully explained, and no Objections and Scruples shall be left on Men's Minds. The Decrees and Purposes of God which are not nicely to be search'd into and comprehended now, shall then be marvellously laid open. Those peculiar Doctrines of the Gospel which at present are doubted of, yea, and by many ridicul'd, as not adjusted to *Reason*, shall then be found to be an Entertainment worthy of rational Minds. Many Intrigues, and entangled Scenes of things, which puzzled the Sobereſt, and most Considerative, are then to be leisurely discussed, and fairly laid open to the satisfying of the most inquisitive Minds. All Men's Lives must be uncased, and every Thought, Word, and Action weigh'd in the Balance. And *many more* things are the employ of that Season, which must needs take up a very *long Time*.

If we speak of what God *can do* if he pleaseth, I know the whole Transaction of Judging the World may be finish'd in a short time; but we are not now speaking of his Absolute Power, or what he can do, but we are modestly enquiring what it is probable he will do. As God could have made the World, so he can Judge it in an Instant. But as he was pleas'd to take up Six Days to Create it, so he will, it is likely, be many Days in Judging the Inhabitants of it. For if we weigh the Considerations just now alledged, and remember how the Almighty God is concerned to clear his Justice and Wisdom, and to make his Majesty and Power known, as well in the shutting up of the World, as in the Creating and Preserving of it, and that it becomes him to *convince* all Sinners before he *Dooms* them, and to *Baffle and Silence* them before he *Condemns them*; we shall on these and such Considerations conclude it most reasonable that God should prolong the Judicial Proceedings, and as it were Prorogue this General Assembly of the World as he shall see fit. So that these are to be look'd upon as new Arguments to establish the *Reasonableness* of the Day of Judgment, and they may be reduced to those before-named. But here I mention them to make it evident that the Day of Judgment is not a short Time, though in the Style of Scripture it be call'd a *Day*.

And to confirm this Notion, that the last Judgment will be of a very great duration, (for that is all I positively assert) let me add this to what I said before; namely, that the *Style* of *Holy Scripture* favours this Opinion. The word *Day* in those Sacred Writings is not always to be restrained to the narrow compass of an artificial, or a natural Day, twelve, or four and twenty Hours. Sometimes it signifies a long Period of Time, as the whole time of the *Israelites* Pilgrimage in the Wilderness is call'd *a Day*, *the Day of Temptation in the Wilderness*, Psal. 95. 8. The Book of the *Chronicles* is call'd ‖ *the words of the Days*, i. e. the History of the Times, yea, and a long Series of them; for that is the signification of the *Hebrew Jamim* in this Title of the Book. So you may observe that [*in that Day*] is an usual manner of speaking among the Prophets of the *Old Testament*, and for the most part it implies a considerable space of Time. The Kingdom of the *Messias* is call'd very frequently in the *Jewish* Writings, ‡ *the Day of Judgment*, and from the *Jews* Christ and his Apostles took that Expression, and applied it to our Lord's second coming; now, it is certain that the *Jews* understood by it a Time of many Years continuance. If you consult Mr. *Mede* (in the Third Book of his Commentary on the *Revelation*) you will be abundantly satisfied that in the *New Testament* also [*Day*] signifies a long Time, as in *Mar.* 6. 11. compared with *Luke* 11. 3. and so in *John* 16. 26. Nay, you read in 2 *Pet.* 3. and the last Verse, of * *the Day of Eternity*, as we find it rendred in the Margin of our Bibles according to the Original. And *this Day* in *Psal.* 2. 7. is as much as *from Eternity*. I think we may be satisfied from these Particulars that the Transaction of the last Judgment may be the Work of a long Time, although in the Style of Scripture it be call'd *a Day*.

‖ דִּבְרֵי הַיָּמִים

‡ יום דין

* ἡμέρα αἰώνος. dies æternitatis, Vulg. Lat.

But the Text tells us *this Day is appointed*. The Omnificient God hath *set* and *determined* it, which is an Assurance to the World that it cannot Lapse, and that there is no way to escape it. The Laws and Constitutions of it are as sure and fixed as those of Death, it *being appointed to Men once to die, and after that the Judgment*, Heb. 9. 27. It is as certain that Christ will come to Judge the World, as that

that he was once born and lived in it. But as for the punctual and exact Time of his arrival, we cannot reasonably hope to be acquainted with it. For our Saviour himself lets us know that no Man or Angel is of such Sagacity and Insight as to foresee the particular and distinct Season of the World's ending. Nor did he himself in the Days of his Flesh penetrate into this Mystery, as we are told by his own Mouth, *Of that day and hour knoweth no Man, neither the Angels, nor the Son, but the Father*, Mark 13. 32. Not to mention the odd Solutions which * *some* of the Fathers have given of these words, † *others* understand them thus; he did not know that Day and Hour so as to discover and make it known; but the best and plainest decision of them is that of *Gregory Nazianzen*, ‖ *He knew that Day and Hour as he was God, but he was ignorant of it as he was Man*. And the same plain Interpretation of the words is given by ‡ other Fathers, *viz.* that Christ as he is consider'd, invested with human Nature, had not the knowledge of the precise Time of the last Judgment communicated to him; for it was God's Will that this should be conceal'd from Mankind. He who hath *appointed* this Day hath also *determined* to *hide* it from the Knowledge of all Men, that they may not be puff'd up with Pride and Conceit from their Foresight of Futurities, that frail Minds may not intermeddle with Divine Secrets, that Security and Presumption may not invade Men's Lives, and that the Designs and Mysteries of Providence may not be interrupted, many of which depend on one another, and make as it were one Chain, the Links of which are not to be shew'd us till the conclusion of all things. A Learned *Greek Father* gives us this Account, why the Knowledge of that Day is hid from us, * It is fit, *saith he*, we should be kept ignorant of it, that reckon every Day to be that, we may be prepared for it by constantly Watching, and expecting the Coming of our Lord.

Yet such is the Curiosity incident to human Nature, that many in all Ages have been busily searching into the *particular Time* of the last Judgment; and some have imagin'd they have attain'd to an exact Foresight of it. The Learned *Grotius* gathers from 1 *Thes.* 4. 15. and from 1 *Cor.* 15. 51, 52. as also from 2 *Cor.* 10. 1, 2. that St. *Paul* really thought the General Judgment was then at hand, and that he should live to see it; and so from some Passages in St. † *Peter*'s Epistles he inferrs the same. Where by the way, I observe that these Texts which mention the *Coming of the Lord*, are by this Sagacious Writer confess'd to speak of Christ's *last Coming*, which some others think are to be referr'd wholly to the *Destruction of Jerusalem*. But I am loth to believe that the Apostles themselves were in an Error, and, (which is more) that they committed that Error to Writing. For though indeed at the beginning and first setting out of the Gospel, some of those Holy Men were guilty of Mistakes, and sufficiently discover'd their erroneous Surmises, yet now after the Holy Ghost was sent in an extraordinary manner to enlighten them, and its Office was to *teach them all things*, even such things as they were not able to bear before; now, I say, it was impossible these Inspired Men should leave us their Writings with any Errors and Mistakes in them, which those Persons would have us believe, who assert that those Apostles in their Epistles thought verily they should live to be Spectators of the World's Catastrophe, and the second coming of Christ.

The true Account then of this matter is this, that the *common People*, or *generality of Christians* in the Apostle's Days were persuaded that Christ's last coming was then approaching, and they were in daily expectation of it; and it is not unlikely that their Persecutions being heavy on them, caused them to wish for some sudden Deliverance, and to be inclined to believe that Christ would speedily come to take Vengeance on their Adversaries. And, moreover, this Opinion might have been occasion'd and nourish'd by the Answer of Christ to the Disciples Questions about his *coming*, and *the end of the World*, as you shall hear anon. Now the Apostles did not absolutely Confute this Persuasion of the common Christians, nor indeed could they, for they did not know when the great Day of Accounts should happen. Yet it is clear that the Apostles knew that they should leave the World before that time. For as to what is said in *Thes.* 1. 4. *We that are alive, and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep*, but *we shall be caught up together with them in the clouds*. And, again in 1 *Cor.* 15. 51. *We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump, and we shall be changed*; though some have inferr'd hence that the Apostles

* Epiphan. hæres. 69. Basil. M. Epist. 141. & 391. Isidor. Pelus. Epist. 117. *l.* 1. Photius in Epist. 228.
† Chrysost. hom. 77. in Mat. Theoph. in 24. Mat. Hilar. de Trin. *l.* 9.
‖ Grat. 31.
‡ Athanas. Epist. ad Serap. Cyril. Alex. in Thesauro, *l.* 22. Theodoret, Damascen.
* Ἀγνοεῖν πάντων συμφέρει ἵνα πᾶσιν ἡμᾶς ἐκείνην ἐπιστρεμίζοντας, ἕτοιμοι πρὸς πάντα χρόνον γρηγορῶντες, καὶ τὸν κύριον ἡμῶν προσμένοντες. Isid. Pelus. *l.* 1. Epist.
† 1 Pet. 4. 7. 2 Pet. 3. 1.

Apostles thought that *they themselves* should be of the number of those who should be found alive at the last Day, and should be changed, yet this Inference hath no solid Foundation, because it is an usual thing with the Apostles to seem to speak of *themselves* and the *present Christians*; but to mean the thing spoken of the *future Ages* of Christians, (as, if I had time, I could evidence from several Texts of Scripture) and thus it is here without doubt, the Apostle having Treated of the Doctrine of the Resurrection, and the Manner and Circumstances of it, which concern all in general, he at last acquaints them with this as a particular Secret and *Mystery*, (as he calls it) namely, that the Resurrection should not extend to all, for all are not to die, but those who do not die shall be *changed* on a sudden. And this he expresses in the First Person, [*We* shall be changed.] Whence it doth not necessarily follow that the Apostles themselves are included; but rather it is certain they are not included in such a way or ‖ mode of speaking, by which he intends no more than this, that *they*, whosoever they shall be, that shall be alive at the General Resurrection, shall undergo a Change instead of Death. I am well satisfied that it cannot be proved that the Apostle speaks of the Men of that Age, but it is rather rational to believe that he means those of the last Period of the World, whensoever it should be.

‖ Metaschematismus.

But these Texts gave occasion to succeeding Christians to think the Day of Judgment was near at hand. Thus ‡ *Lactantius* asserted that there was not above two hundred Years space between that time when he wrote, and the end of the World. And before him *Tertullian* and *Origen* concluded that Doomsday could not be far off, from those words of St. *Paul*, * *Brethren, the time is short, it remains that those that have Wives be as though they had none*, &c. whereupon they urged Virginity and a single Life very warmly. St. *Chrysostom* in † one of his Sermons declares that the last Judgment was then at hand. And in ‡ another he tells his Auditors that this present time runs to an end, and the final Resurrection is as it were at the Door. And generally the Primitive Fathers and Christians thought that the World was ending. But none of the Ancients were so bold as to set and name the particular Year or Day when Christ should come to Judgment, which some Enthusiastick Heads in these latter Days have had the Confidence to do; the Event of which hath been this, that they deceived both themselves and others with their groundless Dreams and Fancies. I could almost say with the *Jewish Rabbies* in another case, *Rumpatur spiritus eorum qui supputant tempora.* I utterly dislike those who Positively and Peremptorily tell us that at such an exact and precise Time the Lord will come from Heaven to Judge the World. This is too great Boldness and Presumption to be allowed by Persons of sober Minds. And yet so it is that some Persons, otherwise very Sober and Judicious, have been too Venturous and Daring in this Particular, their Ardent Desires of Christ's Coming, and the great Pressures and Afflictions they labour'd under, and wish'd to be deliver'd from pushing them on to assign the particular and punctual Time of it. Though these Men have been sufficiently faulty in their presumptuous Determinations, yet I must needs declare that those are more blameable who all their Lives do not so much as think of that Day, and because Judgment is not presently executed against them for their exorbitant Manners, flatter themselves into a belief that there shall never be any such thing.

‡ Institut. *lib.* 7. *c.* 25.

* 1 Cor. 7. 29.

† De Pseudoprophetis.

‡ ὁ δὲ παρὼν καιρὸς ἐγγὺς τὸ τέλος ἔχει, καὶ ὅσον οὐδέπω ἡ τῶν ἀναστάσεων ἔσται. Serm. de Virginitate.

But as for a more *general assigning of the Time* of the last Judgment, that, I conceive is more warrantable, and the Great God of Heaven may have given his Servants some discovery of it. Of this sort is that which I meet with in the Discourses of that Man of God, *Martin Luther*; ‡ He doth verily "believe, "*he saith*, that the Angels are already up in Arms, that they are putting on their "Harness, and girting their Swords about them, for the Day of Judgment draw-"eth near, and the Angels prepare themselves for the Fight, and within the space "of *a few hundred Years* they will strike down both *Turk* and *Pope* into the bottomless "Pit of Hell. And in another place, * I persuade my self verily, *saith he*, the "Day of Judgment will not be absent full three hundred Years longer. And, "again, two hundred Years hence the Voice will come and sound, Behold, the "Bridegroom cometh. If we suppose that he spoke these last words a good while before his Death, (which was in the Year of our Lord, 1546.) then according to him the Dreadful Judgment will begin about forty Years hence. The same Person hath this Passage in another place, "When the *Turk* begins to decline, then "cer-

‡ Colloq. Mensal. *Chap.* 34.

* Chap. 58.

" certainly the last Day will come. These things, among others, you will find in the Writings of that Renowned Person, whom God was pleas'd to raise up as the great Instrument of the Reformation. And a great number of worthy Men, who differ from him in other things, agree with him in this, that the Day of Judgment is not far off.

† Talmud. Tractat. Sanhedrim.

Yea, truly this Notion is not disagreeable with the received † Tradition and Opinion of the *Jews* concerning the End of the World; which they had, they say, from *Elias* a famous Doctor and *Rabbi*, who lived under the second Temple, or, as some of them think, from the Prophet *Elijah* the *Tishbite*. He held the whole Duration of the World to be six thousand Years, which he divided thus; there were two thousand Years of ‖ *Inanity*, i. e. without the Law, there were to be two Thousand under the Law, and two Thousand more after the Law; namely, under the *Messias*. This ancient Tradition concerning the End of the World about the conclusion of six thousand Years was generally receiv'd among the *Christian* Writers soon after our Saviour's time; and particularly one of the most ‡ Eminent of them attempts to prove that the World shall continue just six thousand Years, from those words in *Gen.* 2. 2. *On the seventh Day God ended his Work, and rested on the seventh Day from all his Work which he had made*; and those other in 2 *Pet.* 3. 8. *One Day is with the Lord as a thousand Years, and a thousand Years as one Day.* The Days of the *Creation*, he thinks, shadow out so many thousand Years of the World's *Duration*. As God Created the Universe in six Days, so it shall continue as many thousand Years; for every one of those Days was a Signification of a thousand Years. I do not vouch the strength of his Arguing, but only let you see what was the Sentiment of the Primitive Writers of the Christian Church. According to them, (as well as to the Tradition of the *Jewish* Church) it is probable Christ will come towards the end of the sixth Millennary of the World. At that time shall be the Beginning of his Coming, and consequently of the Day of Judgment.

‖ Tohu.

‡ Irenæus, l. 5. c. 28.

But, (as I suggested before) this Day is of a long continuance, and there may be no less than a thousand Years of *Christ's Reign*, and *Satan's Binding* inserted between the first beginning, or dawning of that Day, and the full arrival of it. At the entrance of it the *Jews* and *Gentiles* shall, it is probable, be receiv'd into Christ's Flock, and the whole World shall become Christian. Afterwards, the Godly that are dead shall be raised, and come and live with the Godly on Earth, and all the Wicked shall be crush'd, though not wholly extinct. Then a long time after, the Wicked that are dead shall be raised, and joyn themselves with the Wicked on Earth, who are mystically call'd *Gog* and *Magog* in *Rev.* 20. 8. Then at last a solemn Judgment shall pass on all the World; and this in the most strict and proper Sense is *the Day of Judgment*, but in a larger and more extensive acception all the rest of the time may be, and is call'd by that name. We see then how Mr. *Mede*'s Opinion is to be Censured, who makes the *Reign of Christ*, and *the Day of Judgment* to be the very same, which can't be true, *strictly* speaking, because this latter is after the Relapse to former Impieties under *Gog* and *Magog*, as is clear from the Book of the *Revelation*. This is the truest Account I can give of the *Time* of the general Consummation of all things. It is hastning towards us, and it is reasonable to think that as soon as the six thousand Years are expired, or expiring, it will arrive. But because we have no infallible Date or Epocha to reckon from, which is necessary in order to calculating the *exact* Period of the World, (for we find that the Computations of its Age are differently made by Writers) and so we have no certain Ground to build our particular Determinations upon, it follows that the Knowledge of *that Day and Hour* is uncertain.

But though this *appointed Day* be not known, yet it cannot be denied but that there are *certain Signs* of its approaching. A notice of the Time may be gain'd from those *Forerunners* of it which are mention'd in Scripture. To this purpose we may observe (what is related by no less than three Evangelists) that our Saviour three Days before his Passion, as he came out of the Temple, and the Disciples admired the Structure of it, foretold its Ruin and Desolation. Whereupon the Disciples, as soon as they had ascended the Mount of *Olives*, and had placed themselves there over against the Temple, (which gave them a fuller prospect of it, and a further occasion to consider of its Fate which was foretold by Christ) they began to be inquisitive about this Matter. And, as if they thought at that time

time that the Destruction of the *Temple* and *the World* should happen *together*, they asked concerning *both at once*, [*When shall these things be, and what shall be the Sign of thy Coming, and of the end of the World?*] Intimating that this was their Notion, that the Consummation of the World should be contemporary with that of *Jerusalem*. Nor is it to be wonder'd at that Christ in his Reply did not take notice of, and check their Mistake; for after this manner he had frequently done before. Their gross Errors of the † *Souls Preexistence*, and Sinning before it came into a Body; and that of the *Temporal Reign* of Christ, and other things *spoken* and *done amiss* are not corrected by him. So *here* he stands not to descant on the Notion which they had imbibed, but returns that full Answer which you read in three of the Gospels. There we may observe that he *mingles* several things together, giving not only *Signs* which are *common* to the Destruction of *Jerusalem*, and the Consummation of all things, but also *Signs proper* to each of them. But these are scatter'd among one another, and it hath puzzled Expositors to separate and distinguish them. I never light on any of them yet that gave a clear and satisfactory Account of Christ's Answer. Some will have him speak wholly of the Destruction of the *Jewish* Nation, especially the City and Temple; to which purpose they insist on the words in the Original, which are † *the Consummation of the Age*, i. e. (say they) the present State of the *Jews*; which referrs to the usual Phrase of the *Rabbies*, and to that Passage in *Dan.* 9. 27. Others will allow him to treat not only of these but of the Day of Judgment; but then they are put hard to it, when they come to *distinguish the Signs* of both, which indeed are strangely mixed in the Relations given by the Evangelists.

*John 9. 2.

† συντέλεια τοῦ αἰῶνος. Mat. 24. 3.

Now, I am clearly of the Opinion that this Obscurity was *on purpose* and *design*. Christ *chose* to speak in an ambiguous manner, (as I might observe he doth at some other times) what he delivers may be applied *different ways*; for his Auditors were not at that time fit for a positive and downright Discovery, as we may remember he told them, *John* 16. 12. [*He had yet many things to say unto them, but they could not bear them then*] and perhaps *never could* as long as he was with them. And it is probable St. *Paul*, in imitation of Christ, when he Treated of this Subject, used ambiguous Expressions, and designedly avoided Plainness. And I conceive these, among others, are according to St. *Peter*, ‖ *the things which are hard to be understood* in St. *Paul*'s Epistles; for the Context of that place plainly shews that it relates to some Passages in St. *Paul* concerning the great Revolution of Times, the coming of Christ, and the Day of Judgment. But to keep close to the Reply which our Saviour made to the Disciples, it is obvious to take notice that it was *darkly* deliver'd, and some things in it may be taken in a literal, others in a metaphorical or mystical Sense; sometimes a strict, other times a larger meaning may be allowed. To wave other Instances, see this confirmed in the Close of all. We find in all the Evangelists who give us the Relation of this Matter, and particularly in *Mat*, 24. 34. that this is our Saviour's Conclusion, *Verily I say unto you, this Generation shall not pass before all these things are fulfilled.* Some look on this as the Key to the whole Prediction, but it will appear that it is as difficult to unlock Christ's Meaning in these words, as in those that preceded. Still *Ambiguity* seems to be designed; for the Disciples might well take [γενεὰ *Generation*] in a *double Sense*; namely, either for that Age which was then present, or for the whole Series of Ages from that time when our Saviour Spoke, to the end of the World; and accordingly some Expositors interpret it after the former way, and others after the latter, and so between both we are left at Uncertainties. From this it appears that our Saviour's Answer to the Disciples demands Labours under some *Difficulty*, and I question not but it was *designed*; for he hereby complieth with their present Infirmity and Indisposition; nay, Inability to know things so clearly at that time as they might be capable of afterwards.

‖ 2 Pet. 3. 16.

But yet, tho' I assert this, I hold that Christ's Answer was in it self Satisfactory enough, tho' as to us in some respect dubious. Christ seems to referr to, and take in both the Significations of those words *this Generation*; shewing in that Chapter what should happen in that present Age; namely, the *Destruction of Jerusalem*; and what in one of the Ages to come, to wit, the *Final Judgment of the World*. He replies to both their Questions, tho' they apprehend him not; telling them not only what should presage the Sacking of *Jerusalem*, but also the end of the World; or, rather, letting them know this, (which was a very choice and considerable Mystery)

Mystery) that the Prognosticks of both are alike, though they should happen at different times, and that many of that present Age should live to behold the *Signs* he had spoken of, and that when the great Period of all approach'd, these very Tokens and Harbingers should be seen again, but in a higher and greater manner. All these Signs and Forerunners mention'd as preceding the Destruction of *Jerusalem*, should be more Amply, more Signally, more Illustriously fulfill'd before the coming of Christ, and the Day of Judgment. Which gives light to those words of our Saviour in *Mat.* 24. 29. *Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkned*, &c. The meaning is not that Christ shall come to Judgment *presently after* the Destruction of *Jerusalem*. The word is not to be taken strictly and properly, but only with relation to the foregoing Prophecy of the Overthrow of *Jerusalem*; as much as to say, there shall no other Destruction or Slaughter of the like nature befall the *Jews between* that and Christ's coming to Judgment. No such great and terrible Calamity shall *intervene*; and on that account the Day of Judgment may be said to follow the Destruction of *Jerusalem immediately*. And the one is a Type of the other, the deplorable Devastation of the Holy City is to set forth to us the dreadful coming of our Lord to Judgment. I doubt not but it was intended by the All-wise Providence that the signal Ruin of the *Jewish* State and Oeconomy, and the taking and burning of their great and renowned City should be a Representation and Symbol of the last coming of Christ to Judgment, of the Destruction of the World, and its being devoured by Fire. From what I shall add anon, the *Parallel* between these two will appear, and then we shall see how appositely the former was made use of to set forth the latter. This is the reason why they are couched within one another in our Saviour's Prediction, and why one Chapter presents us with them both.

Nor is this unusual in the Prophetick way of delivering things, where the Style is Pregnant and Comprehensive, and wraps up diverse Meanings in the same words. Hence there are double Interpretations of some places of Scripture, as of that in *Dan.* 9. 27. *For the overspreading of Abominations*, (or, with abominable Armies) *he shall make it desolate*; which was meant primarily of *Antiochus*, or some other great Enemy and Scourge of the *Jews*; but we are sure also from our Saviour's own infallible Exposition that it *was spoken by* Daniel *the Prophet* of *Titus Vespasian*, or the *Roman Army* which he brought against *Jerusalem*, and at last into it; so that * *the Abomination of Desolation stood in the Holy Place*. Thus that other Prophecy in the 11th Chapter of *Daniel* was meant of *Antiochus*, but is likewise to be understood of *Anti-christ*, who was to come in the last Days. So in the *New Testament* the Prophecy in the Revelation concerning the *Whore of Babylon*, and *the Beast*, &c. is meant both of *Pagan* and *Christian Rome*; for it is said that the Beast *was, and is not, and yet is*. In like manner the 24th Chapter of St. *Matthew* is to be interpreted, not only concerning the *Destruction of Jerusalem*, (which was *their* Doomsday) but of the *last Judgment, and the Signs* which forego it.

* Mat. 24. 15.

In the next place then I proceed to speak of *these*, (and that very briefly) as they are particularly set down by our Saviour. *First*, He tells us that *the Gospel of the Kingdom must be Preached in all the World for a witness unto all Nations, and then shall the end come*, Mat. 24. 14. This Sign was in a great measure accomplish'd before the Destruction of *Jerusalem*; for the Apostles were commanded to go forthwith, and † *Preach the Gospel to all Nations*: And accordingly St. *Paul* acquaints us that *it was made known to all Nations*; and the Records which are remaining of most Countries let us understand that the Gospel hath been Publish'd in all the parts of the then habitable World, Christianity was planted in the farthest parts of it above ten Years before the Destruction of *Jerusalem*. But before the Day of Judgment this Sign shall again in a more eminent manner be fulfilled; no part of the World shall be debarr'd the Knowledge of Christ, and both *Judaism* and *Gentilism* shall be utterly vanquished. The *Pagan* Idolaters shall bow down to Jesus, and acknowledge him their only Saviour; the Stiff-necked *Jew* shall submit to his Yoke, and own the Sacred Laws of Christianity. And so *all Israel shall be saved* at last, there shall be a general and visible Conversion of the whole Race of the *Jewish* People that are then remaining. This Sign is not yet fulfill'd, the *Jews* are not call'd, they remain still in their Infidelity. Besides, there are many Nations that continue in Idolatry and Paganism; but both these and the *Jews* shall be brought to the Knowledge of Christ, and when God

† Rom. 16. 26.

pleases

pleases to effect this, he can do it in a short time. This may be (*as Life from the Dead*, as 'tis express'd by the Apostle) as unexpected as the Reviving of a dead Man. Therefore let not this, (as I see it generally doth) perswade us that the Judgment is not near at hand. God can call both *Jews* and *Gentiles* of a sudden, he can bring it to pass by strange and extraordinary means, which we cannot so much as imagine; and for that reason I say the last Judgment may not be far off, notwithstanding this Sign is not accomplish'd.

Again, our Saviour acquaints us that Error and Imposture, false Prophets and false Christs shall be the forerunners of those great Events. *Many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ, and shall deceive many*, Mat. 24. 5. And, again, *v.* 11. *Many false Prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many.* Which was exactly verified before the Overthrow of *Jerusalem*; for History informs us that several *Seducers* sprung up, pretending to be *Saviours* and *Deliverers* of the People. And so it hath been since, and shall be again before the Final Conclusion of all things. Among the *Jews* several have pretended to be the *Messiah*, and *David George*, a strong Enthusiast said he was Christ. The like Pretences and Impostures are still to be expected, Deceivers and false Prophets shall arise, and spread abroad their damnable Doctrines. Error and Falshood, Heresie and Apostacy shall infest the World, as St. *Paul* long since foretold; ‖ *In the latter days many shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing Spirits.* And, again, ‡ *The Day of the Lord shall not come unless there be a falling away first.* This is partly past, and partly present, *Popery* and *Mahometism* having engrossed so great a part of the World, and still prevailing in it. And it is partly to come, because it is likely these will make their last and greatest Effort before their utter Downfal. And it is probable that all other *Errors* and *Delusions* will once again shew themselves with greater Vigour than ordinary, and I verily think that this is begun already. Then, as our Saviour hath foretold, *they will say, Lo, here is Christ, and there is Christ*, this Sect and that Sect will pretend that they are the only Religion, and right Way. And they will labour to exclude all others, and to set up themselves to be the only People of God, and the only Church of Christ, tho' their Doctrines be very False and Corrupt, and savour of their own Imaginations rather than of the Holy Scriptures. This Sign is in a great measure fulfill'd.

‖ 1 Tim. 4. 1.
‡ 2 Thes. 2. 3.

In the next place, great Wickedness, and universal Corruption of Life shall be the forerunners of the last Day, as they were of the Destruction of *Jerusalem*. This Mark our Saviour sets upon both, *Iniquity shall abound*, Mat. 24. 12. That it abounded in an extraordinary manner before that City was destroy'd, is testified by *Josephus* and other good Authors. There never was such a Decay of Religion and Piety, of Justice and Honesty, and all moral Virtues as there was at that time. The *Jewish* Nation was come to the height of Wickedness, their Sins were at the full, which was a plain Indication that they were ripe for Destruction. Thus it will be before Christ's second coming, and indeed it is so already, for there is a general Depravation of Manners every where, and it is hardly possible to imagine that it can be much greater; which may remind us of that Day, which is to be ushered in by an universal Defection of Manners, and by the abounding of all Sin and Iniquity.

Moreover, Inadvertency, Insensibleness and Stupidity are the Harbingers of the last Days arrival, as well as of the Devastation of *Jerusalem*. For unto both these our Saviour's Words are to be applied, * *As it was in the Days of Noe, so shall it be also in the Days of the Son of Man; they did eat, they drank, they married Wives, they were given in Marriage*, (i. e. they gave themselves wholly up to their Pleasures, they minded nothing but Sensuality) *until the Day that Noe entered into the Ark, and the Flood came and destroy'd them all. Even thus shall it be in the Day when the Son of Man is revealed.* Thus it was when Christ came to destroy the *Jewish* Nation, and to lay their City waste, they indulged themselves in their Sins, and were not sensible of the Judgment which was near them; yea, though there were several *Prodigies*, (as the *Jewish* Story relates) to put them in mind of that Day, yet they went on unconcern'd, and took no notice of it. So it will be before Christ's last coming, the wicked Generation of Men will be hardned in their Sins, and have no Sense of the Danger which is at hand. When they are told of it, they will give no Credit to it, but laugh at it as a thing utterly improbable. Which may be the meaning of Christ's words in *Luke* 18. 8. *When the Son of Man cometh,*

* Luke 17. 26, &c. Mat. 24. 37, &c.

eth, shall he find faith on the Earth? i. e. will the besotted World *believe* that he is coming to take Vengeance on them? For so we find the words explain'd in that and the foregoing Verse, where it is positively asserted that *God will avenge his own Elect who cry Day and Night unto him*; yea, he will *avenge them speedily*. But this will not gain Credit among the Sinners of that last Age, for they having given themselves up to all Prophaneness and Debauchery, their Consciences will be stifled, and their Judgments perverted, so that they will neither think of, nor believe a Day of Vengeance. And if this be a Sign of that Day's Approaching, it cannot be very far off, or at least it can't be far off the *Millennium* which foregoes it, for this Stupidity and Sottishness never prevail'd more than it doth now.

Further, all the Evangelists that acquaint us with the *Signs* foregoing the Destruction of *Jerusalem*, and the end of the World, tell us there shall be † *Persecutions, Tumults, Wars, and rumours of Wars, Nation shall rise against Nation, and Kingdom against Kingdom. Hatred, Cruelty* and *Bloodshed* shall be rampant in the World. It is well known that it was thus before *Jerusalem* felt its last Fate, and thus it shall be before the last Revolution and Consummation of all things. For Christ having told us that ‖ *the Love of many shall wax cold*, it is no wonder that Unchristian Heats and Animosities thereupon arise, and that Men's Hatred and Malice flame out into open Revenge. Hence it will come to pass that Blood and Slaughter shall be the dreadful Heralds of the Judgment to come. *Other Trumpets* shall be heard to sound aloud before *that* of the last Day. This Preparative to Judgment hath been in part already, and is at present in the World, and no Man can deny it. If the persecuting Genius should prevail again, and if universal Conquest and Slaughter be thirsted after, and if Massacrees and downright Murthers become the Pastime and Recreation of Savage Minds, this Sign will be soon finish'd.

† Mat. 24. 6, 7, 9. Luke 21. 12.

‖ Mat. 24. 12.

Other Precursors of the Ruin of the *Jews*, and of the end of the World are *Famines, and Pestilences, and Earthquakes in diverse Places*, as you find them distinctly mention'd in *Mat.* 24. 7. From the most credible History that is extant, we are told that these particular Calamities preceded the Downfal of the *Jewish* Nation, and the very same are to be the Presages of the General Judgment. Fierce and tedious Wars are generally accompanied with Famine and Scarcity, with Contagious and Pestilential Diseases, and consequently with great and spreading Mortality. And the Commotions in the Bowels of the *Earth* shall be answerable to those in Kingdoms and Nations, which perhaps are *the Signs in the Earth beneath* spoken of in *Acts* 2. 19. These dreadful Concussions seem to begin already; yea, rather they have continued a considerable time. We have heard of many terrible *Earthquakes* that have happen'd within these few Years in Foreign Countries, and we have lately had some Warning of the like sort in this Nation. What may this signifie to us? Even this very thing which I'm now speaking of, namely, that the Terrible Day of the Lord, or that *Change* which is to *precede* it, is drawing near; for we are ascertain'd by our Lord himself, that there shall be *Earthquakes* in divers places before his last coming.

The next Signs are those *in the Heavens*, particularly mention'd in *Luke* 21. 25. *There shall be Signs in the Sun, and in the Moon, and in the Stars. Josephus*, in his History of the *Jewish Wars*, acquaints us that these portended the Miseries which befell his Country-men the *Jews*, especially at the Besieging and Sacking of *Jerusalem*. He will sufficiently satisfie us of the Truth of our Saviour's Prediction here, ‡ *fearful Sights and great Signs should be from Heaven*; for he relates that a blazing Comet, in shape of a flaming Sword, hung over *Jerusalem* a long time, and that the Inhabitants of that place had several other Portentous Indications from Heaven. In a more signal manner shall these things happen before the coming of our Lord to Judge the World. Then, as our Infallible Master hath told us, * *The Sun shall be darkned, and the Moon shall not give her Light, and the Stars shall fall from Heaven, and the Powers of the Heavens shall be shaken.* These are the forerunners of the Final Judgment, and the World at several times hath had some Specimens of them in the Terrible and Amazing Sights, in the prodigious Apparitions which have alarm'd some Countries. We of this Nation, (as well as others) have not been without these Signs from Heaven. We have had glaring Comets over our Heads for several Days together, not to speak of other Apparitions and Sights in the

‡ Luke 21. 11.

* Mat. 24. 25.

the Skies, which are Divine Monitors to us from above, and are sent on purpose to remind us of the greater and more hideous things which are to come, when the Cœlestial Bodies shall run into worser Disorders, and the Stars shall feel new and dangerous Trepidations, and the whole Host of Heaven shall appear in a most affrighting Posture, and Darkness and Confusion shall fill the World.

But as some Signs are *common* to the *Destruction of Jerusalem*, and the *Day of Judgment*; so there are others that are *proper* to this latter, of which I will speak in the next place. The Signs that are peculiar and proper to that Day, and are the more immediate forerunners of it are these three, the Personal coming of Christ in the Clouds, the Angels Alarming the World, and the Rising of the Dead out of their Graves. The first of these is call'd *the Appearing of the Sign of the Son of Man in Heaven*, Mat. 24. 30. This *Sign of the Son of Man* was thought by some of the † Ancients to be the Sign of the Cross, and the *Roman Catholicks* generally interpret it so. But it is more probable that this is no other than *the Son of Man*, i. e. *Christ himself*; for so it is according to ‖ another Evangelist; and you will find the same way of speaking in *Rom.* 4. 11. where 'tis said, *Abraham receiv'd the Sign of Circumcision*, i. e. Circumcision it self, which indeed was a Sign of the Covenant. But perhaps there is something more in *the Appearing of the Sign of the Son of Man*; this may denote his Appearing in a *Signal and Remarkable* manner; for, (as it seems to be interpreted in the next words) *He shall come in the Clouds of Heaven with Power and great Glory.* That same Jesus who before came in a mean and contemptible way, shall at last be seen to arrive in great Splendor and Glory, and come attended with a pompous Equipage.

† Chrysost. hom. 76. in Matth. Augustin. de Tempore Serm. 130. Cyril Hierosolym. Cat. 15. Theophylact. in Matth. 24. ‖ Luke 21. 27.

Or, it may be this *Sign of the Son of Man* is some *vocal Sign* that shall strike Terror into all at that last Day; namely, the *Trumpet*, which is often by the *Greeks* call'd σημεῖον, and by the *Latins Signum*. Accordingly, in *Hesychius* σημαίνειν and σαλπίζειν are the same; and ‡ *Heinsius* observes that the Feast which the *Hebrews* call the *Feast of Trumpets*, is by the *Greeks* render'd ἡμέρα σημασίας. Thus there seems to be some bottom to ground this Notion upon, and if so, then the Appearing of the Sign of the Son of Man must be the same with that which I reckon'd as the

‡ Exercit. Sacr.

Second immediate forerunner of Doomsday, *viz.* the *Angels Alarming the World*. That Heavenly Host shall proclaim his coming with a loud and terrible Voice; for, saith the Apostle, * *The Lord shall descend from Heaven with a Shout, with the Voice of the Arch-angel, and with the Trumpet of God.* This latter may be that kind of *Hebraism* whereby the *Greatness* and *Wonderfulness* of a thing are express'd by adding the *Name of God* to it. And accordingly it is said, † *Christ shall send his Angels with a great sound of a Trumpet*, or, (as 'tis in the *Greek*) *with a Trumpet and a great Voice*, which is the same with *the Trumpet of God* here, and with the *last Trumpet*, 1 Cor. 15. 52. It may be there is an Allusion in these places to the Year of *Jubilee*, which was so call'd because it was proclaim'd with the sound of a Ram's-horn, which was the ordinary *Jewish Trumpet*, and in that Tongue *Jobel*, (whence the *Jubilee*) is the same with *Sound of Trumpet*. The time of the last Judgment is the true *Year of Jubilee*, the most joyful Solemnity, the greatest and highest Festival of the Saints. Or, perhaps this Phraseology, and peculiar way of speaking alludeth to the Solemn Promulgation of the *New Year* on the Calends of *Tirsi*, which was with Sound of *Trumpets*, and thence it was call'd the *Feast of Trumpets*. Thus the Beginning, or *New-years-day*, as it were of Eternity, is to be Proclaim'd by Angels in that manner, or at least it is so express'd by Christ and the Apostle, because of the *Resemblance* between these two: Now it is that the World is to be Judg'd, and this wide-spreading Noise is as it were the Citation and Summons to the Court. And this dreadful Sound made by the Angelick Host shall be so loud that it shall reach the remotest corners of the *Earth*; yea, and as the true *Trump Marine* shall be heard in all the spatious Territories of the *Ocean*. In short, it shall rouze and awaken all the Dead wheresoever they are, and forcibly call them out of their Graves, or other Receptacles and Dormitories of the Deceased.

* 1 Thes. 4. 16.

† Mat. 24. 31.

Which is the *Third* and most immediate Sign of the last Judgment, the Day of the *Resurrection* is the first beginning of it. Then Bodies and Souls shall meet again, and be Re-united after their long Divorce. Then all the scatter'd Atomes of

those Carcases which once belonged to Humane Souls shall be mustered up, and appear in a Body: Then the Dead, like dispersed Soldiers, at the Sound of the Trumpet which hath called them, shall flock together, and make towards some common Ensign or Standard. Then all Mankind shall make them ready for the great Tribunal, where they must give an Account of their past Lives and Actions, and receive according to what they have done, as hath been described before.

There remains yet another Thing which some reckon as a *Fore-runner*, I doubt whether it be not rather a *Concomitant* (if not a *Consequent*) of Christ's Coming to Judgment, and that is the *firing of the whole Frame of Heaven and Earth*. Or if it be a Fore-runner, it is not of the *Trial*, but of the *Execution of Judgment*. *The Heaven and Earth*, saith St. *Peter*, *are kept in Store, reserved unto Fire against the Day of Judgment, and Perdition of ungodly Men. The Heavens shall pass away with a great Noise, and the Elements shall melt with fervent Heat, the Earth also, and the Works that are therein shall be burnt up*, 2 Pet. 3. 7, 10. This hideous and lamentable Conflagration, is joyned here with *the Perdition of ungodly Men*, which shews, that it must be after the Trial is over, for if the World should undergo that Fiery Metamorphosis before it, there would not be convenient Place left (for a long Time at least) for the transacting of the Trial and Judgment. It is reasonable therefore to conclude, That when the Faithful shall be discharged and absolved, and thereupon taken up to Christ, then the Wicked shall be left behind, and be exposed to the Flames.

Now, That the World should at last be burnt is a Doctrine not wholly taken from the Writings of the Apostles and held by all Christians, as † *Origen* observes, but was anciently received by those who were Strangers to them. The *Jews* of old held it, and the *Pagan* Philosophers believed it, and the *Sibylls* in their Prophetick Songs made it their Theme, as the learned *Vossius* hath observed. *Lucretius*, *Lucan*, *Ovid*, and other Poets mention it as a Thing very credible. *Seneca*, *Plutarch*, and *Pliny*, and before them, *Heraclitus*, and *Pythagoras*, and *Plato*, *Empedocles*, *Zeno*, *Cleanthes*, *Chrysippus*, and generally all the *Platonists* and *Stoicks* assert it. Indeed all Sects of Philosophy but the *Aristotelians* (who held the Heavens to be incorruptible) embraced this Notion. But yet I must add, That their Opinion of the World's Conflagration differed much from that of the *Christians*: For the *Stoicks* and *Epicureans* held it to be, not a Consumption, but a Purgation and Restauration of the World. The *Platonists* held, there should be a *successive Renovation* of all Things after certain Intervals and Revolutions. This was called by them * a *Periodical Regeneration*, for they held that after a certain Return of Years, all Things should perish by Fire, and then there should succeed a † *Restitution* or *Restauration* of all Things: And innumerable such Renovations and Successions should happen to the Universe, reducing all Things to their former State and Posture. So that it is plain, these *Gentiles* were not of the very same Opinion with the *Christians* concerning the Conflagration of the World, for these latter acknowledged only one single Conflagration. But yet this may be observed, That the very Terms which the *Philosophers* used to express the Universal Burning of the World, were retained by our Saviour and by the Apostle St. *Peter*. The Renovation of the World which we expect after the Resurrection, and the Day of Judgment is called *the Restitution of all Things*, Acts 3. 21. and *the Regeneration*, Mat. 19. 28. if we understand this latter Place according to the Interpretation of the ancientest Fathers. This we are sure of from Holy Scripture, that there shall be such a *Change* as we have mentioned: Christ shall come in flaming Fire at the Last Day, and this inferior World shall be burnt up, and the Heavens themselves *being on Fire shall be dissolved*.

† Περὶ ἀρχῶν. lib. 3.

* Περιοδικὴ παλιγγενεσία.

† Ἀποκατάστασις. Antonin. lib. 11.

And this need not seem strange and improbable in the *nature of the Thing itself* (not to speak of the Almighty Power of God, which is able to effect it) if it be considered what Store of combustible Materials is lodged in the Earth, and that there are continual Fires in its Bowels, as appears from many *Vulcano's* which vomit forth Smoke and Ashes, and sometimes Belch out terrible Flames of Fire. And the hot Baths and Fountains are no contemptible Evidence of Subterraneous Fires, and the Fewel thereof. Of the wonderful and prodigious Quality of these latent Fires under Ground, the ingenious *Kircher* hath given the Curious an Account in his *Mundus Subterraneus*. And not only this Globe of Earth, but the Air, and Clouds, and Heavens which surround it are furnish'd with an ample

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Stock and Magazine of Thunder and Lightning, and other Fiery Meteors, which afford abundant Provision for an Universal Conflagration. As to what some tell us, as a Token of this, That the Sun is come nearer to the Earth than it was at first, I shall not deny this approach, because both *Ptolemy* and *Copernicus* affirm it, but it is plain, that we feel no increase of Heat by it, and so those Astronomers are alledged but to little Purpose. *Pliny* in his * *Natural History* professeth, That he looks upon it as an absolute Miracle that any one Day passes on, which all the World is not set on Fire, because of the innumerable Fires under the Earth, and the inbred Heat in Minerals and Stones, and because of the infinite Number of Stars, and the vast amazement of Flames in the Sun. Now if that Natural Philosopher truly thought it a Miracle, that every Day brought not Tidings of the World's being destroyed by Fire, *we* surely so many Ages since may think it a greater Wonder that the World is not parch'd up, and that the General Fever and Calenture of Nature hath not set its aged Corps on Fire.

* Lib. 2. cap. 107.

But if I may deliver my Mind freely, I am perswaded that what hath been hitherto produced, agreeably to the Sentiments of many learned Men, doth not give a true Account of the World's last Fiery Trial. These Things above-named may, it is true, contribute somewhat towards it, but the first and principal Cause (if I mistake not) is this, the heavenly Bodies (as a Prologue to this Tragical End of the World, (as you heard) shall be put into an unspeakable Disorder; for as our Saviour himself expresseth it, *the Stars shall fall from Heaven, and the Powers of Heaven shall be shaken.* Upon this Preternatural Concussion of the Heavens, there will be a strange Confusion among the starry Bodies, which, like Fire out of its Place, will do infinite Mischief. First, they will set the Upper Regions on Fire, and afterwards these below. The Heavens shall be made to run so fast on their Wheels, that they shall set the Universe into a bright Flame. Thus this Conflagration is to be reckoned as the genuine, if not only, Effect of that Disorder in the Heavens, which our Saviour foretold should be a Sign of his Coming.

Some Christian Writers (as well as others before-mentioned) have thought that the Earth and Heavens which shall be dissolved with Fire, are to be *restored again*, and to be made Use of by Mankind, and that these are *the New Heavens and the Earth* spoken of by St. *Peter*. *Nevertheless*, saith he, *we look for New Heavens and a New Earth, wherein dwelleth Righteousness*, Epist. 2. chap. 3. v. 13. Which is (say they) as if the Apostle had said, though I speak of the *Dissolution* of the World by Fire, yet you must understand this of a Restauration only; it shall refine and purifie the old Heavens and Earth, and make them new, and thereby fit them for the Use of Men afterwards. But I am not much inclined to assent to this Comment on the Words, I do not think that the *New Heavens and New Earth* here are the old ones restored: But the plain Meaning is this, according to the Style of Scripture, that there shall be a New, *i. e.* another World wherein the Godly shall dwell for ever after they have left this. This is *the New Heavens* and *the New Jerusalem*, in the Language of St. *John*. This is all that I understand by those Words, and I see no Ground from thence to assert, That the Saints shall reside here again in this Lower World (as some have fansied) after it is restored and made new. As for that Conceit of * some of the Fathers, That the Souls of the Faithful are to be purged by the Fire which is to be at the Last Judgment, it is to be looked on as a groundless Fancy. This only we may truly say of the wonderful Vertue of the Last Day's *Chymical Fire*, that God will thereby *separate* the Righteous from the Wicked, and that as the Chymist's Fire *extracts* the *best*, and carries up the *Spirits* to the Top, whilst the gross Matter and Dreggs fall to the Bottom, so by this the Righteous shall ascend upwards to the Heaven of Heavens, whilst the Ungodly, as Dross and Filth, a dull *Caput Mortuum*, shall sink down to Hell, never to be recovered again.

* Lactant. Instit. l. 7. c. 21. Augustin. de Civ. Dei l. 20. c. 25. Ambrof. & Hilar.

Thus I have delivered all that I thought necessary to be spoken concerning this Great and Important Article of the *Day of Judgment*. I know not that I have omitted any Thing considerable, but I have on the contrary given the Reader this Doctrine in a larger Extent than commonly is done, taking in more Persons, Actions, Time, and other Circumstances, into that Great Affair than is usual. But I found myself inforced to it, both from the Consideration of the true Nature and Quality of the General Judgment, and from those Texts of Scripture which purposely treat of it.

The

The *Application* of all is yet behind, and to that I now hasten. This is a Subject of Universal Influence, and where-ever it powerfully operates upon Men's Lives, it makes a wonderful Change, and is accompanied with most Blessed Effects. If the Sense of a Judgment to come, were warm and vigorous on Men's Minds, how circumspectly would they walk, how concernedly would they act in the Ways of Religion and Holiness? They would behave themselves with great Meekness and Moderation, and yet with as great Zeal and Activeness. They would discover a remarkable Seriousness and Sobriety in their Deportment, and yet withal a huge Chearfulness and Serenity of Mind. In short, if the Future Judgment had an influence on Men's Hearts, we should soon see the World amended, and Religion would be in fashion and repute, and the main Business of this Life would be to fit ourselves for Death and Judgment, that we might be everlastingly Happy.

But if I proceed any farther after this Manner, I shall prevent myself in the *Application* of this Doctrine: Which I now betake myself to. There is no Person but is obliged from what hath been said, 1. To be throughly *perswaded* of the Truth and Certainty of this Doctrine. 2. To entertain it frequently in his *Thoughts* and *Meditations*. 3. To *live* as one that shall be judged.

1. Let us fix this *Perswasion* on our Minds, that maugre, all the fond Evasions and false Hopes of deluded Sinners, there shall be a General Judgment to call the World to an Account. It is true, though this be a necessary and important Doctrine of our Religion, yet it hath met with opposition, and that among different Sorts of Persons. It is no Wonder that it hath been derided by *Atheists*, for they having cast off the Notion of a *God* may be thought to abandon very easily that of a *General Judgment*, which indeed depends upon the real Existence of a Deity, *i. e.* a most powerful, just, and wise Being, who both can, and will take an Account of the Miscarriages of his Creatures. Nor is it any Disparagement to this Great Article of our Faith that it hath been renounced, or at least not fully received by some high-flown *Enthusiasts*, as particularly those who entitle themselves of the *Family of Love*, who take the Last Judgment to be a Mystery, or say, That Christ is already come to Judgment in Men's Consciences. It could not be expected that these mystical and allegorizing Men, who adhere so little to the Letter and History of the Holy Scripture in other Things, should assert and maintain it in this.

Nor must you think it strange if some wild *Hereticks* and *Apostates* deny this Article of Faith, for these are of the Race of those *Scoffers* St. *Peter* speaks of, *Ep. 2. ch. 3. v. 3, 4. Where is the Promise of his Coming?* say they, *All Things continue as they were from the beginning of the Creation.* As much as to say, we believe the World shall last Eternally, because it hath held out hitherto. The Judge is not come yet, and therefore he will not come at all. All Things are in our Days as they were ever since the World began, and therefore who would think of a Change? This is the profound Logick of these Disputers, or rather this was the idle and groundless Presumption of Men of perverse Spirits, and a Child may answer all their Arguments if they carry no more Strength with them than this doth.

The Last Judgment is likewise denied by some of the *circumcised Doctors and Rabbies*, who are noted sufficiently for their absurd Whimsies and groundless Conceits; and therefore it need not be wondered at, that they exempt *some* Sorts of Persons (who they think have had hard Measure here) from the Future Tribunal. This is also derided by some *formal and careless Professors of Religion*: These are like Lot's Sons, who laugh'd when the Destruction of *Sodom* was foretold. These *unfaithful Servants* think their *Master will not come.*

But Lastly, The Judgment is most of all disregarded and vilified by Men of profligate and prophane Lives, who never keep up a Sense of their Duty, nor of the Punishment which they shall undergo for their neglecting it. Indeed these Wretches would be very glad, that there were no such Thing as a Judgment to call them to an Account: Their Lives being so bad, it would be well for them if they were never to answer for what they have done. Upon this Ground they are hugely inclined to dis-believe a Future Day of reckoning. But I hope there is no one that reads these Papers who finds any such Inclination in his Mind: or if there be any such, I should exceedingly rejoyce if they would be pleased

to

to call to mind, and seriously ponder the Arguments which I have had Occasion to produce upon this Subject. And I doubt not but upon a due weighing of them, the Doctrine of the Final Judgment will be found to be as demonstrable as any Point whatsoever in Divinity. As for this prophane and debauched Herd of People, of which there ever were, and will be the greatest Numbers in the World, let it not startle any sober Person, that their Manners and Practices are a flat Denial of a Judgment to come; that is, That they live as if there should be no such Thing. Let it be remember'd that the God of this World hath blinded their Eyes, and they have also by their own Wilfulness and Obstinacy, blotted out of their Minds the most important Notions which either Reason or Christianity suggested to them. And besides, you must consider, That it is the *Concern* of these Men to lay aside the Thoughts and Belief of a Future Judgment: Their very *Interest* leads them to disown it, for if there be a Day of Accounts, they will certainly be the most forlorn and miserable Persons imaginable.

Not attending then to the irrational Dictates of those whom the Spirit of *Atheism* or *Enthusiasm*, or *Heresie* and *Apostasie* hath corrupted, or to the Suggestions of *conceited Heads*, *formal Professors*, or *prophane Livers*, let us entirely imbrace this undoubted Maxim, That God will judge the World; which hath been the unshaken Perswasion of all sober and rational Minds. The Words before us, assure us, That the Judge is *ordained*, and the Day is *appointed*, and the whole Process shall be *in Righteousness*. Christ ascended into Heaven, but he is not to make his Residence there always: He will certainly return, and call the World to appear before him, and no Man shall be able to plead Exemption in that Day. There is no *Essoine* permitted in that Court, those that are summon'd to appear cannot evade it by any Pretence or Excuse whatsoever. And when they come there, they have no Way to put by the Trial, or to demurr to any Thing alledged against them. In Courts of Humane Judicature it is oftentimes observed, That Men by the Friends they make, and the Bribes they scatter, are able to force a Favour in the Breasts of their Judges, and so evade the Sentence which would prove fatal to them. But the Judge of all the Earth will do right, and cannot be corrupted. No Artifice or Method can be found out whereby an impartial Hearing and Decision may be avoided.

When that *peremptory Day* of Appearance comes, then there will be a conclusive and final Decision of the Cause without any Delays. The *dreadful Execution* which is to follow the final *Judgment* cannot be hinder'd and null'd by an *Appeal*, for *this* is ever supposed to be to a Superior Judge: But we cannot imagine any such Thing in the present Case, this Last and General Tribunal being the Supreme Court, and that to which all others must truckle and submit. Nor can the Execution be staved off by a *Querela Nullitatis* (as the Civilians Term it) *i. e.* when the Sentence is made void by expressing the Error and Mistake of the judicial Proceedings, and by proving that something that was necessary and requisite in them was not observed. *This* cannot be alledged against the Last Day's Proceedings, because (as I have proved) they are transacted *in Righteousness*, and nothing imaginable can be wanting in the exact and compleat Trial. The Judge is of so accurate a Knowledge, that nothing can be hid from him: He is of so vast and unlimitted a Power, that nothing can oppose and resist him: He is of such inflexible Justice and Severity, that he will not be appeased: He is of so untainted a Goodness and Integrity, that nothing can be able to corrupt him: Whence it is impossible there should be any Thing amiss in the Transactions of that Last Court of Judicature, that there should be any Mistake or Defect, and as the Consequent of these, That there should be any Writ of Error, or Reverse of Judgment. In short, which Way soever we look, we may be grounded in the firm Belief of this fundamental Doctrine which I have insisted upon. Both the infallible Voice of Scripture, and the Law written in our Minds (*i. e.* the free and unforced Dictates of Reason) may extort a Suffrage from us in this Point. Both the Fears of the worst Men, and the Hopes of the best, and the Reasonings of all, proclaim the Reality of this Truth. Wherefore we are on all Accounts obliged to assent to this important Article of the Christian Belief, especially in an Atheistical and Prophane Age.

2. Let

2. Let us often entertain this in our *Thoughts* and *Meditations*, that Christ will come to judge the World. It would be singularly Beneficial to a Holy and Vertuous Conversation, if Men would retreat from the World for a Time, and retire from the importunate Crowd of Business, and think seriously of Doomsday; if they would lay aside the Blandishments and Allurements of their Pleasures, and consider and weigh well with themselves the Coming of the Lord, if they would press and urge this upon their Thoughts that Christ's appearing will put a Period to all the gay Follies, which the vain World hath so long been in love with, and doated upon; if they would suffer the great and weighty Transactions of the Last Day to be the Employment of their most steady Meditations; if they would fix it on their Minds, that Christ Jesus will bring with him from Heaven the whole Army of Blessed and Glorified Saints, and he will summon all the damned from Hell, and cause the whole Race of Men and evil Angels to appear before him to be judged. There will a Time come (and we know not how near it is approaching) when the great Sovereign and Ruler of the World will call all his Subjects to an Account, and make them give Proofs of their former Duty and Allegiance, or inflict the Punishment due to their Disobedience and Rebellion. A Day will come, when † *the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from Heaven, with his mighty Angels, and that in flaming Fire, taking Vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, who shall be punished with everlasting Destruction from the Presence of the Lord, and from the Glory of his Power, when he shall come to be glorified in his Servants, and to be admired in all them that believe in that Day*, 2 Thess. 1. 7.

† Cum mare, cum tellus, correptaque regia cœli Ardeat, & mundi moles operosa laboret.

Let us have that Day frequently in our Thoughts, and even now *admire* what shall be done then. Let us think what a great Change and Alteration, what New Figures and Scenes of Things will then be introduced. Let us consider, That though the Thoughts and Studies, the Designs and Endeavours of Men may lie hid now, yet then they shall be openly brought upon the Stage. Let us remember, That that Day will put a stur upon all Earthly and Secular Felicity, and inspire Men with right Notions of this World, and shew them how Vain and Foolish they were in their too eager Prosecutions of it. At that Day the Incomparable Gain of Godliness shall be discovered, and it shall appear what was the truest Policy and the highest Wisdom; namely, to be mindful of the Soul's Welfare, and to preferr that before all bodily and external Advantages. For at that Day, Men must not plead their former Riches and Revenues, their Honours and Preferments, the Favour they had among their Friends, and the Terror they struck into their Enemies, or any worldly Interest whatsoever. Thus let us contemplate the weighty Issue and Event of that Last Day, let us think seriously of the Proceedings, and of the Determinations of the Judge at that Tribunal. Whatsoever I do, saith St. * *Jerome*, "Whether I eat or drink, wake or Sleep, I imagine I hear the "last Trumpet sounding this in my Ears, Arise ye Dead, and come to Judgment." Let us pray that we may arrive to the same Holy Temper and Disposition, let our Thoughts be continually employed about the great Transactions of Doomsday.

* *In St.* Matth.

And to particularize, let me commend these two weighty Things to your Meditations; namely, the *Horror*, and the *Suddenness* of the Last Judgment. If you think of the former, it will strike Fear and Amazement into you: If of the latter, you will learn thence to cast off all Security.

To begin with the First, the *dismal* and *terrible Scene* of Things at that Day, may very reasonably take up your Thoughts. If the delivery of the *Law*, which was accompanied with fearful Claps of Thunder and Flashes of Lightning, and many other strange and affrighting Circumstances, † *was so terrible, that even Moses said, I exceedingly fear and quake*: if, according to *Philo*, ‖ The Place was filled with Prodigies of all Kinds, if Mount *Sinai* became like Mount *Ætna*, casting forth Flames and Smoke; if there was ‡ the Sound of an invisible Trumpet (as he relateth) if those struck such a Terror when *the Law was delivered*, how affrighting will that Day be, when Christ the great Law-giver and Judge shall come with Fire, and with the Voice of a Trumpet, to take an Account of *Men's not keeping the Law?* How dreadful must that Day be which hath such Prodigious Attendants, which will present the amazed Sinners with the most direful Noise and Flames? If an *Earthly Judge*, who rides his Circuit, and visits various Quarters

† Heb. 12. 21.

‖ Πάντα τὸν τόπον ἐθαυμάζειν. De Decalogo.

‡ Ἀοράτου σάλπιγγος ἠχή. Ibid.

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to animadvert upon Malefactors, be very terrible to those poor Miscreants, if his Arrival in the Shire-Town makes the Guilty to tremble, when he is usher'd in with Sound of Trumpet, what Tongue can express; what Mind can conceive the Horror and Confusion which shall possess those forlorn Souls who are rouzed by the Last Trump, and are to stand at the Bar of the Last Judgment, and answer before the severe Judge of Heaven and Earth? It is certain, That all Earthly and Humane Courts of Judicature, are petty and inconsiderable in respect of that Tribunal; the most austere Bench of Judges, is an insufficient Representation of the severe Proceedings of Doomsday.

Shall I be permitted to mention the stern Judges of *Areopagus*, whom Historians recount to be the Blackest and Austerest Court that ever sat? Which some have thought was signified by their sitting on *Mars*'s *Hill*, who was a bloody God, a killing Deity, and was for Slaughter and Execution. But I crave leave to dissent from this Notion, and to declare that ἄρειος πάγος doth not referr to *Mars*'s *Hill*, but because that *Athenian* Judicature judged of Capital Offences, Murders especially, and those with the greatest Severity imaginable; therefore, the Place where they sat, was thence called *ἄρειος, *Martial*, that is, Bloody, Capital, Fatal. † That Court sat upon Life and Death: ‖ Capital Causes were first of all tried there. Some tell us, That *Orestes*, others that *Mars* was first tried for Murther there, and that from the Trial of the latter the Place took its ‡ Name. But I rather think the Denomination was from the ** *Bloody Causes* tried there. However, this is certain, That that Court of Judicature was exceeding *severe* and *rigid*. Accordingly I read, That these *Areopagites* judged always in the Night, to render that Court more dismal and affrighting. And hence I can give an Account of what *Plutarch* relates; namely, That it was one of the Laws of this grave and terrible Senate, that †† none of the Judges of it should be permitted to *write Comedies*. A very unfit Employment indeed for this Inquisition, which was addicted wholly to the *Tragical Part*. ‖‖ No Persons whatsoever were suffered to *laugh* before that Court, it being so grave and venerable an Assembly.

* i. e. φονικος. Hesych.

† Ἀθήνησιν ἄρειος πάγος κέκληται τὸ φονικόν. Hesych. in verbo Δικαστήρια.

‖ *Judicium capitis in Areopago primum actum est.* Plin. lib. 7. c. 57.

‡ Ἔστι δὲ καὶ Ἄρειος πάγος καλούμενος ὅτι πρῶτος Ἄρης ἐκεῖ θα ἐκρίθη. Pausan. in Attic.

** Ἔστιν δ' Ἄρειος τις ὄχθος, ἃ πρῶτον θεοί.
Ἕζουθ' ἐν νυκτὶ φίφοισιν, αἷμα δ' ἐκεί.
Eurip. in Electrâ.

†† Μηδένα ποιεῖν κωμῳδίας Ἀρεοπαγίτην.

‖‖ Æschin. Orat. cont. Timarch.

Lastly, I might remark, that *Areopagus* was called * the *Supreme Senate*, and the *Overseer* of all others. Now, observe how proper and suitable these Quotations are, for it was to these *Areopagites* that St. *Paul* preached *this very Text* that I am now insisting upon, *viz.* That *God had appointed a Day in which he would judge the World*, and that *in Righteousness*, with the utmost Justice and Severity, intimating that *Areopagus*, that Place near *Athens* where their Sessions-House or Judgment-Hall was, which was famed for its *great Rigour*, was nothing so Dreadful as the *Last Tribunal*. Those Senators, or any other the most terrible Inquisitors on Earth, are but a faint Resemblance and meer Shadow of the harsher and more lamentable Proceedings of the final Judgment. Nothing can fully represent the deplorable and horrid Attendants of it. *Angelo*'s Draught of *Doomsday* (as lively a Piece as 'tis said to be) is but a dull and dead Portraicture of the unutterable Horrors of that Day. The Artist may draw a Veil over his own Workmanship, in Imitation of that famous Limner, who, because he could not draw a Father's Face sad enough at the sacrificing of his only Daughter, therefore covered it. All other Horrors may in some Manner be described, but nothing can express those of the General Judgment. They must of Necessity be left to be imagined, and yet our Imaginations will fall infinitely short. The greatest and most remarkable Judgments which befal Sinners here, and Death itself with all the dreadful Summons to it are but Fore-runners of the Last Doom, and cannot impart to us a true and adequate Sense of the horrible Nature of it.

* Ἡ ἄνω βουλὴ καὶ σκοπὸς πάντων. Plut. in Solone.

And I pray consider this, That if the *Doctrine* of Judgment and of Christ's last Appearing be a moving and an affrighting Subject, what will the *Thing itself* be? If *Felix trembled*, and was struck into a cold and quaking Fit when he heard St. *Paul* preach to him of *Judgment to come*, how will the poor Man shake, think you, when he feels the Judgment both in the Sentence and Execution? If the

Hearts of good and holy Persons were struck with Fear and Amazement at the Presence of *one Angel* (as * we read,) how will the guilty Consciences of Sinners be affrighted when *the Lord Jesus shall come* with an *innumerable Host* of those glorious Spirits? If those heavenly Messengers, when they were sent on Errands of Mercy, were so dreadful, what shall they be, do you imagine, when they are dispatch'd for Revenge and Ruin, as at the last Close of the World? For (as you have heard before) *the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from Heaven with his mighty Angels in flaming Fire, taking Vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.* Can you imagine how amazing the World's Catastrophe by these Flames will be? Although you were able to grasp and comprehend in your Thoughts the Terribleness of *Sodom*'s Destruction; although you may conceive what horrible Confusions and Out-cries accompanied the last Sacking and Burning of *Jerusalem*: Or, not to go back so far, though some of you perhaps were Beholders of the grievous Conflagration of the *great City* of this Nation, and can from that hideous Spectacle frame an Idea of unspeakable Amazements and Affrightments, Distractions and Confusions; yet all these, and much more added to them, are but a short and mean Representation of those confounding Horrors which will attend the burning of the World, the Heavens passing away with a Noise, and the Elements melting with fervent Heat, the Blaze of the Last and Universal Fire, the fearful Cracks at the World's downfal; in a Word, Nature in her Last Throes and Dying Pangs. Thus † *the Day of the Lord is great and very terrible: Who can abide it? That Day is a Day of Wrath, a Day of Trouble and Distress, a Day of Wasting and Desolation.* Thus may we revolve in our Thoughts the *Terror* of that Day: and remembring that God will then judge us according to our Works, we shall be powerfully induced (according to St. *Peter*'s reasoning) to ‖ *pass the Time of our sojourning here in Fear*, in an awful and reverential Sense of that future Doom.

* Gen 21. 15. Judg. 6. 22. Luke 1. 12.

† Joel 2. 11.

‖ 1 Pet. 1. 17.

In the next Place entertain your Thoughts with the *Suddenness* of the Last Judgment, and let that make you abandon all *Security*. The inspired Apostle tells us, That * *the Day of the Lord shall come as a Thief in the Night*, i. e. of a sudden, when it is not look'd for, and thought of. It is easie to inferr from what hath been premised in this Discourse, that the World is towards its Consummation, and is passing to its Last Period. The whole Time of which may be of a very considerable Length, extending to all the Space of the *Millennary Reign*, that glorious Kingdom of the Christian Church upon Earth, which shall succeed these troublesome and sinful Days of the World: Yet notwithstanding this, the *Beginning* of that last Period may be at Hand. We know not how soon the dawning of that long Day may visit us. This may arrive of a sudden: And therefore the great Uncertainty of the Time of its Arrival should excite us to prepare for it. Some of its Harbingers are come already, and we must be daily and hourly expecting the rest: For there is good Reason to believe, that they are not far off. It is not in the Power of any the most Sagacious Creature to tell the just Time. This is purposely hid from us, that we may be ever watching for it. The serious Meditation of the *Uncertainty* of that Time should be serviceable to put us into such a Posture wherein we may not be *surprized*.

* 2 Pet. 3. 10.

Vigilancy is a necessary preparative to *Judgment*; We must throw away all our Opiates, we must abandon Sleep and Carelessness, and be in constant Expectation of our Masters appearing. † *Watch, for ye know not what Hour the Lord will come*, said he, who is the Lord and Judge himself. And with Watchfulness is ever joyn'd *Sobriety*, this being indeed not only a Species, but a natural Cause of that. St. *Paul* might fitly at the same Time reason of *Temperance* and *Judgment*, since the former prepares us for the latter by making us Watchful: As on the contrary, the Fumes of Intemperance and Debauchery will not suffer Men to watch, and to attend to their own greatest Interest. ‖ *Take heed then to yourselves lest at any Time your Hearts be overcharged with Surfeiting and Drunkenness, and so that Day come upon you unawares*, i. e. before you have reflected on your past Sins and Errors, and humbled yourselves before the Almighty, and by unfeigned Repentance turned from all your evil Ways. This is the very *Inference* which our Saviour makes from the Doctrine of the *Last Judgment*. And thus I am, before I was aware, enter'd upon the

† Mat. 24. 42.

‖ Luke 21. 34.

Third, and last Inference, which is this, live as those that shall be Judged. This is the deduction St. *Peter* drew from the Consideration of the final Dissolution of all things, * *Seeing*, saith he, *all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of Persons ought ye to be in all holy Conversation and Godliness?* And, again, immediately after, † *Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless.* The Consideration both of the Terror and Suddenness of the Great Day of Accounts is admirably serviceable to a Holy and Blameless Life, and to stir us up to the faithful Performance of our Duty of what kind soever.

* 2 Pet. 3. 11, 12.
† V. 14.

The Ministers and Guides of Souls are hence admonished to discharge their Sacred Office with all Care and Fidelity, as is clear from that Passage of the Apostle in 2 *Cor.* 5. 10, 11. where after he had reminded the *Corinthians* of the great Day of Reckoning, telling them that *they must all appear before the Judgment-seat of Christ*; he subjoyns this in the next words, *Knowing therefore the Terror of the Lord we perswade Men.* The Thoughts of the dreadful Account which was one Day to be given effectually, moved the Apostle to *Perswade* and Exhort the Flock of Christ to live Soberly, Righteously, and Godlily in this present World. The serious Reflection on Doomsday should fire our Spirits with Zeal and Love towards the Souls of Men; this should make us forward, and even impatient to win seduced Sinners to the Ways of Holiness, to gain Proselytes to the best Institution under Heaven, to settle Men in the true Notions of the Christian Belief, to work out of their Minds all Error and Delusion, and by the best and most powerful Arguments to bring them to an entire Love of God, and whatever is Good and Holy. Thus we must endeavour to *perswade Men*, and if we see we can gain upon them, and fit them for an endless Happiness, we must be content to undergo any Pains and Trouble that are consistent with our Function; we must be * *instant, in season, and out of season, Reprove, Rebuke, Exhort with all Long-suffering and Doctrine*; we must *cry aloud, and spare not*, but *lift up our Voice like a Trumpet*, and all that we may fit Men for the *last Trumpets* dreadful Sound. O that all of us who are intrusted in the Ministry might seriously consider that we ought to † *watch for Men's Souls, as they that must give an Account.* We must act the part of true *Watchmen*, we must carefully inspect the Flock committed to our charge; for if any of them perish by our wilful Default, we must answer it at the last Day. This should be a cogent Motive to us to execute our Ministerial Office with the utmost Care and Vigilancy, and heartily to bewail and regret our former Negligence and Carelessness.

* 2 Tim. 4. 2.
† Heb. 13. 17.

And this concerns *all of you* as well as *us*, you are every one of you obliged from the same Motive and Argument to discharge your several Duties with all Diligence and Faithfulness, with all Care and Watchfulness, and to study that your Lives be Examples of the strictest Virtue and Holiness. Keep a good Conscience, be satisfied about the Lawfulness of what you undertake and perform, live not by others Opinions, for they are not to answer for you, but you your selves at that Day. The Consideration of the last Judgment is a most effectual Perswasive to an upright and Pious Life, and there is nothing can more successfully deterr Men from the Practice of Vice. It is a Saying of the *Jewish Rabbies*, (taken notice of in the *Talmud*) "Think of three things, and thou shalt never Sin; namely, that there "is above thee a seeing Eye, and an hearing Ear, and that all thy Deeds are "written in a Book. As much as to say, the constant remembrance that God takes notice of all our Actions, that he records and sets them down, and will one Day call us to an Account for them; this is an excellent Preservative against all manner of Vice, and a great help to a Virtuous and Godly Life.

Here I might address my self to all Ranks and Degrees of Men, and shew them the Usefulness of this Theme in their several Employments and Stations. The Divine in his Study in the Schools, or in the Church, the Lawyer at the Bar, or on the Bench, the Physician with his Patient, the Merchant on the *Exchange*, or in his Counting-house, the Soldier in the Camp, or in his Quarters, the Tradesman in his Shop, or Ware-house, the Husbandman in his Grounds, and the Labourer at his Days-work, may every one of them distinctly feel the Influence of this Doctrine upon them in their particular Undertakings and Businesses. Whatever they design, or whatever they do, this will still be serviceable to them. I might also make use of this Argument to encounter all sorts of Sinners; with this I might rouze

rouze the Secure and Careless, break in upon the unlawful Retirements of the Lewd and Wanton, strike the full Bowls out of the Hands of the Intemperate and Debauch'd, ruffle the gay Pride of effeminate Apparel, break up the Coffers of Wealthy Extortioners and Oppressors, search into the hellish Breasts of the Envious and Malicious; in brief, ransack the Hearts and Lives of the Sinners of this Age, and shew how unsuitable they are to the Doctrine of a *General Judgment*. Is it not too plain, that even those who profess to *believe it* as an undoubted Truth, yet make their *Lives and Manners* contradict their Profession? If we are thoroughly persuaded that there shall be a future Scanning of all our Actions, why do we not relinquish our Sins, and prepare for that Final Inquisition, and provide against that terrible Day, and be ready to meet the Judge, or, in St. *James*'s Style, * *So to speak, and so to do as those that shall be Judged by the Law of Liberty*, i. e. according to the Rules of the Gospel? Why doth not the last Day influence upon every Moment of our Lives?

* James 2. 12.

Now, though all Graces and Duties are promoted by the serious Consideration of a *future Account*, yet more particularly these ensuing ones are advanced by it. 1. We are taught hence to Judge our selves. 2. Not to Judge our Brethren. 3. To be patient and contented in whatever State we are. 4. To be reconcil'd to the Incensed Majesty of Heaven, and to break off our Sins by speedy Repentance. 5. To long for, Lastly, to pray for Christ's coming.

1. We are concern'd to Judge our selves, that thereby we may find Favour at the last Tribunal. If we do as it were Anticipate the Day of Judgment by calling our selves to an Account now, we need not fear the lamentable Reversions, and After-reckonings of the Future Judgment. As we are desirous to escape the Condemnation hereafter, let us make a strict and severe search into our Lives, and freely and impartially unveil our Sins before God. The Judgment must begin now in our own Consciences; there is here, (as *Civilians* speak) an *Interlocutory Sentence*, not that which fully decides the whole Matter, but by the bye determines and defines some things appertaining to the Cause. This must be done within our own Breasts, after an exact Surveying of our Words, Thoughts, and Actions, after a Trying and Arraigning of our selves, we must proceed to Self-condemnation. See that you perform this Task with all Sincerity and Uprightness; first spend a great Portion of your Time in Examining your Lives, in rifling your Hearts and Consciences, in enquiring into your Duty, and asking what you are to do. Let every one of you, before you undertake any thing of moment, put such Questions as these to your selves, How shall I be able to answer for this at the Day of Judgment? Can I give a good Account of this at Doomsday? Will this endure the last Day's Tryal? And then likewise, after your Actions, reflect upon what you have done, examine it over again, and what you find to be Evil renounce and disown. If you thus Judge your selves, you shall not be Condemned with the World in the great Day of the Lord, but you shall be Acquitted and Absolved by him. Wherefore prepare your selves daily for that last Tribunal, by bringing your Actions to a Tryal, and by Judging your selves here.

2. Though it is our Duty and Interest to Judge and Condemn *our selves*, yet we are forbid to do so to our *Brethren*, and that upon the account of the *General Judgment* which is to be hereafter. This we learn of the Apostle in *Rom.* 14. 10. *Why dost thou Judge thy Brother?* (saith he) *or why dost thou set at nought thy Brother? for we shall all stand before the Judgment-seat of Christ.* And he adviseth us in 1 *Cor.* 4. 5. to *judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come.* In both which places we are instructed by the Holy Ghost to forbear all rash and uncharitable Censures of others, and to behave our selves Candidly towards them, and favourably to construe all their Actions, and, if there be any thing dubious, to leave it to the Great Judge, who will one Day scan all Men's Lives and Behaviour, and recompense them according to their Doings. But as for us, it becomes us to be Modest and Humble, and not to usurp upon the Office of the last Day's Judge. Many times we are not capable of understanding our Brother's Case, no more than he is of ours; therefore here our Saviour's Counsel is seasonable, *Judge not, that ye be not Judged.* Especially let us remember that we must all of us appear before the same Tribunal, and therefore let us not presumptuously and peremptorily Judge those who must be Judged with us. Let us exercise a great Charity towards our Brethren, seeing we stand in need of it from God. As we desire to find Favour

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from the Universal Judge, so let us not forget to shew it now to one another. As we desire not to be rigorously dealt with in that Day, so let us forbear dealing with our Neighbours in that manner now; especially in all doubtful Cases let us not be Peremptory and Definitive, but leave the Decision to the Great and All-seeing Judge.

3. *Patience* and *Contentment* are the Result of the foregoing Discourse of *Judgment*. † *Be patient, and stablish your Hearts*, (saith St. *James* to his dispersed and suffering Converts) *for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh.* In respect of the Time already past, and in comparison of Eternal Life to come, the Time to the last Judgment is short, and may be said to *draw nigh*. Let *Patience* then have its perfect Work; bear up Manfully under the Crosses and Troubles of this World, in expectation of what shall be hereafter, when a just Recompense shall be assigned you for the Injuries you underwent here. He urgeth the same Duty on the same Ground in the following Verse, *Grudge not one against another, brethren, lest ye be condemned; behold, the Judge standeth before the door.* As if he had said, endure Affronts and Injuries patiently, even from those that are your *Brethren*, and of the *Church*; murmur not *one against another*, much more you ought to bear Affronts and Wrongs from those that are professedly Wicked. You could expect no other Usage from them, whilst you are among them. Remember what St. *Paul* tells you, namely, that there is *Man's Judgment*, and there is *God's Judgment*, and *that it is a small thing for you to be Judged of the former*; for that must give place to the latter, and on that account you may be content to be Misrepresented, to be Reproach'd, to be Judg'd and Condemn'd by Men here.

† Jam. 5. 8.

You are not to be concern'd what the Opinions and Censures of Men are concerning you, supposing we are Sincere and Upright in our own Consciences. We must one Day be Judg'd by him that is the Searcher of Hearts; and therefore let us despise the Reproaches and Obloquies which are cast upon us now. And let us meekly undergo any Calamity that befalls us, considering that there is a Day coming which will fully recompense us for all. So in *Heb.* 10. 36, 37. you'll find that the Apostle exhorteth to *Patience*, on assurance of the future Judgment; *for yet a little while*, saith he, *and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry.* Sink not under your Burthen, of what kind soever it is, with a chearful and undaunted Spirit undergo your Cross, be it never so heavy; for *Christ's Coming* will make you amends for all your Sufferings. In the mean time murmur not against God's managing of the World. You cannot be guilty of a more heinous Crime than to Fret, and put your selves into a Ferment because you behold the vilest Sinners prosper, and the best Cause miscarry; for this is the Guise and Manner of this World, and God hath order'd that it shall be so; wherefore you Arraign God and his Providence whilst you complain and repine at this Posture of Affairs.

You are to remember what that ancient Apologist long since said, ‖ "The great Judge who hath appointed that there shall be a Day of Judgment after this Life, doth not hasten to make a Separation between the Sheep and the Goats in this World. That is the Work of the last Day, but till then he suffers them to be together in common, and to share alike; the Wheat and the Tares grow up in the same Field. The great visible difference to be made between the Righteous and the Wicked is reserv'd to the last Day. But in the mean time the true Followers of Jesus ought to refresh their Minds with that of St. *Peter*, ‡ *God knoweth how to deliver the Godly out of Temptation, and to reserve the Wicked to the Day of Judgment to be Punished.* And therefore though that Day will be above measure dreadful to the Impenitent and Ungodly, yet it must needs prove a Season of Exultation and Jubilee to those who are Righteous. He that is their Father, their Brother, their Bridegroom, their Redeemer must be their Judge. Nothing that happens at that Day can fright a Godly Man. The true Christian Soldier shall not be daunted, but, like a right Warrior, find his Spirits and Courage exalted by the sound of the last Trumpet. All doleful Noises and Clamours shall be silenc'd and drown'd by that Great and Angelick Voice; all past Sorrows and Troubles shall be forgotten when the Times of Refreshing appear. There is not any one Article of the whole Christian Religion which Administers a more solid Comfort than *this* of the Great Day of Recompences is able to do, if it be duly made use of. Despised Honesty and Probity, Afflicted Virtue, and Persecuted Righteousness may from this

‖ Qui semel æternum judicium destinavit post sæculi finem, non præcipitat discretionem (quæ est conditio Judicii) ante sæculi finem. *Tertul. Apol.*

‡ 2 Ep. ch. 2. v. 9.

this sole Topick derive the most unanswerable Arguments to inforce an undisturbed Joy and Serenity.

It may not be improper therefore to observe on this occasion that amongst the *Apocalyptick Visions and Prophecies* the *Description* of the *Day of Judgment* is inserted no less than *thrice*, and that at equal distances as it were; for the Book of the *Revelation* foretelling, and representing for the most part the Miseries and Calamities of the Church, it was necessary that *this chearing and solacing Article* of the Christian Belief should be here and there interspersed, to uphold and animate the faithful Followers of Christ. And this, by the bye, is a notable Key to open the Secrets and Mysteries of that Book; for it is plain from what hath been said, that the Apocalypse is not one entire and continued History, or Representation of Matters as they shall happen in Order of Time, (which hath been the common and receiv'd Opinion) for then the Description of the *General Judgment* would have been mention'd only among the last things in that Book, and not have been twice represented before. But this may seem to be a *Digression* here, though otherwise I could shew it to be very serviceable to remove the Mistakes which the generality of Interpreters labour under. I only mention it here to let you see how necessary a Doctrine the *Day of Judgment* is, for constantly after the *Prophecies* and *Representations* of the State of the Church this is annexed. This shuts up the *Visions* and *Predictions*, because how sad soever the Condition of the Church hath been represented to be, the Foresight and Assurance of the *last Judgment* will afford matter of Consolation and Joy to the Servants of Christ.

I might observe to you likewise that the great Article of a future Judgment is made the final upshot of *Solomon's Book* of the *Vanity of the World*, as much as to tell us that this comfortable Close of a Judgment to come should serve to qualifie the forlorn Premises concerning the *Vain* and *Vexatious* Condition of Man's Life; and wherein we are told that *all things come alike to all*. Thus you may remember he shuts up his Book, * *Fear God, and keep his Commandments, (which is the whole Duty of Man) for God shall bring every Work into Judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil.*

* Eccl. 12. 13, 14.

4. This Doctrine calls upon you to be reconcil'd unto God by hearty Repentance, and turning from your Sins, and by living holy and upright Lives; and this you must do speedily. For the Lord may come to Judgment sooner than you imagine, as is clear from the *Parable* of the *Sloathful Servant*. And another Parable represents the *Bridegroom* coming on a sudden. Wherefore it will be your concern to make ready your *Lamps*, and to have your *Lights* burning. Ever think the Apostle's Example is to be follow'd, who *herein exercised himself, to have always a Conscience void of offence towards God and towards Men*. The Conscience of every one shall be his Accuser and Witnesses at the last Day; wherefore be careful above all things to keep your Consciences Pure and Undefiled. Seeing your present Life and Actions must be examined and ransack'd by a future Judgment, take heed how you live and act; see that you walk circumspectly, not as Fools, but as Wise, redeeming the Time, and providing for Eternity. Remember that good or evil Actions are the great and only considerable difference of Men, and that which will be enquired into at the last Day; therefore look narrowly to your Lives and Actions, and be faithful in the discharge of all the Duties which God requires of you. Let this Consideration make you Bold and Couragious for the Truth, and enable you to act with great Zeal and Magnanimity. And though it be your lot to meet with great Difficulties and Sufferings in the discharge of a good Conscience, and the Performance of your indispensible Duty, yet think of that which the Pious Author suggests in *Wisdom* 5. 1. *At that day the righteous Man shall stand in great boldness before the face of such as have afflicted him.* Hold fast your Integrity whatever you lose, and shed your Blood for the *Truth* rather than suffer *this* to be trampled upon by your Default. Keep your selves from *Sin* by all means, but if any shall endeavour to force you to it, submit patiently to all sorts of Suffering rather than commit it. When it is come once to this, remember what *Tertullian* saith, † There is nothing more our Interest than to get out of the World as soon as we can; and we cannot do it more honourable than in defence of our Religion and our Consciences.

† Nihil nostrâ refert in hoc ævo nisi de eo quàm celeriter excedere. *Apol. cap.* 41.

5. Long for that glorious Day of Christ's Appearance. This you are engaged to do as you are Parts and Members of the Creation. To which purpose mark the Apostle's

Apostle's words in *Rom.* 8. 19. *The earnest expectation of the Creature waiteth for the manifestation of the Sons of God,* which will not fully be till Doomsday. The whole Frame of the World doth in a manner look for, and earnestly expect that Day. The World sustains its vast weight, in hopes of a glorious Time of Freedom from that Vanity and Curse which are now entail'd upon it. There is a desire in all Created Beings that their vain and corrupt State should be changed. *The whole Creation groaneth, and travailleth in pain together*; as the Apostle goes on in *v.* 22. Nature it self is big, and groans to be delivered of the Burthen of Sin, and the Load of Sinners; by a certain Instinct it longs for that Day of Liberty. Shall not *they* then who are the most eminent part of the *Creation*, yea, who are *new Creatures*, breathe and pant after it much more? And those words of the other great Apostle are remarkable, 2 *Pet.* 3. 12. *Looking for, and hastening unto the coming of the Day of God*, or according to the Original, † *hastening the coming*; which acquaints us that it is our Duty to *expect, look*, and *hope for* that Day, and by our longing Desires, as it were, to *hasten it*, and bring it nearer to us. Unless you would rather have this Clause to be referr'd to the foregoing Verse, where the Apostle reflecting on the Day of Judgment, cries out, *What manner of Persons ought ye to be in all holy Conversation and Godliness?* And then these Words immediately follow, *Hasting to the coming of the Lord*; as much as to say, we put back and retard that Day by our Sins, we provoke God to defer that Restauration of all things by our unholy and ungodly Conversation.

† σπεύδοντες τὴν παρουσίαν.

Sixthly, and lastly, *Pray* for the hastening of that Day, and *Pray* that God would fit and prepare you for it, that it may not overtake you unawares. ‡ *The end of all things is at hand*, saith St. *Peter*, whence he inferrs the Practice of several Christian Duties; *this* in an especial manner of *Praying*, *Be ye therefore sober and watch unto Prayer.* Keep your selves Temperate and Vigilant, that thereby you may be fit to Pray, and fit to receive what you pray for, *i.e.* that you may be ready and prepared for the coming of our Lord. What *Luther* saith of an obscure Prophecy in *Daniel*, let me here (in the conclusion of all) apply to the Day of Judgment, and the Duties which it requires of us, *Our business*, saith he, *is neither to know, nor to guess at it, but to Repent and Pray.* Having then first bewailed and abandon'd our Sins, let us earnestly implore the Divine Grace and Favour for the Remission of them; and let us look up unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our Faith, and all other saving Graces, relying wholly upon him for Life and Salvation. And having also, according to our Places and Capacities, endeavour'd to reform others, let us Pray for the Consummation of all things, saying, *Thy Kingdom come*; *come Lord Jesus, come quickly.* And finally, let us Pray unto him who is to be our *Judge*, that he would be our *Advocate*, that he would plead for us, and take our part at the last Day, that he would be pleas'd to interpose with his Merits and Satisfaction, and thereby make us acceptable to the Father; that so we may share in the Blessed Absolution of that Day, and be not only acquitted from Guilt and Punishment, but be receiv'd into those Everlasting Mansions which are prepared for pious Souls.

‡ 1 Pet. 4. 7.

ARTI-

ARTICLE VIII.

I believe in the Holy Ghost.

ROM. VIII. 9.

Now if any Man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.

HERE

Is shew'd what are the *several Gifts* and *Operations* of the Holy Ghost, both *Extraordinary* and *Ordinary*. The *Manner* of the Spirits *Teaching*. The true meaning of *Praying by the Spirit*. The large Signification of the Word *Paraclete*.

THE First Article of the Creed doth chiefly declare our Faith concerning *God the Father*, the First Person in the Glorious Trinity; the next six represent the Belief which we ought to have of *God the Son* the Second Person; and now we proceed to the Eighth Article, which is a summary Acknowledgment of our *Belief in the Holy Ghost*, the Third Person in the Trinity. I have spoken of the *Holy Ghost* before, when I Treated of the *Second Article* of the Creed, in my Discourse of the *Trinity*, where I spoke concerning his *Personality* and *Divinity*, these then most fitly and seasonably offering themselves in that place.

But now I am to discourse of him under another Notion; namely, as he is the Author of several Gifts and Endowments, as he is the giver of Grace to all the Members of the Church, as he is the Sanctifier of all the Elect Servants of God. This is one of the chiefest Doctrines of our Religion; for though God the Father sent his Son to Redeem Sinners, and though the Son came, and undertook for the Redemption and Salvation of Mankind, and by his meritorious Passion did actually expiate their Sins, yet it is by the Operation of the *Holy Ghost* that these prove effectual. Unless this Sacred Person works on our Hearts and Lives, and influences on all our Actions, unless we be changed and renewed by this Blessed Sanctifier, it is impossible our Salvation should be accomplish'd. In short, there is a twofold *Spirit*, a Good and an Evil one, *the Spirit of the World, and the Spirit which is of God*, as the Apostle distinguisheth in 1 *Cor.* 2. 12. By these all Actions good and bad are managed; God's *Holy Spirit* assisteth in all that is Good, and the Devil, or Evil Spirit influenceth in the contrary; and hence it is that in the Sacred Writings, both of the Old and New Testament, the Actions of Men are frequently ascribed to one of these Spirits.

Now, it is the former of these whose Influence and Operation we are to speak of at present, and we cannot speak of him as we should without his special Influence and Assistance, which he therefore grant for Christ's sake. Nothing is well said or done in Religion without this. As all Grace is implanted in us by him, so it is promoted, increased, and brought to perfection by the same Divine Power. Nothing that is good and holy was ever found in any Man unless it was derived from this Heavenly Source and Fountain. Hence we receive all our Spiritual Life and Power; hence we are enabled to live and act as Christians, to exert all those Graces and Duties which Christianity requires of us, to follow the Example of Christ himself; and hence likewise we may on good Grounds inferr that the Holy Jesus is formed in us in all Purity and Righteousness, and that he dwelleth in us, and we in him; whereas on the contrary, if we be not acted and influenced by the *Holy Spirit* of Grace, we have reason to conclude that we are utter Strangers to Christianity, and to the Blessed Author and Institutor of it; for so the Apostle tells

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us in plain terms, *If any Man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.*

He is call'd the *Spirit of Christ*, because he proceeds as well from the *Son* as from the *Father*; and because Christ in his humane Nature, when he lived here on Earth was filled with this Spirit, for *God gave not the Spirit by measure to him*, *John* 3. 34. And likewise, because Christ by his Death and Passion merited the sending and giving of the Holy Spirit to his Disciples and Followers; wherefore he saith, *If I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you, but if I depart I will send him unto you*, John 16. 7. For these Reasons the Holy Ghost is call'd here *the Spirit of Christ*, and the Apostle adds, that whosoever hath not this Spirit *is none of Christ's*; that is, he belongs not to him, he hath no part and interest in him; Christ is not his Prophet to teach and instruct him, he is not a Priest to him, to sacrifice and shed his Blood for him; he is not his Lord and King to Rule over him, to Protect and Defend him; he is not his Saviour to deliver him from the Wrath to come, but Satan rules in him, and hath dominion over him, and the Wrath of God abides on him.

From these words I will present you with this plain but important Remark, That no Person belongs to Christ, or hath any Interest in him who is destitute of the Holy Spirit, and his Divine Graces. And on the contrary, it is an undeniable Testimony that we appertain to Christ, and are his true Members, if his Holy Spirit dwelleth in us. *Hereby we know*, saith St.* *John*, *that He*, (i.e. Christ) *abideth in us by the Spirit which he hath given us.* This Divine Gift is bestow'd on all the faithful Servants of Jesus, whence it is that they are styled *Spiritual* by St. *Paul*; namely, because they are not only *born of the Spirit*, (as he saith in another place) but because they are *led by it*, and are blessed with all the *Fruits* of it. Now, these are either *Extraordinary*, such as were bestowed on the Christian Church at the first planting of it; or *Ordinary*; namely, those that are of perpetual use in the Church of Christ.

* 1 Ep. ch. 3. v. 24.

First, we are to take notice of the *extraordinary* and *miraculous Gifts* of the Spirit; and these were either given to the Apostles in Christ's time, before his Resurrection, as we read in *Mat.* 10. 8. that they had Power to *heal the Sick, to cleanse the Lepers, to raise the Dead, to cast out Devils.* Or after Christ's Resurrection, when he said to the Apostles, *Receive ye the Holy Ghost*, John 20. 22. which denotes a Renewing and Confirming of those miraculous Gifts of the Spirit which they were vested in before. Or just before Christ's Ascension, when he promised and assured the Apostles and other Believers that *in his Name they should cast out Devils, speak with new Tongues, take up Serpents*, and that *if they drank any deadly thing, it should not hurt them; that they should lay hands on the sick, and they should recover*, Mark 16. 17, 18. And, lastly, our Saviour actually fulfill'd all this, and much more by sending down the Holy Ghost on the Day of Pentecost in a fuller manner than ever. Now all their former Darkness and Ignorance vanished, and they were of a sudden enlightned with the Knowledge of all Divine Truths. By this extraordinary Illumination they were enabled to expound all the Predictions of the *Old Testament*, to unravel all Spiritual Mysteries, and to instruct the People by immediate Inspiration. Upon this Descent of the Holy Ghost the Apostles and other Believers had strange Revelations and Discoveries, they were indued with the Gift of Prophecy or foretelling future Events, the Gift of speaking various Languages, and of interpreting them, the Gift of Healing all Diseases with a Word, the Gift of Dispossessing Devils; and, in short, of working all sorts of Miracles.

Thus the *Holy Ghost* descended upon them at *Pentecost* in an extraordinary manner, insomuch that it may be said, (as we shall hear presently) that he was not given till then, *i. e.* he was not given in that high and excellent manner till that very time; namely, after Christ ascended into Heaven. And truly it is clear from *John* 7. 39. that the sending of the Spirit, *i. e.* the conferring these extraordinary Gifts of the Spirit, and in that large manner, depended on the *Ascension* of Christ. There the Evangelist tells us that *the Holy Ghost was not yet given*, (i. e. before Christ's Ascension he was not signally given as after it) *because Jesus was not yet Glorified.* But soon after he was *Glorified*, i. e. ten Days after he ascended into Heaven, he sent down the Holy Ghost, as he had promised. For our Saviour had commanded the Apostles to stay at *Jerusalem*, and wait for the coming of the Holy Ghost; and in

in Obedience to this Command, *they continued there with one accord in Prayer and Supplication*, expecting the Accomplishment of their Master's Promise. And lo, *as they were all with one accord in one Place, suddenly there came a sound from Heaven as of a rushing mighty Wind, and it filled all the House where they were sitting, and there appeared unto them cloven Tongues, like as of Fire, and it sat upon each of them: and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other Tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance*, Acts 2. 1. &c. Most fitly was the *Spirit* represented by the *Wind*, seeing ‡ the same Word in the most noted Languages signifies both, and seeing our Saviour himself makes that Similitude, *John* 3. 8. *The Wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou heareſt the sound thereof, but canst tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: So is every one that is born of the Spirit.* And no less significant is that other Representation of *cloven Tongues, like as of Fire*, because the Descent of the Holy Ghost was attended with the Gift of *Tongues*, which being so many and various are represented as *divided* or *cloven*.

‡ רוח, πνεῦμα, Spiritus.

And the Emblem of *Fire* is very apposite to set forth the true Nature of the *Holy Ghost*; for *Fire* carries with it *Light*, or rather is *Light*, and therefore we find * these two promiscuously taken sometimes. *Light* among all the sensible Qualities, is the chiefest and noblest; it is the subtilest of all corporeal Things, and comes nearest to a Spiritual Nature; and therefore is the fittest to represent *God*. Light is a pure unmix'd being, most eminent and conspicuous, of a searching and penetrating Nature, and besides is most chearing and reviving. On all which Accounts it sets forth the Nature of the Divine infinite Being, who is an uncircumscribed immense Light, in comparison of whom the greatest Splendor is Darkness. It is the peculiar Nature of Light to dart forth its Rays towards the Circumference: Luminous as well as Fiery Bodies labour to go off from their Centre. A proper Emblem of God, who is pleased to go as 'twere out of himself and his own Centre, to enlighten and chear the World; he scatters his Divine Rays of Love and Bounty in a wide and spacious Compass, even upon the whole Creation. Hence we read in Sacred Scripture that *God is Light*, 1 John 1. 5. and by St. *James* he is said to be *the Father of Lights*, Chap. 1. v. 17. And not only Christians, but Pagans have used this Symbol: The old Sages, especially those of *Ægypt* and *Chaldea*, were wont to set forth God by it: In so much, that at last the *Sun*, the Fountain of Light, was worshipped as a *God*, and held to be one. The Second Person in the Sacred Trinity is called *the true Light*, Joh. 1. 9. and by the ancient Church he was said to be *Light of Light*. So the other Divine Person, the *Holy Ghost*, is rightly expressed by *Light*, it being his particular Office to illuminate the Minds of the Faithful, and to dart into their Souls the Beams of Divine Truth, as we shall see most distinctly afterwards.

* אור Lux is put for אור ignis: So φῶς for πῦρ, Mat. 14. 54. Luk. 22. 56.

But to come closer to the Matter, *Fire*, properly and strictly so call'd, is a genuine Representation of the *Holy Spirit*: For both in the Old and New Testament. God is call'd *a consuming Fire*; whence his immediate Attendants and Ministers are call'd a *flaming Fire*, *Psal.* 104. 4. and their Title of † *Seraphim* is of the same import. It is no Wonder then, that the *Holy Ghost* was *thus* more peculiarly represented on the Day of *Pentecost*, and that he thought fit to illustrate and set forth his Divine Qualities by *Fire*. So the *Baptist* had foretold concerning Christ, that he should *baptize with the Holy Ghost and with Fire*, (Mat. 3. 11.) that is, with the Holy Ghost, who hath the Properties of Fire, particularly that of Cleansing and Purifying. It is the same *Hendyadis* with that in *John* 3. 4. *Except a Man be born of Water and of the Holy Ghost, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of Heaven. Water and the Holy Ghost*, i. e. the Spirit who is like Water cleansing and purging. So that the Meaning of both these Places is alike, (though it be express'd in such different, yea, contrary Terms, as *Fire* and *Water*) namely, That every true Christian, every regenerate Man, every one that shall be happy hereafter, must first be purified by the Holy Spirit here. This is the *Spirit of Burning* spoken of by the Evangelical Prophet, *Isai.* 4. 4. where 'tis said, *the Lord will wash away the Filth* of his People *by the Spirit of burning*. It is worth our observing, how *Isaiah* and *John Baptist* resemble one another in their Style: Though they speak of the same Thing yet they borrow their Similitudes from contrary Elements, Fire and Water. The former foretells, That in the Times of Christianity Believers shall be *washed with the Sprrit of Burning*: The latter declares that they shall be *baptized* (or washed) *with the Holy*

* Deut. 4. 24. Hebr. 12. 29.
† Isa. 6. 2, 6.

ly Ghost and with Fire. This Fire and Burning, this Baptizing and Washing are Expressions made use of to signify to us the *purifying* Nature and Vertue of the Holy Spirit, when it entirely takes Possession of the Hearts of good Men.

And there are *other* Qualities and Properties of the Holy Ghost represented to us by *Fire*. This not only purgeth and refineth impure Things, but it *heateth* and *warmeth* those that are Cold, and so it denoteth that *burning Zeal* which is the Fruit of the Spirit. *Fire* also *softneth* and *melteth* those Things which are hard, and herein acquaints us with the Property of the Holy Spirit, which is to mollifie and supple the obdurate Hearts of Men. Again, it is the Nature of Fire to *separate* Things, and to *consume* those which are combustible: Both which Properties seem to be referr'd to by the Baptist in that fore-named Place, where he tells them, That when Christ comes he will *baptize them with the Holy Ghost and with Fire*, † *whose Fan is in his Hand, and he will throughly purge his Floor, and gather his Wheat into the Garner: But he will burn up the Chaff with unquenchable Fire.* Fire is a Devourer, a Consumer, and this may be the Reason why 'tis called *the Tongue of Fire* in *Isai.* 5. 24. The *Flame*, the extreme Part of which in its going up puts itself forth in Fashion of a Tongue, licks up all before it, and devours whatever comes in its Way. Which by the bye gives an Account of the fitness of the Appearance of *cloven Tongues; like as of Fire.* This is but a natural Representation of the Thing, for a *Flame* ascends in a Shape something like a *Tongue.* However, we cannot but take Notice, That God hath represented many great and notable Things by *Fire.* He appeared himself to *Moses* in a burning Bush. The Law was deliver'd by God on Mount *Sinai* with Thunder and Lightning, and very terrible Eruptions of Fire. The Fiery Pillar in the Wilderness was the Representative of God himself, and of *Israel*'s safe Conduct. So here at the Feast of *Pentecost* the *Holy Ghost* appeared in the Shape of *Fire*, and sat on the Apostles Heads. Then was eminently fulfilled the Baptist's Prophecy, That *they should be baptized with the Holy Ghost and with Fire.*

† Ver. 12.

This is the Blessing which our Church Yearly commemorates on *Witsunday* or *Pentecost* (the Fiftieth Day after Christ's Resurrection) which is a Festival in remembrance of the *miraculous Descent* of the *holy Ghost* upon the Apostles. Which was necessary on this twofold Account, first, because Christ had solemnly promised it, and that more than once, *Luke* 24. 49. *John* 14. 26. *John* 15. 26. Wherefore it became needful, to testifie the Truth of what our Saviour had promised, to make good his Word, and thereby to shew his Faithfulness, and consequently to confirm all that he had said, to assure his Disciples of the Truth and Reality of his whole Doctrine. Secondly, it was necessary not only for the Apostles and those First Christians, but also for all succeeding Generations: For by those *extraordinary Gifts* and *Miracles* which accompanied the *Descent of the Holy Ghost*, the Truth of the Gospel is attested to the World's End. These *Signs which followed them that believed*, are unquestionable Testimonies of their Divine Authority, and that they were commissioned by an Almighty Power. Seeing the Gospel was to be planted and propagated in divers Countries among *Jews* and *Gentiles*, who were averse to the Belief of Christ's Doctrine, there was a Necessity that there should be these miraculous Operations to seal and confirm that Doctrine.

Nay, indeed the Truth of our whole Religion depends upon this great Article of the Descent of the Holy Ghost, for the Infallibility of those Truths which we embrace, and which constitute the Christian Religion, depends upon the Infallibility of the Apostles: And they appear not to be infallible and void of all Error till this solemn Mission of the Holy Ghost, who (as Christ had promised) was to *lead them into all Truth.*

Besides, the Truth and Certainty of the *Scriptures* of the New Testament depend upon this, for unless these Writings were dictated by an unerring Spirit to the Evangelists and Apostles, we may justly question the Authority of what they deliver: Wherefore, upon this Account we may inferr the Necessity of the Holy Ghost's descending.

But as there was this *extraordinary Spirit* in the Church at first, as there were miraculous Donations of the Holy Ghost, which were fitted only for that Time, so there are *others*, which are *ordinary*, and are to last in the Church the whole Time of its continuance. This is a Thing which we are to take Notice of, because it shews us the *Difference* of *that Oeconomy*, and *this* which we are now under.

The Gift of the Holy Spirit promised to the Apostles and Primitive Saints in their Days, is not the same with that now: For First, The Effects of the Holy Spirit at that Time were outward and visible (which was requisite, because they were in order to the propagating of the Gospel, and therefore were to be taken Notice of) but now the Holy Spirit rules in our Hearts and Minds chiefly, and so its Operations are not so visible as formerly. Secondly, the Gifts of the Spirit in those Days were rather for the Benefit of others, than of the Persons on whom they were bestowed: But now there is a personal Advantage redounds to those who are filled with the Spirit, they are really sanctified by it, their Hearts are changed, and their Lives are reformed: And being made Holy here, they cannot miss of Happiness hereafter. Thirdly, The outward and miraculous Gifts of the Spirit were bestow'd only in the First Times of Christianity, and were the Lot but of a few: But the Gifts of the Spirit which I am speaking of, are conferred on Christians all the Time of the Gospel, and they are common to every true Believer, which is the Reason why I call them *Ordinary* Gifts; though otherwise, namely, in respect of the Excellency of the Gifts themselves, they are not ordinary and common. But because they were not peculiar to the Primitive Times, as the speaking with strange Tongues, and the like; therefore I distinguish them from those *extraordinary* Endowments of the Holy Ghost. Those are ceased long since, because indeed there is no need of them now: None can pretend now to those miraculous Gifts of the Spirit which the Apostles were endued with: For we are under another and far different Dispensation, and therefore it is unreasonable and presumptuous to look for any Thing of that kind. *But this is* certain, That all faithful Christians have the Holy Ghost bestowed upon them now. At Baptism, and all their Lives long they receive the Holy Spirit, and feel the Vertue and Efficacy of it. Which must needs be so, because this is absolutely necessary in order to their Salvation. Unless they receive the Holy Spirit, and are under its continual Regency, they cannot be saved. Hence it is, That none belongs to Christ, that hath not the Spirit of Christ, and hence we may be convinced of the Truth of what the Apostle saith, *if any Man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.*

The next Thing then we are to enquire into is, *What are the great Offices of the Spirit* at this Day? Or, what are *the chief Operations* and *Effects* of the Holy Ghost in these Times of the Gospel? What are the Gifts which every true Christian may expect to receive from him? I answer, These Seven, 1. The illuminating of the Understanding. 2. The inclining of the Will and Affections. 3. The strengthning of the Memory. 4. The powerful Influencing on the Life and Actions. 5. The giving an Ability to Pray. 6. The confirming and establishing us in Grace. 7*dly* and *Lastly*, The imparting of Comfort and Solace to us. All these are the constant and standing Gifts of the Holy Spirit, and which by the Tenour of this Article of the Creed which I am now to treat of we are to know and believe.

I. It is the Office and Gift of the Holy Spirit to enlighten our Minds, That we may see the great Mysteries of Christianity, and that we may understand our Duty aright. And here I will consider, First, The *Illuminating* or *Teaching itself*: Secondly, The *Way* and *Manner* of it, whereby it becomes efficacious and successful. I begin with the First: This is that inestimable Privilege which St. *John* speaks of, **Ye have an Unction*, saith he, *from the Holy One, and ye know all Things.* And again, † *The anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any Man teach you: But, as the same anointing teacheth you of all Things, and is Truth, and is no lye; and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him.* Prophets and Priests, who were professed Teachers and Instructers, were wont to be *anointed*: So in Allusion to that, all Believers, who are *Priests*, yea a *Royal Priesthood*, are *anointed* to teach and instruct, and are taught and instructed first by the Spirit, that they may be able to discharge that Work. Or, what if this Conjecture be the true Meaning of those Places; namely, That *the Unction* whereby *we know all Things, and the anointing which teacheth us of all Things* referr to *the Oil for Light*, which was made use of under the Law? For of *this Sort of Oil*, you read in *Ex.* 25. 6. as well as of *anointing Oil.* So then the Sense of this inspired Writer may be this, you shall *know*, you shall *see* and *discern* all Spiritual

* 1 John 2. 20.
† Ver. 27.

Spiritual Things by this *Unction*: as there was an *Oil* on purpose made and used to give *Light* in the Temple. So you shall be enlightned under the Gospel, by an effectual Illumination from the Holy Ghost, you shall understand all Things in Religion more fully than ever: By the abundant Inspiration and Grace of this Divine Instructer, you shall come to the saving Knowledge of God and his Son Christ Jesus, and whatever appertains to your Eternal Welfare. And be assured of this, That none can attain to this excellent and transcendent Knowledge, without the Revelation and Manifestation of the Spirit.

For this we have a plain Text (though the other was something obscure, till I gave you some Light into it,) 1 Cor. 2. 11, 12. *The Things of God knoweth no Man, but the Spirit of God. Now we have received, not the Spirit of the World, but the Spirit which is of God; that we might know the Things that are freely given to us of God*; namely, the great Mysteries of our Salvation, which afterwards are called * *the Things of the Spirit of God*, and therefore, *cannot be received by the natural Man*, but *must be spiritually discerned.* This must needs be so, because Natural Reason is corrupted since the Fall, and therefore this Principle is not powerful enough to discern aright the Mysteries of God and of our Eternal Salvation. Whence there is need of God's illuminating Spirit to assist our weak Sight, and our dark Faculties. And this most certainly is the Privilege and Benefit that all sincere Christians shall share in, according to that Promise of our Saviour, *When the Spirit of Truth is come, he will guide you into all Truth*, John 16. 13. The Holy Spirit is a Spirit of *Truth*, and it is impossible for us to err, if we faithfully follow his Conduct. * Ver. 14.

In this last Age Men have very warmly pretended to the *Spirit*, and yet at the same Time we have seen them run into all manner of Errors and Heresies. They have pulled up the Foundations of Religion, they have thrown off all Principles, they have shaken the most settled Doctrines of Christianity, they have exploded the most received Maxims of Divinity; and in their Room they have entertained unsound and erroneous Propositions, new and upstart Opinions never heard of before in the Christian Church (which they are pleased to call *New Lights*,) fanciful and extravagant Interpretations of Scripture, dangerous Inferences from thence repugnant to the Analogy of Faith, and the whole Tenor of the Gospel; and, in brief, destructive of Godliness and good Manners. Now, to me it is evident, That these Men's Pretences to the *Spirit* are false and groundless, for *Truth* is ever a Companion of the *Spirit*: Therefore those who discard and renounce the former, have nothing to do with the latter, let them say what they please. We may try whether we have the *Spirit* by this: the Spirit leads Men into Truth, and it leads them into it by a Rule, by Scripture, by the Will of God, and not by the vain Traditions of Men, not by corrupt Customs, not by carnal Reasonings, not by the Dreams and Fancies of deluded Brains. The great unerring Canon of Truth is the Holy Bible. If we follow this, and lay aside our Prejudices, and with sincere and upright Hearts search after Truth, we shall certainly find it: For the Spirit of Christ is a Spirit of Light and Understanding, and opens the Eyes of Men to behold what is true, and to distinguish it from Falshood. It is, as the Apostle acquaints us, *the Spirit of Wisdom and Revelation, in the Knowledge of Christ*, i. e. the Knowledge of all necessary and saving Truths of Christianity. We are concerned then to look well to our Principles, to see that we be grounded in the main Doctrines of the Gospel, That *we hold fast the Form of sound Words*, and be not misled into Error and Delusion: For if we willfully be, our claim to the *Spirit* is in vain, for the Holy Spirit is a Spirit of *Truth*: For his Office is to enlighten, to teach, to instruct us.

Next, I am to shew what is the *Manner of the Spirit's teaching.* For the right Understanding of this, we must know that there is an immediate Illumination or Inspiration of the Spirit whereby God sometimes in a more especial Manner enlightens some Men's Minds, and reveals those Secrets to them which he hides from others. This rare and unusual Way of the Spirits illuminating and teaching, we are not able to comprehend and make any Judgment of: But I am now to speak of that which all good Christians, not only understand but daily Experience, and that is such as this:

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First, It is a teaching by *Moral Perswasions* and *Arguments of Reason*. And this without doubt, is a common and frequent Way which the Holy Instructer makes use of in his conveying of Divine Knowledge to our Minds. Religion is a Matter of free Choice and Discourse: To which Purpose *Hierocles* most truly, *It is the same Thing, saith he, to obey Reason and God. All sober Persons have agreed in this, that the Divine Instructer teaches us in the Use of our rational Faculties. For notwithstanding these are weak and corrupted (as is freely granted) yet he strengthens and rectifies them, and enables us by Vertue of them to Reason aright, to deduce Consequences in a due Manner, and to judge impartially. *It is the fondest Thing in the World*, saith † one, *to imagine that the Holy Ghost doth any Ways teach us but in and by our own Reasons and Understandings*. Which I alledge to shew the Sense of that Person, who is accused by some of another extreme: And therefore it is a very considerable Testimony upon that Account. I doubt not but the improved Reasons of such wise and learned Heathens, as *Sergius Paulus* the President of *Cyprus*, *Dionysius* the *Areopagite*, *Athenagoras* and *Justin* the Philosophers, *Tertullian* the Civilian, and other eminent Converts to Christianity, promoted their embracing of it. I cannot believe (as some do) that the meer Gifts of Nature and Education which they were endued with, could indispose them for entertaining the best and highest Philosophy, which is the *Christian*. The right use of their exalted Reasons was so far from hindring, that it hugely furthered their Compliance with the Principles of the Gospel. And that others of them rejected Christianity, and were implacably set against it, proceeded not from the use of their Reason, but from an ill managing of it, and from their depending *wholly* upon this, which *of itself* is not able to conduct them to the Mysteries of the Gospel. Besides, their Wills byass'd their Understandings, and their perverse Affections debauched their Reasons, and thence it came to pass that they opposed Christianity: Which without doubt they would not have done if they had improved and manag'd their Reason aright. For this is not to be questioned, that for the most Part the Spirit works on us as *Men* and *rational Creatures*, and indued with intellectual Powers.

* Λόγῳ ὄρθῳ πειθόμενα καὶ θεῷ, ταυτόν ἐστι. In Pythag. Carm.

† Dr. *Owen*. Σύνεσις Πνευματικὴ. Chap. 1. p. 10.

Secondly, The Spirit teacheth by the outward *Preaching* of the Word. Faith, which is the Operation of the Holy Ghost, cometh by *Hearing*, and Hearing (as the Apostle adds) *by the Word of God*, by the Holy Oracles of the Scriptures expounded and applied to us. St. *Paul* therefore calls his Preaching, *the Ministration of the Spirit*, 2 Cor. 3. 8. This is that which the wise God hath appointed for the Information of our Understandings, and the convincing our Consciences: This is that which is ordained to be the great Instrument of Conversion, and the usual Chanel whereby Divine Knowledge is conveyed to Men's Minds. But because I shall have Occasion to speak more largely under another Proposition of the Usefulness and Necessity of this in the Divine teaching of the Spirit, I dismiss it at present.

Thirdly, The Spirit teacheth by *outward* and *visible Representations*, by Signs and Symbols, objects of Sense, and Bodily Perception. As it teacheth by a Voice when the Word is read or preached, so by outward Signs when the Sacraments are administred. Thus in a Special Manner the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, by the gracious Efficacy of the Holy Spirit, enlightens and instructs us, marvellously affects our Minds, and builds us up in our most Holy Faith. Those visible Elements and the Actions appertaining to them move and affect the Senses, and these the Understanding, and the Understanding being moved and wrought upon by the Spirit's Aid, draws Arguments from these Signs and Seals of God's Mercy and Love to Mankind, and of Christ's Design to save Sinners. Here it is that we are under the Tuition of that Heavenly Doctor, whilst we have represented to us, not only plain and visible Tokens of the Love of Jesus towards us, but also powerful Memento's of the Demerit of our Sins, and of the Wrath of the Almighty due to us on that Account, and consequently of the infinite Obligations we lie under to live Holy and blameless Lives, because we are delivered from that Wrath and Vengeance by our Blessed Redeemer, who hath given us his Body and Blood in the Eucharist to be an Assurance of it.

Fourthly, By all the Emergencies of *Providence* in the World, by the Examples of Mercy and Judgment, and all the remarkable Executions of God's Decrees in the actual Administration of Things, by these also doth the Sacred and Divine Instructer

structer enlighten the World. We know God's Will and Pleasure by his Framing and Constituting the Nature of Beings in the World. God speaks by his Works, as well as his Word; these discover his Intention, these are fair Intimations of his Will. Our Observation of these is one Rule of our Sentiments and Actions. There is not any thing that God doth in the World, there is not an Accident or Occurrence that happens which is not Matter of Instruction to us; because, like *Thomas*, we will not believe unless we feel and see, God is pleas'd to give us most palpable and visible Demonstrations of his Wisdom, Power, Justice, Veracity, and Goodness in his Dispensations in the World. Thus the Spirit teacheth us by our Senses to acknowledge all these excellent Attributes of God, and to learn our Duty from the various Transactions of his Providence towards the Sons of Men.

Fifthly, This I take to be another way of the Spirits Teaching, (and which makes it to transcend all other Instructions) that he makes choice of the *best Topicks*, and presents the *strongest* and *most prevalent Motives* to us. This is true whether we speak of those which meer Reason, or those which the Word of God furnisheth us with. Weak and Trifling Arguments are enough to prejudice the best Cause, and render it suspicious. In *this* therefore is to be seen the Excellency of the Perswasions propounded by our Heavenly Teacher, that they are firm and solid, and such as are most Rational and Convincing.

Sixthly, The Spirit removes from the Mind, or suffers not at all to be offer'd to it such *Prejudices* as may any ways hinder his Teachings, and the closing of the Understanding with them. Ill Prepossessions in any Art or Science are very harmful, and they make the right Learning of them to be very difficult. Whence *Timotheus* the famous *Milesian* Musician used to ask a double Salary from those who had had another Master before. So is it in Religion, when false Notions and corrupt Perswasions are receiv'd into the Soul, they render the Teaching very hard and laborious, for Men are more easily *taught* their Duty, than *untaught* the contrary. Wherefore it is the Work of the Holy Spirit either to keep the Mind free from those Evil Impressions, or else powerfully to remove them, and effectually to dispossess the Soul of them, so that it shall be as capable of receiving Divine Truth into it as it was at first. Herein this Heavenly Teacher hath the Preeminence and Advantage of all others, and hence it comes to pass that his Instructions are so successful.

Moreover, the Spirit's matchless Teaching is by *Inculcating* and *Fastening* those Arguments on the Mind which are propounded to it. For you must know that unless there be a steady Attention to the notices of things, they are not likely to do any great Good upon us. * A Learner must not be of a desultory Humour, but the things which are offer'd to him must dwell with him. Unless the Reasons and Perswasions be tied upon him by repeated Acts, they will soon fly off again, and prevail very little on his Mind. Therefore the Holy Spirit effectually teacheth all good Men by assaulting their Understandings with continual Batteries of Reasoning and Conviction. He disposes their Minds to think and consider a long time of such a Doctrine, such a Reproof, such an Exhortation; he urges the thing upon them, and will not suffer them to banish it from their Thoughts; so that at length by this means it comes to be firmly impress'd on their Souls, and riveted into their Hearts and Consciences. Hereby the Instructions of the Divine Teacher become successful.

* Nemo qui frequenter circumvagatur, doctus evadit. *Hillel. Cap. Patr. c. 2.*

Further, by particular *Application* of things to our *several* and *distinct Cases* the Spirit proves the best Teacher. Men of the greatest Elocution, and Skill to perswade, must needs very often fail because they are unacquainted with the particular Conditions of the Persons they speak to; from whence it is that they too often talk at a venture, and hit not the Case of their Hearers. They are forced sometimes to deal in loose Generals, which fly over their Heads and touch them not. But the Omniscient Instructer, who is no stranger to our *secret Conditions*, but is better acquainted with the inmost Retirements and Recesses of our Hearts than our selves, he cannot but most *fitly apply* his Convictions to us, and Order and Methodize them according to the particular Temper and Complexion of our Souls. Hence it is that he hath met with so many debauched and dissolute Livers, and brought them to a sight of their Errors, and a Remorse for them. The Sword of the Spirit hath been so happily directed by that Almighty Influence and Operation, that (to speak

speak in the Apostle's most expressive Language) it *hath pierced to the dividing asunder of Soul and Spirit, and of the Joynts and Marrow, and so hath become a Discerner of the Thoughts and Intents of the Heart.* It hath strangely rifled the Sinner's Conscience, and ransack'd all the Privacies of his Soul, and disturb'd his Security, and powerfully Captivated him into the Embraces of the Truth. This is done by a particular and personal applying and urging the Perswasions home.

Lastly, (and which is the chief of all) the Holy Spirit teacheth by *Purifying the Heart*. For it is certain that depraved Affections darken the Mind, and hinder the Reception of Truth. Wherefore young Men were not fit Auditors of Ethicks in the Judgment of the great Master of the *Peripateticks*. Youth, *said he*, is Heady, and carried away with Passion, and consequently is not capable of receiving those grave Dictates of Morality. Upon the same ground I may conclude that the generality of Men are uncapable of the Christians Rules and Laws, for they are misled by one vile Affection or other; they are govern'd by their Lusts and vain Desires, and so become Indocible, unless it be in respect of what is Erroneous and Vicious. Like sullied Glasses or Mirrors they cannot well receive the Images of things set before them; their Souls being stained with the Love of the World, and defiled by those corrupt Appetites which they indulge themselves in, it is impossible they should retain the Impressions of what is Pure and Holy. Wherefore when the Sacred Spirit undertakes to teach us, he doth it by Composing and Allaying the Mutinies of Lust, by subduing all our unruly Passions, and by giving check to all those corrupt Inclinations which arise from the Objects of Sense, and the Temptations of the Fleshly Part. When this powerful Teacher hath effected this, then whatever Truth he instills into the Mind, it is presently receiv'd and embraced; the Eye of the Soul is open'd to see the Divine Light, and by it the true Nature of Divine Objects. Hereby it is taught to discern Truth from Falshood, yea, and to discover the Vanity and Emptiness of those Sophistical Arguments which it cannot answer, and the Deceitfulness of those Reasons which it hath not Learning enough to Confute.

Briefly, the Spirit in the use of the abovesaid Means teaches by a certain kind of *Evidence, peculiar* and *proper to it self*, which is therefore styled *the Demonstration of the Spirit and of Power*, (if *that* will be admitted to be the meaning of the Apostle St. *Paul's* words.) And as St. *Paul's* Preaching, so it seems St. *Stephen's* was of this Quality, for his Auditors *were not able to resist the Wisdom and the Spirit by which he spake*, Acts 6. 10. where the Spirit teaches and convinces effectually, there the Soul hath no power to resist and gainsay, because he strikes in with a forcible Evidence and Demonstration. In a word, he is the only true παιδαγωγὸς, (as *Clemens Alexandrinus* calls him) the most Compleat and Accomplished *Teacher*, because he gives his Scholars the best and soundest Instructions, and withal gives them Grace to follow and perform them. And this is all I have to offer concerning the ordinary Way and Method of the Spirit's Teaching. I call it *Ordinary* in respect of the Godly, who have daily experience of it; but it is unusual and extraordinary in respect of others, who are not acquainted with it. From the whole I have in some measure given an account of what I undertook; namely, to shew the *manner* of the Spirit's Teaching.

Under this First General Head it will be proper to enquire into the *Latitude* of this Teaching, and shew what is the meaning of what Christ saith, that *the Spirit shall guide us into all Truth*, John 16. 13. *and shall teach us all things*, John 14. 26. Likewise, I will freely deliver my Thoughts concerning *Enthusiasm*, which is founded by some on the Spirit's Teaching. *First*, Let us see how the Promise of the Spirit's *Guiding* the *Disciples into all Truth*, is to be understood. It seems, our Lord when he was on Earth, found his Disciples uncapable of some Doctrines; they were not fitted for the Reception of some Truths, which therefore he forbore to reveal to them, and *these* he tells them shall be communicated and discovered to them *afterwards* by the Holy Spirit. [*I have yet many things to say unto you*, (saith our Saviour) *John* 16. 12, 13. *but you cannot bear them now; howbeit, when the Spirit of Truth is come, he will guide you into all Truth.* Which is as much as if our Saviour had said, I have spoken to you concerning my *Rising again*, I have said many things relating to my *Spiritual Kingdom*, concerning the *Calling of the Gentiles*, &c. These and many other things which I have deliver'd, shall be clearly evidenced

to

to you, and the Holy Ghost shall throughly convince you of them, and you shall no longer doubt of their Truth and Certainty.

But there is a *larger* Sense of these words, and those other, *the Spirit shall teach you all things*, for this is to be interpreted of *all things* that are *necessary* to be known by us, as we are Christians, in order to our Salvation. None can be so absurd as to understand Christ in an absolute Sense when he saith that the Spirit shall teach us *all things*, for then the Spirit should make us *Omniscient*. Or, if this be not to be understood with some Restriction, it may hence be proved that the Spirit shall teach us Geometry, and all sorts of Mathematicks, that we shall be skill'd in Law and Physick, and that we shall be taught the Art of Navigation. Unless we will admit of these absurd Consequences, we must interpret Christ's words in a qualified meaning. Besides, none can be so fond as to imagine that the Holy Spirit will satisfie our *vain Curiosities*, and that we shall feel its Operation in conveying into our Minds the Notions of those things which do not concern us, and the Speculation whereof will prove Fruitless and Unprofitable. All Truths that may Administer to Godliness, and a virtuous Behaviour in the several States of Life we are conversant in, these are to be look'd upon as the main Principles of True and Heavenly Wisdom, and in *these* we shall not fail to be enlightned, if we do not wilfully shut our Eyes, and oppose the Illuminations of our Heavenly Guide. Of these the wise Man's words are to be understood, *Prov.* 28. 5. *They that seek the Lord understand all things*; and those words of the Apostle, 1 *Cor.* 2. 15. *The Spiritual Man judgeth all things.* And that of St. *John*, 1 Ep. Chap. 2. v. 20. *Ye know all things*, i. e. (as those Texts are to be understood) all the necessary Truths belonging to the Kingdom of Heaven, all things that are the Matter of indispensible Duty.

If it be *objected* that the Apostles were ignorant of some of these things, even after they receiv'd the Spirit, (for 'tis evident that they knew not that the *Gentiles* were to be Preach'd to, and taken into the Christian Church, otherwise *Peter* had not need to have been Admonish'd of it from Heaven by a Vision) I *answer*, It is not promised that they shall know all things *at once*, and that the Spirit shall teach them every thing *together*; but, as there should be occasion, in the Administring of their Office these things should be reveal'd to them. Then was the due time for them to have this communicated to them, then when they were to go forth and Preach.

Thus we see how our Saviour's Words are to be understood. They are not to be taken in the Sense of some high-flown Religionists, who grosly mistake the Teaching of the Spirit, and confidently assert that the Holy Ghost now under the Evangelical Dispensation enlightens Men in an immediate manner wholly. There is indeed an immediate darting in of Divine Light into the Understanding, (as hath been said) but this is not common and usual, this is not a thing which holy Persons constantly and generally experience. However, it is certain that the Spirit never teacheth any who neglect and abuse the Means which are Ordained for the conveiance of Knowledge.

But doth not the Prophet *Jeremy* foretel of the Times of the Gospel that [*they shall no more teach every Man his Neighbour, and every Man his Brother, saying, Know the Lord; for they shall all know me from the least of them to the greatest of them*, saith the Lord?] *Jer.* 31. 34. And *Isaiah* had said the same before, [*All thy Children shall be taught of the Lord,*] Isa. 54. 13. which our Saviour also alledgeth in *John* 6. 45. Some *Enthusiasts* snatch at such Passages as these, and look upon them as their General Patent and License to lay aside all Ordinances, and to give themselves wholly up to the Teaching of the Spirit. But if these bold Men would seriously consider and weigh these Prophecies, they would find that they do not intend the Abolishing of the Ministerial Dispensation and Appointment, or the using of other Means for the acquiring of Divine Knowledge. It is true * St. *Austin* understands those Prophetick Passages of the State of the other World; then, (*saith he*) Outward Ordinances shall cease, and there shall be no need of Men's Teaching one another. But this good Father is singular as to this Interpretation of the words, and the generality of Expositors with better reason understand them concerning the Times of the Gospel, and then the meaning is this, *They shall no more teach every Man his Neighbour*, i. e. they shall not only teach a *Neighbour Jew* the Commandments and Will of God, but *all* shall be taught to

* Lib. de spir. & litera.

to know them, the Gospel shall be Preach'd even to the *Gentiles*, and those who were not the People of God shall be instructed in his Laws, and become his People.

Or, we may take this easie and plain Account of the words, namely, that they are to be understood in a *Comparative* Sense, as is common in Poetical Writers, (and such we may reckon *Isaiah* and *Jeremiah* to be, though in Prose) and they import no more than this, that there shall be a *far greater* and *clearer Knowledge* upon the Discovery of the Gospel than ever there was before. This is the marvellous Benefit of the coming of Christ, and of the Effusion of the Spirit, that the Veil is now drawn aside, the Shadows are fled, the Imperfections and Weaknesses of Types are vanished. Whereas the *Jews* were inveloped in Darkness, and enslaved to their beggarly Elements, the Secrets of the Kingdom of God are laid open and manifested to the *Christian World*, and they *evidently see* how they may and ought to rescue themselves from the former Blindness and Slavery. Those of old saw Christ as *Moses* on the top of *Pisgah* did the Land of *Canaan*, who view'd it at a great distance, but never came at it. But the *Holy Instructer* whom I speak of leads us on *further*, and gives us a *full view*, and *possession* likewise, of what *they* could but guess at. Now they *need not teach every Man his Neighbour* in that manner which they did before; the things of Religion are clearer and plainer than they were, all the Types and Mysteries of the *Old Testament* are unlock'd, and the Mind of God is evidently discover'd, and our Way to Salvation and Happiness is intelligible and easie.

That this is the true Interpretation, and that we cannot argue from the foregoing words that all External Ministrations shall cease, and be supplied by the Spirit alone, is evident from this Consideration, that *the Spirits of the Prophets*, (as St. * *Paul* informs us) *are subject to the Prophets*; one Prophet doth not contradict and clash with another, and what may seem Obscure or Incongruous in one ought to be made out by another; so that the right of Instructing and Teaching is still kept up. *This* Prophecy then of *Jeremiah* must be interpreted according to *the* Analogy of Faith, and the Sense of *other* Passages of the Holy Book of God, and particularly those of the very same Prophet in *Jer.* 3. 15.—23. 4. where *Pastors and Shepherds who shall feed the People with Knowledge and Understanding* are promis'd under the Gospel; wherefore the foresaid Prophecies do not exclude the Ministry of the Word.

*1 Cor. 14. 32.

But especially those Prophetick Sayings must be meant according to what is delivered in the Writings of the *New Testament* by our Saviour and his Apostles, and particularly according to that Commission given to the Disciples, that they should *go and teach all Nations, and Preach the Gospel to every Creature*; which runs countre to *that foresaid Prediction*, as *some Men* interpret it. In brief, if that Prophecy doth foretel the utter Cessation of the outward Exercises of Religious Worship, I demand how it can be reconcil'd with what that infallible Writer delivers in his 4th Chapter to the *Ephesians*, *v.* 11. 12, 13. [*When he*, (i. e. Christ) *ascended up on high, he led Captivity Captive, and gave Gifts unto Men, some Apostles, and some Prophets, some Evangelists, and some Pastors and Teachers, for the perfecting of the Saints, for the Work of the Ministry, for the edifying of the Body of Christ.*] To what purpose was the Glorious Ascension and Exaltation of our Redeemer, and afterwards to what End was the wonderful Descent of the Holy Ghost with the Effusion of all Gifts and Endowments, and the Donation of all sorts of Offices for the Edification of the Church, to what design were *these*, and wherefore are the *Extraordinary* and *Miraculous Gifts of the Spirit* now ceased, if the *ordinary Means* and Ministry were to be abolished with them? And do we not learn from this remarkable Passage of the Apostle, that *Pastors* and *Teachers* are as necessary now, as *Apostles*, *Prophets* and *Evangelists* were at first in the Church? And doth not this Inspired Writer acquaint us that they are requisite to the Perfecting of the Saints, to the Work of the Ministry, and to the Edifying of the Body of Christ? How then can they be laid aside?

From what hath been said we may be furnish'd with an Answer to that place of St. *John*, Ep. 1. Chap. 2. v. 27. [*Ye have no need that any Man teach you, for the anointing which ye have receiv'd abideth in you, and teacheth you of all things.*] That is, it teacheth in the use of those Means which God hath ordained for the promoting and improving of Knowledge. Wherefore the Ministry and Teaching of Men are

are not excluded by this, for, (as we heard before) these are a settled Office in the Church of Christ; whence it follows that those who are taught by the Ministry of the Word are taught by God, and that those who are taught in the use of those Means which the Holy Ghost in Scripture directs them to, are taught by the Spirit.

In vain then do some Men talk of the *Age of the Spirit*, and *the Reign of the Holy Ghost*, wherein the Word and Sacraments, and all outward Administrations shall be void. In vain do they pretend the Teaching of the Spirit, when in the mean time they vilifie that very Way and Appointment which the Holy Ghost hath approv'd in the Church. And thus much hath been said in pursuance of the first great Office of the Holy Ghost under the Gospel; that is, to *Teach* and *Instruct*. He shines into the Soul with the bright Beams of Knowledge, and sufficiently illuminates the Understanding. And I have insisted the *longer* upon it, because it was necessary to Correct the Mistakes and Errors which some, and those well-meaning Persons, have entertain'd about the *Spirit's Teaching*. I shall be more brief in the following Heads.

II. Another Work of the Spirit is to influence upon the *Will* and *Affections*, and to give them a new Turn. Having made his way by clearing the *Intellectual* Faculty, (which I have already discours'd of) he easily prevails with *these* to embrace the Truth and Good which are known to be such. The *Will*, that refractary and stubborn Faculty, which is the spring of all the Disorders of our Lives, is by this Divine Power brought into Subjection, and made to comply with the Will of Heaven. Nor are the *Affections* less powerfully wrought upon by the same Divine Efficacy. First, the Holy Ghost stirs up in us *Desires* of Knowledge and Goodness, ardent Longings and Breathings after Communion with God, and the Fruition of his Presence and Grace. The same Heavenly Author excites our *Love* to God, and to all that is truly worthy of that noble Passion; and at the same time he stirs up our *Hatred* against every thing that is contrary to the pure Nature of God, and brings Dishonour to his Name in the World. This Divine Spirit enlargeth our Hearts with *Joy* and *Gladness* whilst we are Serving our Maker, and Obeying his Commands; but he filleth our Souls with unspeakable *Grief* and *Sorrow* whenever we transgress the Divine Laws, and act in opposition to those just and holy Rules. So likewise he raiseth in us a *Fear* of Offending the Divine Majesty, and doing any thing that is displeasing to him; but it renders us *Fearless* and *Undaunted* in the Discharge of our Duty, and in suffering for Righteousness sake. This blessed Spirit kindles in us an holy *Anger* and *Indignation* against Sin, especially if it be of a heinous nature; and yet at the same time it inspireth us with an *even* and *calm temper*, whereby we are enabled to live peaceably with all Men, unless they be of an implacable Disposition. This is the *Spirit* which all good Christians have; thus their *Affections* are wrought upon by the Influence of the Holy Ghost. Thus he irresistibly insinuates himself into our Souls, thus he moves and acts upon our Hearts, and effecteth that in us by his Secret, but Almighty Power, which we could never attain to by our own natural Strength, or by the Influence of any Created Power whatsoever. This is the main and principal Work of the Spirit.

III. Another Office of the Holy Spirit, as our Saviour acquaints us, is to *strengthen our Memories*. *He shall bring all things to your remembrance*, saith he to his Disciples, *John* 14. 26. as if he had said, when I am gone hence, you will be apt to *forget me*: The Rules and Dictates I gave you may soon slip out of your Minds, and you will be ready to lodge other things there instead of them: I will therefore consult your Weakness and Frailty, and send my Spirit to *relieve your Memories*, and *recal to your Minds* those wholsome Lessons and Instructions I entertain'd you with. *Herein* our Divine and Heavenly Master hath the Advantage of all others, that he not only teacheth us things which are worthy to be treasured up in our Memories, but he hath also appointed a perpetual *Remembrancer* to bring them forth. All the admired Contrivances and Arts of Remembring deserve nothing but Oblivion in respect of this Evangelical and Christian Art.

By Virtue of this it was that the History of the Gospel was first Compiled, and that those good Men were able to retrieve and call back so many Sayings and Deeds of our Saviour, and the whole Narrative of his Life and Death, for the things

were done a considerable Time before they were written: St. *Luke's* Gospel being not compiled till about Fifty Years after Christ's Birth, and St. *Mark's* not till about Sixty, and St. *John's* not till Ninety-nine Years after that famous *Æra*.

Again, hereby Holy Men are ascertained of, and confirmed in the Faithfulness of God and the Truth of his Word. To this Purpose we have Two eminent Instances, the one is in *John* 12. 16. [*These Things understood not his Disciples at the first, but when Jesus was glorified* (i. e. after his Ascension, and sending of the Holy Ghost) *then remembred they that these Things were written of him,*] then they were fully perswaded of the Truth of what he had said to them. The other is of St. *Peter*, in *Acts* 11. 15, 16. [*As I began to speak* (saith he) *the Holy Ghost fell on them: then remembred I the Word of the Lord, how that he said, John indeed baptized with Water, but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost.*] Thus this *Remembrancer* seasonably put the Apostles and Disciples in mind of what Jesus had said, and how it was fulfilled. And this Office he still performs to all the Faithful, and thereby begets in them an assurance of God's Veracity and the Truth of the Divine Predictions and Promises. This is the Effect of the Holy Ghost's *bringing Things to our remembrance.*

Moreover, it is by Vertue of this excellent Office that all the Saints and Servants of God are enabled, when they are in their greatest Troubles and Miseries, and stand in need of the greatest Assistances and Comforts, to *call to Mind* the joyful Experience they formerly have had of the Divine Goodness, to recollect the Mercies of God promised to relenting Souls, to bear on their Minds such important *Principles*, and to apply to themselves in their present Condition such comfortable *Conclusions*, as may administer to them Grounds of an unexpressible Joy and Exultation.

There are I confess, *strange and extraordinary Workings* of the Spirit of Grace upon the Souls of Men, but to speak of his Methods so far as our Apprehensions will guide us, I conceive, *This Remembrance* is wrought in us, 1. By that illuminating Power of the Spirit before-mentioned. A clear Apprehension cannot but conduce to a faithful Memory. Wherefore, when the Mind is fully enlightned by the Spirit, it is the more capable of remembring. 2*dly*, By a strong Impression and inculcating of Things, (which I have also spoken of already) whereby the *Memory* cannot but be very much helped. 3. By the Spirit's convincing us of the absolute Necessity and infinite Concernment of the Matters it propounds. What we think is of greatest Importance to us we more readily lodge in our Memories. 4. By the Spirit's taking off the load of Worldly Cares and unnecessary Business from us, for such an Incumbrance is a very great Impediment to our Remembrance. 5. By charging us with other Cares; namely, of the Things of Heaven and our Eternal Welfare: And this is certain, That what we care for and are sollicitous about, we shall remember. Lastly, by the whole Genius and Composure of the Christian Religion, which makes its Votaries serious and retired, and unwilling to engage in the Distractions of the World, and desirous to be sequestred from Noise and Tumult. By which, and other excellent Qualities it is hugely serviceable to this Purpose; namely, to make us faithfully recollect, and firmly retain the main and most useful Doctrines which Christ hath taught us.

IV. The next Office of the Holy Spirit is to guide us in our *Actions*, and to make *them* successful. It is not enough that our Understandings are enlightned, and our Wills and Affections rightly disposed, and our Memories duly strengthned, but it is further needful that we be assisted in the outward and actual exerting of our Graces, and in the Performance of the several Duties required of us. This according to the Style of Scripture is * *to be led by the Spirit*, i. e. to have our whole Lives and all our Actions directed by the Spirit of God. This Conduct and Guidance are necessary in whatever we undertake or do in Religion. Hereby the preaching of the Gospel and the Administration of the Sacraments, and all other Means of Divine Appointment prove effectual. Hereby our Faith and all our other Christian Edowments and Vertues become successful and prosperous. It is not only needful that the Spirit should open our Eyes, and move and affect our Hearts, but it is absolutely necessary that he take us by the Hand, and lead us; That he actually help and assist us in the Practice of what is enjoyned us. And this he graciously doth, and all pious Souls experience the real Truth of it: They are endued

* Rom. 8. 14. Gal. 5. 18.

endued with Ability and Strength to perform the whole task of Christianity, and that with much Ease and Delight, with great Alacrity and Zeal: They are empowered to undertake the nobleft and worthieft Actions, and to finish them for the most excellent Ends.

This must needs be so, because the Spirit of Christ is a Spirit of *Holiness*, and thence he is emphatically called *the Holy Spirit*. By this we are to examine our own or other Men's Claims to the *Spirit*. If we be Enemies to Holiness and Purity, if we foster Vice and Immorality in our Hearts or Lives, our Claims are groundless and presumptuous. For the Spirit is the Source of all Purity and Sanctity, and expells the contrary where-ever it comes. Hence perhaps it was, That anciently upon the Day that was kept in remembrance of the Holy Ghost's Descent they came to the Publick Devotions in *white Garments*, (whence it hath the Name of *Whitsunday*) especially the newly converted and baptized (who were many at that solemn Time) were clothed in *White*, intimating thereby the great Innocence and Purity which that sacred Festival, in commemoration of the *Holy Ghost*, requireth of us. *Through this Spirit we are not only born again*, John 3. 5. *and renewed*, Tit. 3. 5. so that our Wills are made conformable to the Divine Pleasure, and we feel in us the Principles of a new Life, (which were the Matters we insisted on before) but by this Spirit we are enabled to *mortifie the Deeds of the Body*, Rom. 8. 13. By Strength and Vigour derived from him we are able to order our Conversations aright, and to perform all the Offices of our Religion with Sincerity and Uprightness. All this is called by the Apostle *walking after the Spirit*, Rom. 8. 1, 4. And *walking in the Spirit*, Gal. 5. 16, 25. *i. e.* walking Holily. For the Spirit is the Sanctifier, he leads Men into the Ways of Holiness and Righteousness. He moves us to nothing but what is good, he excites us only to shun the Ways of Sin, and to do our Duty. Accordingly we may observe from *Ezek.* 36. 27. That when God *puts his Spirit within us, he causeth us to walk in his Statutes, and keep his Judgments and do them.*

Lastly, Let us consult the Apostle in Gal. 5. 22, 23. where he reckons up the *particular Fruits of the Spirit*, (no less than Nine, if they may be thought to be *distinct* Effects and Products of that Divine Being. The First is *Love*, love to all Mankind, a hearty Desire and a careful Endeavour to do Good and to communicate, to assist the Necessitous, to relieve the Distressed of what Rank and Quality soever they be, or whatever kind of Distress it is that they labour under.

The Second Fruit is *Joy*, opposed to a morose and sour Temper, a querulous and repining Spirit, and consequently denotes a contented and quiet Mind, a being satisfied with our Condition, let it be what it will: It is a chearful surrendring ourselves to the Divine Pleasure and Disposal, and Rejoycing in doing our Duty in whatsoever State of Life we are placed.

The next Fruit is *Peace*, whereby is signified to us a Mind free from all extravagant Passion, an avoiding of Schism and Sedition, a studying to be quiet, and to live peaceably with all Men, as much as in us lies. When this World at first was but a rude and indigested Chaos, this *Spirit* moved upon it, and hatched it into this good order which we now see it in. And this is still the work of the *Spirit*, it delights in Order and Comelineſs, it checks all rude and extravagant Actions, it composeth the turbulency of Men's Minds, and it inspireth them with humble and peaceable Tempers. If you see Men of another Spirit, if you observe them in all their Actions to be disorderly, fierce, and mutinous, believe them not when they pretend to the Spirit, but pronounce of them as St. *Jude* doth of this sort of Persons, *They are sensual, having not the Spirit.* Where the Spirit dwells, there Unity takes up her Lodging: But where Divisions and Distractions are fomented by evil Minds, there, there the Spirit of Satan reigns. On the contrary, the Spirit of Christ is a Spirit not only of *Love* (as I said before) but of *Unity*, which is the genuine consequent of that: Therefore we must *endeavour to keep the Unity of the Spirit in the Bond of Peace*, as the Apostle exhorts us in *Eph.* 4. 3.

The Fourth Fruit is *Long-Suffering*, That is, being slow to anger, not easily incensed, bearing one anothers burthens, stooping to the innocent and unavoidable Infirmities of our Brethren, and willing to suffer rather than to fail of a certain Opportunity of doing good to those who have not done so to us. This is a Christian

Temper

Temper, this is a certain Mark of the Spirit. Whoever hath this, is free from all unchristian Hatred, Malice, and Ill-will. None can have the Spirit of God, and yet hate and oppose it, and persecute those that have it. For the Spirit of God will not stir Men up to act against the Ways of God; the Spirit of Christ will not teach Men to oppose his own Kingdom.

The next is *Gentleness*, i. e. a readiness to treat all Persons humbly and fairly; and not standing upon nice Points when we may oblige our Brethren; especially we must not shew ourselves at any Time implacable and cruel towards them: For the Spirit is no lover of Inhumanity and Cruelty. Therefore he is not expressed to us in Scripture by any Bird of Prey, but by the *Dove*, a mild and gentle Creature. To call for Fire from Heaven to destroy our Adversaries; yea, tho' they differ from us but in some smaller Matters, is not to resemble that gentle, meek Spirit of Christ, who came to further the Salvation of Men, but to destroy none: Wherefore this is unlike the *heavenly Fire* which came down at the Descent of the Holy Ghost.

Goodness is another Fruit of the Spirit; namely, a free and obliging Behaviour towards all Men, a Simplicity of Manners, an open and honest Conversation in the World. Or (as the Word may be taken) it may signifie a loving and incouraging of whatever is *good* and commendable either in ourselves or others. This is not unworthy of the *Holy Spirit*, who by the Apostle hath enjoyned us to approve of *whatever Things are honest, just, pure, lovely, and of good report*, yea, *if there be any Vertue, and if there be any praise* (i. e. if there be any Thing Vertuous and Praise-worthy) *to think on these Things*, Phil. 4. 8.

Next, *Faith* is said to be a Fruit of the Holy Spirit, which being reckoned here among moral Vertues, or rather those Graces of the Spirit which appertain chiefly to the visible Manners and Conversations of Men, is not perhaps to be taken for justifying Faith, but rather is the same with *Faithfulness*; which consists in a hatred of Lying and dealing Falsly, and deceiving others, and in a doing all Things sincerely and uprightly. This is an Effect of the *Spirit*, for he is even in this Sense *a Spirit of Truth*. Those therefore who lay claim to the Spirit, and yet give themselves to Dissembling and Equivocating, Lying and double Speaking, are to be esteemed as meer Pretenders. These are not the *Cloven Tongues* which sat upon the Apostles; whatever is false and hypocritical is not from the Spirit.

Again, *Meekness* is justly rank'd among the *Fruits* of the Spirit, which is a readiness to pass by Injuries, and to pardon Offences, without being enraged and stirred up to Passion. Or more generally, it is a Freedom from Wrath and Bitterness upon all Accounts whatsoever, but more especially it is a being void of bitter Zeal and Eagerness about petty and disputable Matters, about indifferent and uncertain Things. They who uncharitably judge and condemn their Brethren for Things of this Nature discover little of the Spirit of Christ, for this teacheth us to think the best of others, and candidly to interpret their Opinions as well as their Actions. This meek Spirit doth not violently compel, but sweetly and gently, peaceably and lovingly draw Men to the acknowledgment of the Truth. This Spirit is calm and placid, this Dove is without Gall and Bitterness.

Lastly, Temperance is added as a Fruit of the Spirit; this teacheth us to keep ourselves within the due Bounds of Joy and Sorrow, and other Affections of the Soul, and to be moderate in the use of the good Things of this World. Or else, it may signifie Continence and Chastity: The Body, which is the *Temple of the Holy Ghost*, must be clean and pure, consecrated unto God, and kept unspotted from all carnal Lusts.

Thus we see what the *Fruits* and Effects of the *Holy Spirit* are: Let us try and examine ourselves by them. The Summ of all that hath been said is this, That that Man *hath not the Spirit of Christ*, and consequently *is none of his*, who is not both inwardly and outwardly Holy. It must needs be granted, That that Man hath not the Spirit of Christ, who hath the *Diabolical* Spirit in him. Now, this we are sure of, That such is the Spirit which resides in wicked Men. * *The Prince of the Power of the Air*, (as the Apostle informs us) *is the Spirit that works in the Children of Disobedience.* This Spirit must be cast out and dispossessed before the other can enter. Never think that the Spirit of Darkness and Light will dwell together, that the impure Fiend of Hell and the Holy Spirit which comes down from Heaven will lodge in your Hearts at the same Time. Throughly persuade yourselves

* Eph. 2. 2.

yourſelves of this unqueſtionable Truth, and then you will not be guilty of Flattery in trying either yourſelves or others. If Men diſcover to us only the Satanical Spirit in their Lives and Actions, yet all the while pretend that the Holy Ghoſt rules them, have we any Reaſon to credit them? No ſurely, unleſs they can make a friendly Union between thoſe two contrary Spirits. This muſt be our Teſt; namely, That the Works of the Devil are inconſiſtent with thoſe of the Spirit of Grace. Wherefore, when you ſee Men doing the former Works, and delighting and perſiſting in them, you may inferr that they are Strangers to the Sacred Spirit. And by this you may make an eſtimate of yourſelves as well as of others: If you live in your Sins, and thereby gratifie the evil Spirit, you wholly exclude yourſelves from any Pretence to the good one.

V. Another great Work of the Holy Spirit is, to give us an Ability to *Pray*. The Spirit of Chriſt is a Spirit of Prayer. A great Man in the Church of *Rome* tells us, That we may try a Spirit whether it be a Devil or an Angel, by forcing it to ſay the *Lord's Prayer*. I will not examine the Truth of this, but ſure I am, that we may try who have the true Spirit by this; namely, their *praying*, their calling on the Father, which is in Heaven. If they know not what this is, if they be Strangers to the Practice of it, they are none of Chriſt's. † *Ye have received the Spirit of Adoption* (ſaith the Apoſtle) *whereby ye cry, Abba Father.* And again, ‖ *God hath ſent forth the Spirit of his Son into your Hearts, crying Abba Father.* By this you may examine yourſelves, and know whether God hath ſent forth his Spirit into your Hearts, and whether you have received it. This Spirit teacheth us to offer up our Supplications to our Heavenly Father. *We know not* (ſaith our Apoſtle) *what we ſhould pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itſelf maketh Interceſſion for us with Groanings which cannot be uttered.* As if he had ſaid, we cannot tell what is beſt for us; in many Caſes we know not what to pray for. Affliction and Worldly Diſtreſs may be moſt convenient for us, eſpecially at ſuch a particular Time; whereas we think Plenty and Proſperity are beſt for us, and we are very ready to pray for them. But the Holy Spirit knows what is moſt ſuitable to us, and therefore prays with us, and intercedes for us in an unutterable Manner, yea, *he doth more than intercede*, as the *Greek* Word properly ſignifies, *Rom.* 8. 26. It follows in the next Verſe, *he that ſearcheth the Hearts*, (*i. e.* God) *knoweth what is the Mind of the Spirit* (underſtands his Intention without any articulate forming his Deſire into Words) *becauſe he maketh Interceſſion for the Saints, according to the Will of God*, i. e. he cauſes them to ask thoſe Things which are beſt for them, what God would beſtow upon them, not what they always like themſelves. This *Interceſſion of the Spirit*, or his enabling us to intercede for ourſelves in the moſt acceptable Manner is a worthy Point of Chriſtian Doctrine: And by this we may try whether the Spirit dwelleth in us.

† Rom. 8. 15.

‖ Gal. 3. 6.

But there is a falſe Notion of the *Spirit of Prayer* which hath deceived ſome, for they have thought that the meer Ability to conceive a Prayer, and to utter it with great readineſs and warmneſs, is to *pray by the Spirit*, and that none but truly godly Perſons can attain to this. But this is a Miſtake, for the worſt of Men may have a very great Talent this Way; and on the other Hand many Perſons are not able to conceive a Prayer on a ſudden, and to expreſs their Thoughts on every occaſion with Promptitude and Zeal, and yet may reaſonably be looked upon as very good Men, and without doubt are. For though they have not this *Gift of Prayer*, which is always accompanied with a ready Tongue, and a quick Invention and Memory, yet they are no Strangers to *praying by the Spirit*: Which, in the Senſe that we are to underſtand it now, (ſince the Apoſtles Time, ſince the extraordinary Gifts and Endowments are ceaſed) is this, to offer up our Petitions and Addreſſes to God, (let them be never ſo weak and imperfect) with an awful Fear and Dread of the Divine Majeſty before whom we appear, with a due Veneration and Reverence of all his glorious Attributes and Perfections, with a deep Apprehenſion of our own Sinfulneſs and Guilt, and conſequently of our Unworthineſs to approach his Preſence, with a lively Senſe of our Wants and Neceſſities which we come to have ſupplied, with a hearty Deſire of the Bleſſings and Favours we crave, and yet with an entire reſigning of ourſelves to the Will and Diſpoſal of God. And Laſtly, with a firm Purpoſe and Reſolution to live and act according to what we pray. This is *praying by the Spirit*. As many as pray thus, whether they

they use a Form of Words, or their own immediate conceptions, they have the Spirit, which is a Spirit of Prayer and Supplication. This will enable them to pour forth their Souls in the devoutest Manner, this will stir them up to confess their Sins and Miscarriages, to deprecate the Divine Displeasure, to beg Grace and Mercy, to bless God for all the Testimonies of his Bounty and Favour to them. This will open their Mouths, enlarge their Hearts, enliven and inflame their Affections, make them fervent and importunate in all their Addresses at the Throne of Grace.

Yea, and let me add, the Holy Spirit gives not only *Affections*, but sometimes *Words* in Prayer. I question it not in the least, for Words are the Product of the Heart, and when this is throughly moved and affected, the Tongue will be so also. When *David's Heart was hot within him*, when *the Fire burned* there, *then spake he with his Mouth*, Psal. 39. 3. It is evident therefore, that the Spirit influences on our Words in Prayer. It helps the faithful to form Expressions that are fit to represent their Desires and Thoughts. It prepares Words for their Tongues, and enables them to utter Things suitable and seasonable, and sometimes above their Thoughts and Expectations. This also is *praying by the Spirit.*

But that which I annex is this, That it is not necessary, and absolutely requisite that *Prayer* be always *presently conceived.* It may sometimes be read, or it may sometimes be rehearsed by heart: And they that read or rehearse it, and those that join with it so read or rehearsed, with an humble Sense of their Sins, and a hearty Desire of receiving what they pray for, and a Belief of the Power of God, and his Willingness to bestow it, do really and truly *pray by the Spirit.* And I will farther adjoin, That the Spirit of Prayer may be exerted in the *due composing of a Prayer*, and committing it to Writing, before we solemnly offer it to God, for even then the chief of those Qualifications before-mentioned may be found in us when we are preparing that Form of Devotion: And the Spirit may particularly assist and direct us in providing such Addresses as are fitting. To conclude, though I would not advise any one to confine himself to set Words, lest it should nourish Formality, yet it is certain, that the Use of these Helps *is* requisite at some Times, and for some Purposes. Several Godly Men, even Ministers, have made choice of Forms in their Families, that is, ordinarily and for the most Part: For few have a Gift or Ability of varying their Words and their Matters upon all Occasions, and sometimes they are indisposed to conceive such Prayers, which renders the Use of set Words lawful. But after all, I admire and esteem the Gift of Prayer, and think it very advantageous in the Ministry, and among private Christians.

VI. Another great Office of the Spirit, is to *confirm* us in all Grace and Holiness, and to *assure* us of the love of God in Christ Jesus. This the Apostle meaneth when he saith, we are *sealed by the Holy Spirit of God unto the Day of Redemption*, Eph. 4. 30. *i. e.* we are *confirmed* and *established* in Grace, and in the favour of God, not only to our Lives end, but to the end of the World, the final Consummation of all Things, which shall be accompanied with the full and compleat *Redemption* of the Servants of the most High. I might observe, That there are these Three following Uses of *Sealing* in Scripture, which may be all applied to this Particular *Sealing* mentioned here by the Apostle. First, it is for *Secrecy*, as in *Dan.* 12. 9. *The Words are closed up, and sealed till the Time of the End*, i. e. they are kept Secret. And in * other Places this is the import of Sealing. which is appliable to the Holy Spirit, because he hideth the Faithful, he preserveth them by his secret Power, he invisibly guards and defends them, even when they seem to be exposed like other Men. Secondly, Sealing is for *Distinction* and *peculiar Designation*; thus concerning Christ, it is said, That *God the Father hath sealed him*, (*John* 6. 27.) *i. e.* designed him to the Special Office of Mediator. So *the Servants of God were sealed in their Foreheads*, Rev. 7. 3. that it might be a Mark of Distinction or Appropriation, to shew that they peculiarly belonged to God. In this Sense all Believers are *sealed* by the Holy Ghost, they are distinguished from other Persons, they are owned as the peculiar Favourites of God. Thirdly, Sealing is for *Confirmation* and *Certainty*: Thus the Decree of *Ahasuerus* for putting the *Jews* to death was *sealed* by him, *Esther* 3. 12. And Christ's Sepulchre *was made sure by sealing the Stone* that lay before it, *Mat.* 27. 66. So likewise

* Deut. 32. 34. Isai. 29. 11.

wise we are said to be sealed by the Holy Spirit of God, *i. e.* by him we are confirmed and assured in the Ways of Holiness. He doth as it were set to his Seal, and thereby testifie the Certainty of our Salvation. This last Acception of the Word, is thought by Expositors to be the chief and principal Import of the *Sealing* mentioned by the Apostle in the fore-named Place.

And there is this Reason to perswade us to think so; namely, because this *Sealing* is joyned by the Apostle in other Places with another Word, which is very expressive of this particular Office of the Holy Ghost. The Word is ἀῤῥαβὼν, *an Earnest*, which, though it be used by the Apostle as a *Greek* Word, is indeed a *Syriack* one, for the *Grecians* trading with the *Phœnicians* learnt this of them, it being a Word frequently used by them in Commerce and Traffick. It is indeed a large Word, and signifies an *Earnest*, a *Pledge*, a *Pawn*, an *Hostage*: But the most usual Signification is the first, *viz.* an *Earnest*, which is used only in the Contract of Buying and Selling: It is Part of the Price laid down before-hand to secure the Payment of the whole entire Summ. An *Earnest assureth* a Bargain, and makes it compleat: It *Confirms* the Promise and Obligation that were made, and *seals* them up as it were. No Wonder then that St. *Paul* joyns these two together, in *Eph.* 1. 13, 14. *After ye believed* (saith he) *ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of Promise, which is the Earnest of our Inheritance* (a *Security* to us of our full enjoying the Spiritual Inheritance promised to us, *viz.* Grace and Salvation) *until the Redemption of the purchased Possession.* That is, the *Spirit* is given as an *Earnest*, that we shall actually inherit what is already purchased, that we shall enter upon the whole Possession. Part of the Price is paid *until* or * *against* the Time of the full Purchase, or *in order to it*; for so likewise the *Greek* Præposition may signifie. * Εἰς.

This very Thing is more plainly and amply expressed by the Apostle in 2 *Cor.* 1. 20, *&c. All the Promises of God in him* (namely in Christ) *are yea, and in him Amen*, that is, they are true and certain, they are fixed and established. If you would know whence this proceeds, he adds in the next Verses, *he that stablisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God; who hath sealed us, and given us the Earnest of the Spirit in our Hearts.* The Meaning is, the Holy Ghost *confirms* and *ratifies* all; he *seals*, and he *gives the Earnest*, for himself is that *Earnest* which *ascertains* us of the whole Purchase, himself is the *Seal* which *Assures* us of all that is conveyed to us in the Gospel.

VII. The next Office of the Holy Spirit is that of *Paraclete* or *Comforter*, as he is styled in *John* 14. 16. This is a Title that hath been in great Repute, and hath been claim'd even by those who made false Pretences to the Spirit. Thus that old Heretick *Montanus* would needs perswade his Disciples, That he was the *Paraclete* spoken of by St. *John*; and by that specious Title he gain'd not a little on the silly Multitude, as * *Theodoret* relates. So *Manes* or *Manichæus*, the Author of the Sect of the *Manichæans* gave out very confidently, That he was the Person whom Christ there promised to send, as we are told both by the foresaid † Writer, and by ‖ *Epiphanius*. And it is not improbable, That this impious Pretence of his occasioned his ‡ Name. Likewise that *Arabian* Impostor, *Mahomet*, who prevail'd so much among those Eastern People, made use of the same Title: and the Expositors on the *Alcoran* tell us, That in the 14th Chapter of St. *John*, where Christ speaks concerning the sending of the *Paraclete* or *Comforter*, there was something particularly set down about their great Prophet, but the Christians blotted it out. So fond are they in inventing any Thing to patronize their Cause, that they wilfully mistake their Prophet's *Pidgeon* for that *Holy Dove* which all the Christian World adore.

* Hæret. fab. l. 3. c. 2.
† Ibid. cap. ult.
‖ Hæres. 65.
‡ Manacheus ab Hebr. *Menachem*, consolator. Gatak. Adversar. Sac. cap. 35.

But to unprejudiced Minds nothing is more plain and evident, than that this Title is appropriated in the foresaid Place, to the Third Person in the Trinity, and that he alone is there spoken of. And to confirm us in this Perswasion, this Appellation is given no less than four Times to him; namely, to the Holy Ghost, *John* 14. 16, 26. | 15. 26. | 16. 7. It is true, the Word is of a large and extensive Meaning, because the * *Verb* from whence it comes hath this triple Signification, First, to *entreat, or to exhort, and stir up*, as in 1 *Cor* 4. 13. *Mark* 1. 40. *Heb.* 3. 13. 1 *Tim.* 2. 1. 1 *Pet.* 5. 1. and παράκλησις is the known Word for *Exhortation*, as in *Luke* 3. 18. *Acts* 13. 15. *Rom.* 12. 8. 2 *Cor.* 8. 17. and other Places. And accordingly παράκλητος, as it owes its Original to the Theme of this Signification, is

* Παρακαλέω.

is an *Exhorter*. Again, the *Greek* word signifies *to Plead, to Intercede*, to *act the Advocates part*; and tho' it occurs not in this Sense in the *New Testament*, yet it bears this signification in * Classick Authors, and indeed seems to be the † primary and most obvious import of the Word. Whence perhaps it was that the word *Paraclete* which comes from it, was in use among the ‖ *Jewish Talmudists*, and *Hebrew* Writers, (as they had several words of other Languages in their Tongue) and it is often inserted into the *Chaldee* Paraphrase for an *Advocate* or *Proctor*, one that undertakes another's Cause. Besides, these fore-named Significations of the Word, there is a Third, which is very well known, namely, *to Comfort*. 2 Cor. 1. 4.—7. 6. *Eph.* 6. 22. And παράκλησις is *Consolation*, Rom. 15. 4. And thence παράκλητος is a *Comforter*.

* παρακαλεῖν pro alio intervenire, ut advocatus & patronus, patrocinum suscipere. Apud Æschin. & alios. *It is opposed to* κατηγορεῖν accusare. Apud Plutarch. in vit. Perielis.

† παρακαλεῖν & *advocare* exactly answer to each other.

‖ See *Outram.* de Sacrific. *l.* 2. *c.* 7.

Thus we see that the Title applied to the Holy Spirit hath these three Acceptions, an *Exhorter*, an *Advocate*, a *Comforter*; and it were easie to shew how fit and congruous this Application is. It is part of the Office of the Spirit to exhort and excite, to move and stir up the Minds of Men, and to win them to a Compliance with his gracious Offers. We are backward, and shew great Averseness to our Duty, but the Holy Ghost pushes us on, and excites us to the Love and Practice of it. He mildly cures our Reluctancies by gentle Perswasions, and he prevails by his *Hortatory* Power. Next, I might shew how the word, as it signifies a *Pleader* or *Advocate*, may be applied to the Holy Spirit. For as the evil Spirit is justly styl'd the *Accuser*, so this good Spirit, to counterwork his malicious Employment, becomes our Pleader and Defender, our Advocate and Intercessor. He is so Powerful and Efficacious, that he not only silences the inward Accusations of our own Consciences, but those louder ones of Satan against us. He it was that took the part of the Apostles, and pleaded their Cause before Heathen Princes and Governors. *It is not ye that speak*, saith our Saviour, *but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you*, Mat. 10. 19. he shall defend and patronize your Cause, and clear you from the Accusations of your most malicious Adversaries. The Learned *Grotius*, who recedes not from his *own Faculty*, interprets the word παράκλητος in a *Lawsense* only, and so doth our *Annotator*, (who loves to imitate him) representing the Holy Ghost to be the *Advocate* sent by Christ to vindicate and plead his Cause against the World. And accordingly these Expositors understood those words in *John* 16. 7, 8. of three *Causes* or *Actions of Law* that were in use among the *Jews* in their *Courts*. But this seems to be too nice and curious, and even precarious, and framed on purpose to establish their rendering of the word παράκλητος in St. *John*'s Gospel by the Term *Advocate*.

But the third way of rendring it, as it is applied to the Holy Ghost, is most eligible. And this is that which our Translators have pitch'd upon, giving the Title of *Comforter* to the Holy Spirit, because in the most emphatical Sense it belongs to him. It is not to be denied that God the Father may justly claim this Appellation, as being *the Father of Mercies, and the God of all Comfort, who comforteth us in all our Tribulation*, 2 Cor. 1. 3, 4. And the Son of God may deservedly challenge this Name, as is implied in those words of his, *John* 14. 16. *I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter*; as much as to say, he himself was one. And * this is an usual Name given the *Messias* by the *Jewish* Writers, saith the Learned *Lightfoot*; who observes also that the Days of the *Messias* are call'd by them *the Days of Consolation*. But notwithstanding this, the Third Person of the ever to be Adored Trinity hath the Title of *the Comforter* given him by way of Eminency, and as it is the peculiar Character of his Office. For it is his particular and distinct Employment to Administer Comfort to us in our Spiritual, and in our Temporal Distresses.

* Menachem, *or the Comforter*. Hor. Hebr. in 3. Johan.

First, It is the Holy Spirit's peculiar care to encourage, strengthen, and support us under our Spiritual Crosses. In the midst of Temptation he stands by us, and enables us to repel the fiery Darts of the Devil, and to resist his fiercest Assaults. Though we are weak and feeble, † *the Spirit helpeth our Infirmities*, and furnishes us with Strength to baffle that implacable Enemy of our Souls. This Blessed *Comforter* conducts the forlorn Penitent from his mournful Tears to other Waters, justly call'd by the *Psalmist* ‖ *Still Waters*, because they produce Quietness, Calmness, and Tranquility in the Soul. And here by the bye we may observe that the Holy Ghost is represented to us in Holy Scripture under this Name of *Waters*, as in *Isa.* 44. 3. *I will pour water on him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground: I will pour my*

† Rom. 8. 26.

‖ Psal. 23. 2.

my Spirit on thy seed, &c. To which place it is probable our Saviour referrs in *John* 7. 38, 39. *He that believeth on me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. This spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive.* Accordingly the *Jews*, when they *poured out Waters* at the Feast of Tabernacles, (at which Christ was present when he utter'd those words) used to reckon it as an Emblem of the *Holy Ghost* to be poured out; and they performed this Ceremony with great ‡ *Joy* and Exultation, with Singing and Dancing, insomuch that their common saying was, *They know not what Joy is who never saw the Joy of Waters*, which they poured out at the close of that Feast. The *Holy Spirit* is represented by *Water*, because, when he flows into the Hearts of true Penitents, he *Refresheth* and *Comforteth* them. Although they reflect on their Sins and Guilt, whereby they have incensed the Anger of the God of Heaven, yet in the multitude of their disconsolate Thoughts within them the Comforts of the Sacred Spirit delight and chear their Souls. For this joyful Guest that hath taken up his Abode in them, Administers abundant Consolation to them, by assuring them of the Pardon of their Sins, through the Merits of Christ Jesus their Mediator, and consequently of the lasting Favour and Love of God to them.

‡ Isa. 12. 3.

Again, he comforts them in all their Outward and Temporal Calamities, he supports them in all their Worldly and Bodily Distresses; and upon this account it is plain that Christ gave the Title of *the Comforter* to the Holy Spirit. *In the World ye shall have Tribulation*, said he to his Disciples; and, again, *They shall put you out of the Synagogues.* Nor is that all, they shall thrust you out of the World, as it follows in the next words, *John* 16. 2. *Yea the time cometh that whosoever killeth you, will think that he doth God service.* It is no wonder therefore that our Lord tells them, *Because I have said these things unto you, sorrow hath fill'd your Hearts.* Such dismal things could have no other Effect upon them. Now, things being thus, there was need of a *Supporter* and *Comforter.* What could be more seasonable than the Promise of such a one to the Persons who were to suffer all sorts of Injuries, and to undergo all the Evils which their implacable Enemies could inflict? This was a Donative that would be unspeakably welcome and useful to them. This would enable them to outbrave all their Disasters, to rejoyce in the midst of Sorrows, and to sing under their Sufferings. This is the Spirit of Consolation which made the first Christians rejoyce that they were counted worthy to suffer Shame for Christ's Name. This made the Primitive Saints undergo the most exquisite Torments with Patience and Magnanimity. This made the whole Army of Martyrs engage so valiantly, and come off with Conquest and Triumph. This made all the Christian Heroes do and suffer so bravely. The refreshing Influence of this *Comforter*, acting warmly upon their Minds, and making most sensible Impressions of the Divine Favour upon them, whereby they felt the Hopes of another and a better Life after this, transported them with unutterable Ravishments, and possess'd them with an ineffable Joy and Extacy, and gave them the Fruition of that Peace and Serenity of Mind which reconcil'd all Hardships and Miseries to them.

The gladsome Experience of Godly Sufferers is the best Comment on this Theme, and no Man is able to express it unless his Tongue were inflamed with the same Cœlestial and Divine Fire which came down from Heaven with the Holy Ghost on the Apostles upon the Day of *Pentecost.* But *this* all holy Men are able to conceive and express, that to the holy Spirit they owe all their Comfort and Refreshment in their Hardships. In the hottest Service this holy Dove fans and cools them with his Wings, and mitigates their Sorrows, and asswages their Griefs. Say that they are troubled with many cross Accidents which they meet with in the World, as Bodily Pain and Sickness, Want and Penury, Reproach and Disgrace, Tribulations and Persecutions of all Kinds, yet they have reason to rejoyce in them, and to thank God for them; for by the help of this holy *Comforter* they become real Blessings to them, they are made serviceable to the Mortifying of their Sins, the effectual subduing of their corrupt Desires and Appetites, the strengthning and increasing of all their Graces, and the promoting of their endless Happiness and Glory.

Here I might observe how the Title of *Comforter* given to the Holy Ghost, and his *Office of Teaching* us, and bringing things to our *remembrance*, do mutually depend upon one another. The Spirit *comforteth* us by *teaching* us, and he doth *both*

by executing his Office of *Remembrancer*, by enabling us to *hide and lay up the Word in our Hearts*, (Psal. 119. 11. Luke 2. 51.) there is Administred abundant Matter for our *Instruction* and *Consolation*.

Thus I have enumerated the several Offices and Gifts of the Holy Ghost now in the Times of the Gospel. I have reduc'd them to Seven, and accordingly the Holy Spirit is set forth by *seven Lamps*, Zech. 4. 2, 6. and is call'd *the seven Spirits*, *Rev.* 1. 4. because of this variety of Gifts.

Are these things so? then

1. The Prophane Mockers at the Spirit are justly to be reproved. Of this sort were those whom we read of in *Acts* 2. 13. who when they heard the Apostles *speak with other Tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance*, cried out presently, *These Men are full of new Wine*. They have drunk more than their Brains could bear, and that is it which infuses this strange Faculty into them. It is the Spirits of Wine, and not the Holy Ghost that they are filled with. That sweet fulsome Liquor hath got into their Crowns, and that makes their Tongues run so fast. Thus instead of being astonished at this prodigious Accident, they scoff'd and laugh'd at it. The miraculous Gifts of the Holy Ghost were interpreted to be Drunkenness and meer Intoxication. And in our Days the number of these Scoffers is increased. Wherever you go, you may hear them blasphemously deride the *Spirit*, and disgrace and vilifie whatever is *Spiritual*. There are set Clubbs and Assemblies of these Men, who professedly inveigh against Religion, and the Author of it; who turn the Scripture into Ridicule, and all the weighty Matters of Christianity into Dream and Fiction; especially when they sit a long time at the Wine, their Tongues are set on fire of that and Hell, and they belch out their Venom against all that is Religious and Sacred; particularly the Gifts and Graces of the Holy Spirit are look'd upon as fabulous things by them. Because they find no such thing in themselves, they conclude that others never do, and therefore condemn them as Pretenders and Impostors. Whenever they talk of these Spiritual Endowments, they fail not to make them the Subject of their Profane Railery.

Yea, there are those who would not be thought to be Scoffers, but pretend to great Seriousness and Sobriety, and yet tell the World how mean Thoughts they have of the Assistance and Influence of the *Spirit*. * *Socinus* declares that *the Holy Spirit, which is necessarily requisite to conciliate a Force and Efficacy to the Word of God, is not any thing that is distinct from the Word it self*. And † one of his Disciples hath the Boldness to say, *That a Man by bare Hearing and Understanding the Word of God is able to convert himself really unto God, without any other Operation, much less the special Assistance or Operation of the Holy Spirit*. And I'm afraid that some others, who disown *Socinianism*, would speak the same Language if they had that liberty which they wish for of uttering their Minds in Points of Religion. One speaks after this manner, ‖ *As the Angel who was sent to* Cornelius *inform'd him not, but sent him to* Peter *to School, so the Spirit teaches not, but stirs up in us a desire to learn*. And the same Author tells us that in the Work of *Regeneration* he *can conceive no other than this, that the Spirit infuses no Knowledge into a Man, but sends him to the Church and to the Scriptures*: His Work is to *remit him to the Law of Nature, or to send him to learn his Sins from the Mouth of his Teachers*. And then concludes, *More than this, in the ordinary Proceedings of the Holy Spirit, in Matter of Instruction, I yet could never descry*. These are the mean Thoughts which this Writer had of the Great and Heavenly Teacher; which seem to proceed from this, that such Men have not a due Sense of the Corrupt and Degenerate State of Mankind, wherein there is a necessity of Divine Grace to enlighten us in the Knowledge of our Duty, and to strengthen us in the performing it. Now, as our present Circumstances are, we cannot without the Assistance of this Sacred Guide and Director either enterprize or finish any thing that is Good and Virtuous. Without his Blessed Influence and Help we in vain assume the Name of Christians, and claim any Benefit by the Author of it; for the Apostle assures us that *if any Man have not the Spirit of Christ he is none of his*.

* De Justificat.

† Slichting. contr. Meisner. de Ser. Arbitrio.

‖ Mr Hales's Sermon, 2 Pet. 3. 16.

2. Let us who are perswaded of the unquestionable Truth and Reality of what the Apostle saith, heartily *Bless God* for the Sacred Spirit of Grace. Let us commemorate with Thankfulness those his Gifts and Graces which are bestow'd on the Faithful, and which are beneficial to them as to their everlasting Welfare. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, that he hath vouchsafed his Church the Inspiration of the Holy Ghost, that we are taught by this Holy Instructer, that

that our Minds are enlightned, our Hearts moved and affected, and our Lives reformed by this Heavenly Teacher. To him we are indebted for all our good Desires, Purposes and Endeavours, all our good Thoughts, Words, and Actions. To this Blessed Guide we must ascribe all the Ability we have to subdue our Lusts, and conquer our vile Affections, and to renounce all our former Sins. In a word, to this Sacred Conduct we owe all our successful Undertakings and Performances; and therefore let the due Consideration of this beget in us serious and hearty Resentments of this singular Blessing and Favour conferr'd on the Church. *Thanks be unto God for this unspeakable Gift.*

3. Let every one of us examine our selves by this Aphorism of the Apostle, whether we be in Christ, whether we be really his. The Tryal, we see, is by the *Spirit*; if we have this we *are Christ's*, if we have not this, we are *none of his*. This is a clear Resolution, a plain Decision of the Case. The Apostle is short and preremptory, *If any Man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.* But then here is the Difficulty, How shall we know that we have the Spirit? For the World is full of Pretenders, and ever was as to this very thing. As Christ foretold that it should be said by the false Prophets and Seducers, *Here is Christ, and there is Christ*; so it is as true concerning the Spirit; some cry out, *Lo, here he is*, and others as loudly tell us, *there he is.* I have the Spirit, saith one, and I have it, saith another; and a third comes and excludes both, and Monopolizeth the Spirit to himself. The *Gnosticks*, and other Hereticks of old gave themselves the specious Title of *Spiritual*; and all others were styled by them *Animal* and *Carnal*. *Montanus* perswaded his Followers that he was very familiar with the *Spirit*, yea, he Blasphemously call'd his Strumpet the *Holy Ghost*. The great *Arabian* Impostor, (as I noted before) pretended to Inspiration, and made his credulous Partisans believe that a *Pidgeon* whisper'd Divine Secrets in his Ear. The *Quaker*, and all *Enthusiasts* please themselves exceedingly with this Notion and Fancy, that they have the Spirit. The Animal Spirits jumping and playing with more Activity than ordinarily in the Brain, are mistaken by some for the Holy Spirit. Some Men's Tempers and Constitutions, yea, their very Hypochondriack Passions are taken for the Spirit. Nay, sometimes Satan's Impressions are voted to be such, and the *Cloven-foot* is as venerable as *Cloven-tongues*. Thus the Claim to the *Spirit* is made by many, yea, even by those who are acted by the *Spirit of Darkness* only. It is necessary therefore that we be very Inquisitive and Cautious in this Matter, and proceed with great Judgment and Deliberation. We must not believe every one that saith he hath the Spirit, but we must try and examine whether he hath it or no. And there is no way to do this but by those Marks and Evidences which I have before propounded. That is, we may certainly know that others or our selves have the Spirit by having our Understandings enlightned with Divine Knowledge, by the right Disposition of our Wills and Affections, and by the Change which is wrought in our Lives and Manners, and by those other Signs which I have before-mention'd. This is the only Test by which we are to examine our selves.

4. Having thus examin'd our selves, and taken an Account of our State and Condition, we must by all means endeavour to *attain* this Holy Spirit, if we find we are destitute of it; or, if we find that we have it, let us use our utmost care to *keep* and *preserve* it. *First*, If we have it not, let us endeavour to attain it; and in order to it, duly observe this Method. Let us not resist the Motions and Suggestions of the Holy Spirit, but submit humbly to them, and receive them with a willing Mind, and with all readiness listen to the Dictates of that great Teacher and Instructer. He *will not break the bruised Reed*, the Soul that bends and bows it self to his gentle Gales and Breathings; he *will not quench the smoaking Flax*, the Soul which is cover'd with its own Darkness, but is sensible of it, and ardently desires the powerful Breathings of the Holy Spirit to enlighten and kindle it, and to blow it up into a Flame, and to overcome all its Darkness. Yield your selves then to the Spirit, and entirely comply with it.

In the next place, empty your selves that you may be fill'd with this Holy Guest, and that he may have his full Residence in your Souls. Prepare and cleanse your Hearts by sincere Contrition and Remorse for your Sins, by bewailing the Follies and Miscarriages of your past Life, and by turning from them. *Repent, and ye shall receive the Holy Ghost*, Acts 2. 38. Unfeigned Repentance is the Spi-

ritual

ritual Baptism or Washing of the Soul, whereby it is in some measure made a fit Receptacle for that Spirit of Purity and Holiness.

Again, Be earnest in Calling upon God to bestow this inestimable Gift upon you. It is observable that the Apostles and Brethren after Christ's Ascension return'd to *Jerusalem, and continued with one accord in Prayer and Supplication*, Acts 1. 14. and thereby fitted themselves for the miraculous Descent of the Holy Ghost. The like must be done now in order to the Spirit's descending into our Hearts, and blessing us with his saving Fruits. To excite your Prayer, and make it more fervent, fix your Minds on that gracious Promise in *Luke* 11. 13. *Our heavenly Father will give the holy Spirit to them that ask him.* Our *Asking*, i. e. our constant, incessant and devout Prayers shall be rewarded with the Gift of the Spirit. It is further promis'd in 1 *John* 5. 14. That *if we ask any thing according to his Will, he heareth us.* Now, *this is the Will of God, even your Sanctification*, that you should be made Holy in Body, Soul and Spirit by this Heavenly Sanctifier. Wherefore cry aloud unto God, be instant and importunate with him, that you may experimentally feel in you the sanctifying Effects and Operations of the Spirit of Grace.

Moreover, you must use those other *Means* of Divine Appointment, as Meditation, Religious Converse, Reading the Scriptures, Hearing the Word of God. And seeing the Spirit is more especially convey'd by this latter, you are obliged to attend to it with all Diligence. It is particularly taken notice of, that *Cornelius* and his Company receiv'd the Gift of the Holy Ghost at the very time when St. *Peter* was Preaching to them, *Acts* 10. 44. *While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the Word.* And afterwards the other great Apostle reminds the *Galatians* that *they had receiv'd the Spirit by the hearing of Faith*, *Gal.* 3. 2. In the same manner must we receive it. Wherefore that we may effectually do so, let us endeavour to banish from our Hearts all Unbelief; and that the Word Preached may profit us, let it be mixed with Faith in us that hear it. Thus if we Pray and Hear, and use those Means whereby God is wont to give *his* Spirit, we shall certainly receive it, and be filled with all its saving Gifts and Graces.

Having thus attained the Holy Spirit, in the next place, let us by all holy Ways and Means endeavour to *Preserve it.* Let us beware that we do not by our unkind and unworthy usage cause the Holy Spirit to depart from us. By our consenting to Sin, and making Provision for the Flesh, (as the Apostle speaks) we forfeit the Grace of God, and the Help of his Holy Spirit. We scare away that Sacred Dove from us, we deprive our selves of the Assistance of the Blessed Comforter; we are left to our own Strength, or Weakness rather, and then 'tis no wonder if we comply with every Temptation to Sin, and fall frequently and scandalously. The Apostle's Advice is seasonable here, *Grieve not the Spirit*, Eph. 4. 30. which though it be spoken after the manner of Men, there being no *Passions*, and consequently no *Grief* in God, yet it shews us what is the practice of Men, and warns us to avoid it. Sinners do what they can to *grieve the Spirit*; as we read of the stubborn *Israelites* of old, that they *vexed his Holy Spirit*, Isa. 63. 10. Though they do not this really, because in strictness and propriety of Speech the Holy Spirit is not capable of being *grieved* and *vexed*, yet they do what lies in them to create *Grief* and *Vexation* to him; that is, they act those things towards the Spirit of God which are wont to *vex* and *grieve* Men; namely, they behave themselves most unthankfully towards him, they make his Kindness to them an encouragement to Sin, they make no other return than that of Disobedience and Rebellion for all his Favours shew'd to them. This kind of Behaviour *grieves Men*; and therefore the Scripture, which condescends to our Capacities by expressing things after the way of Men, intimates that the *Holy Ghost* is *griev'd* by such Carriage, and bids us not be guilty of it. If we would retain this Sacred Guest with us, we must treat him kindly, and shew our selves exceeding thankful that he will be pleas'd to stay with us, and confer so great a Blessing upon us. If we suffer this Holy Dove to go from us, perhaps he may, like *Noah's*, never return to us again. If we slight and contemn him, and by our voluntary and customary Sins drive him away, we may eternally blame our Folly; the grieving of the Spirit of Grace will be recompensed with endless Dolours and Vexations.

But

But the Apostle who bids us not *grieve* the Spirit, bids us also *not quench it*. 1 *Thes.* 5. 19. Opposite to which is that to *Timothy*, * *to stir up* (as Fire) *the Gift of God*, i. e. the Gifts and Graces of the Holy Ghost. Those may be abated, and at last *quenched* these two ways:

* ἀναζωπυρεῖν. 2 Tim. 1. 16.

1. By stifling them by their Contraries, as Fire is put out by throwing Water on it. Thus the Spirit is quench'd by Impurity of Life, which is absolutely contrary to his Holy and Pure Nature. *The Holy Spirit will not abide when Unrighteousness cometh in*, Wisd. 1. 5. Therefore we must be careful that we expel all unclean and impure Thoughts, that we cleanse our Hearts from the Love of Sin, that we wash our Hands in Innocency, that our whole Lives and Conversations be void of all wilful Pollution. In order to this we ought to be very cautious in our Converse with the World. Let not this engross either our Thoughts or Affections. Worldly-mindedness extinguisheth the Spirit. The Damps of Earth put out this purer Light. The Thorns, *i. e.* the Cares of the World choak this precious Seed. But chiefly let us beware of the *particular Sin against the Holy Ghost*, which is the greatest of all Sins, and totally banishes the Spirit of God from the Soul.

I know there are some Writers of late who confidently assert that this was a Sin proper only to the Times when our Saviour was on Earth. I grant it was most signal then, because Men had the singular privilege of seeing the Miracles which he wrought at that time by the Power of the Holy Ghost; and consequently their Opposing and Persecuting him, notwithstanding those Divine Miracles, were no other than a bidding Defiance to the Spirit, and a notorious Sinning against him. But still the same Sin, as to the substance of it, is committed daily; for some with great Hatred and Malice oppose the strict Ways of Christianity which they know were attested and confirmed by the Miracles which Christ and his Apostles wrought, and which they are convinced could be done by no less Power than that of the Holy Ghost. Therefore it is rashly and groundlessly said, and it is contrary to the current of Antiquity, and the best modern Divines, that the Sin against the Holy Ghost was peculiar only to that Age wherein Christ lived. It is more consonant to Reason, Scripture, and the Suffrage of the Learnedest Writers, (both Protestants and Papists) that many at this Day are guilty of that high Crime, which is this, a deliberate, stubborn, and malicious acting against a Man's Knowledge, and the clear Convictions of his Conscience, and withal as stubborn and malicious a *Persisting* in the Commission of the grossest Sins which he knows to be such; yea, moreover a *Persecuting* of those that are Good and Righteous, out of meer Hatred and Spite to them because they are such. It is not to be question'd that he who acts thus, and thereby * *doth Despite to the Spirit of Grace*, is really guilty of the Sin against the Holy Ghost. Wherefore, above all things we are to take heed lest we be guilty of this, especially if we consider that the Penalty of this grievous Sin is no less than being debarr'd of Pardon and Forgiveness for ever.

* Heb. 10. 29.

Secondly, The Graces of the Holy Spirit must be abated and extinguish'd, and so the Spirit himself may be said to be *quench'd* by the disuse or neglect of those things which are appointed to cherish and maintain those Graces in us; as when we withdraw Fuel from the Fire, it goes out for want of Nourishment. Thus is the Spirit quenched by substracting that which should maintain this holy Fire. As for example, it is too commonly seen that Men quench the Spirit by not hearkening to its Deputy in their own Consciences. This Holy Instructer speaks within, if they will attend to him, they may hear his Voice in their own Breasts. But alas, they too frequently stop their Ears, and will not listen to the Dictates of this Domestick Teacher. Let not this be our practice, let us often descend into our own Hearts, and Commune with our selves, and hearken to that still Voice which proceeds from our own enlightned Consciences. Again, the Spirit is quench'd by the neglect of those particular Means whereby it is wont to be cherish'd in the Hearts of the Faithful; namely, Studying and Meditating on the Word of God, Prayer and Daily Addresses at the Throne of Grace; for this we must know, that as *Prayer* is a *Fruit* and *Effect* of the Spirit, (which was proved before) so it is a proper *Means* to procure it. And so likewise is the Hearing of the Word, which was appointed by God for this very Purpose. For the Spirit and the Word go together; the latter being the usual Conveyance of the former. Wherefore the Connection of those

two

two Verses is remarkable, *Quench not the Spirit, despise not Prophecyings*, 1 Thes. 5. 19, 20. The *Preaching of the Word* answers now to those *Prophecyings* of old, and for that Reason we must not despise it, but reverently attend to it, as knowing that the Holy Spirit is conveyed by it to the Hearts of true Believers. Again, the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, Holy Fellowship and Converse, and all other Means prescribed us by God for the nourishing the Graces of the Holy Spirit in us, must be duly made use of. For God will have our Graces maintain'd and preserved in us in that Way which he hath appointed. And this is the Way which I have set before you; and the Experience of all good Men will bear Witness of the Success which attends it. See then that you neglect not, see that you disuse not these Means which are of Divine Appointment.

3*dly* and *Lastly*, The Graces of the Holy Spirit are damped and quenched by Men's extreme Coldness, Idleness, and sitting still. Therefore be careful to exert your Graces daily, be constantly employed in Religious Actions. Strive and endeavour to do your utmost, and to increase every Day in Righteousness and Holiness. Though you cannot effect your Salvation by your own Strength and Power, yet you are commanded to * *exercise yourselves unto Godliness*, and *to* † *give all Diligence to make your Calling and Election sure*. And you have this Promise to encourage you, That *to him that hath shall be given*, i. e. to him that makes use of what he hath, greater Accessions of Grace shall be vouchsafed. Wherefore sit not idle, but do what you can. Improve the Talents which God hath bestowed on you. Be very active and busie in the Ways of Godliness and Righteousness. And then you may assure yourselves, That the Gifts of the Holy Spirit shall not decay in you, nor be extinguished, but that they shall increase and flourish more and more, and that you shall be filled with all the Fruits of the Spirit, which are by Jesus Christ unto the Glory and Praise of God.

* 1 Tim. 4. 7.
† 2 Pet. 1. 10.

The

The Former Part of

ARTICLE IX.

I believe the Holy Catholick Church.

A Discourse on MATT. XVI. 18.

On this Rock I will build my Church: and the Gates of Hell shall not prevail against it.

Where these following General Heads are treated of,

1. The *Church*, the true Notion and Nature of it.
2. The peculiar *Officers* and *Ministers* of the Church.
3. The *Sacred Institutions* and *Ordinances* appointed to be used in the Church.
4. The *Perpetuity* of the Church.

Of the Church.

THOUGH the Article of the *Belief of the Holy Catholick Church*, be not in the Apostles Creed mentioned by *Irenæus*, *Tertullian*, *Cyprian*; nor in the Creed of the Council of *Nice*; yet it hath been generally received by all Churches, and there are none at this Day, who own the Christian Religion, that deny the Matter of this Article; that is, that there is a *Church* of Christ upon Earth, and that it is *Catholick* or *Universal*, and that it is truly *Holy*, and that all Pastors and Governours are to take Care that the Church be *Holy*, that there be a Communion in it of *Saints*, i. e. Holy Persons; that all Ungodliness and Impiety be expell'd out of it. Accordingly observe, That this Article of the *Church* immediately follows that of the Belief of the *Holy Ghost*, whose great Office is to *sanctifie* (as we heard;) and therefore the gathering of a *Church*, and making it *Holy*, is part of the Work of the Holy Ghost.

There are two Members of this Article; namely, the *Church* and the *Communion* that belong to it, wherefore I will distinctly treat of both; and first I will begin with *the Holy Catholick Church*, and then proceed to the other, *the Communion of Saints*. Under the First Member, these Things in Order I intend to treat of,

1. The *Name* and *Nature* of the *Church*.
2. The *Officers* and *Ministers* of the Church.
3. The *Institutions* and *Ordinances* which Christ hath appointed in his Church.

Lastly, and *Lastly*, The *Perpetuity* of the *Church*, or the Providence of God in preserving the Church. For as Bishop *Pearson* well Notes, *This Article of the Existence of the Church is proposed to the Belief of Christians in every Age. The Church from the first constituting of it, to the End of the World, is the object of the Faith of the Church believing.* And therefore this is that which I will make good; *viz.* the Church's Continuance.

In Prosecution of the First Head, *viz.* the *Name* and *Nature* of the Church, it will be requisite, 1. To enquire into the Meaning of the *Name* or *Names* given to it. 2. To shew how Christ and his Apostles use and apply the Name or Word. 3. To gather thence what is the true Nature and Notion of the Church. 4. To shew what is the particular Jurisdiction and Power of the Church, and to make it evident that the Church is a distinct Society from the Commonwealth.

 As

As to the First, there are Two Names for the *Church* in the Old Testament, *Gnedah* and *Kahal*; the First carries in it the Notion of an *Assembly* or *Meeting*, it being derived from a * Verb which signifies *to meet together*, and it is render'd by the Seventy, *Synagogue*. The other Word, *Kahal*, is of the like Signification, it coming from a † Verb which signifies *to call together*, *to congregate*, and it is render'd Ἐκκλησία in the *Greek Version* of the Old Testament: Which is also the Word that is used in the New Testament, and is there translated the *Church*: Whereas, this Word *Church* is no where to be found in our Translation of the Old Testament, but *Assembly* or *Congregation* are the Words that are made use of. There is but one Place of the New Testament, where the Word Ἐκκλησία is otherwise render'd, *viz. Acts* 19. 32, 39. where the rude Rabble met at *Ephesus* for *Diana* against *Paul*, are named Ἐκκλησία. Thus *Lucian* hath a Dialogue entituled Θεῶν ἐκκλησία, *the Assembly of the gods*. So I might observe that the *Hebrew* Word *Ragash* is applied not only to Assembling together in the House of God, *Psal.* 55. 14. but an unlawful Assembling together, *Dan.* 6. 7, 12, 16. *Psal.* 2. 1. *Psal.* 64. 2. The *Latin* Word *Ecclesia* is sometimes used after this Manner, thus *Tertullian* applies it to the Meetings of the ‖ Hereticks. But amongst the *Greeks* generally it was used for any Publick Assembly of the People convened by the Order of the Magistrate, and *called together* by the Publick Cryer: Whence 'tis likely it had the Name Ἐκκλησία; that is a *call'd Assembly*.

* *Jagnad*, convenire, congregare.
† *Kahal*, convocare, congregare. Inde Gr. καλέω, & Angl. *call*.
‖ Faciunt favos & vespæ, faciunt Ecclesias & Marcionitæ. *Adv. Marcion.* l. 4. c. 5.

But a certain Reverence and Holiness hath been added to that common and prophane Word from the Use of *Christians* chiefly, who apply it to their Sacred Assemblies, and even to the whole Body of the Faithful, who are distinguished from the rest of the World by their embracing of the Christian Religion. And we see how properly both the *Hebrew* and the *Greek* Words are applied to them, seeing in the very Propriety of the Terms, they denote a Company of People *call'd together* and *call'd out* from the rest, which well expresses the *Church*. Thus I have briefly shew'd the Denotation of the Words by which the *Church* is set forth.

But 2*dly*, I pass from the bare Signification and Import of the Words, to the Thing itself contained in them: And to shew distinctly who and what are meant in the Writings of the Evangelists and Apostles by *the Church*.

1. By this Word they mean, in the largest Sense, the Universal Company of all that ever were, are, or shall be, gathered together in one Body, under one Head Christ Jesus: Part whereof is already in Heaven, Part as yet here upon Earth. This is the Acception of the Word in *Eph.* 1. 20, 21, 22. where we read that God the Father *raised up Christ from the Dead, and set him at his own Right-hand in the Heavenly Places, far above all Principality and Power, and Might, and Dominion, and every Name that is named, not only in this World, but also in that which is to come, and hath put all Things under his Feet, and gave him to be the Head over all Things to the Church, which is his Body, the Fulness of him that filleth all in all.* The *Church* here spoken of, is the Church above and below, as the plain Connection of the Words shews, for it appears thence, that *this World* and *that which is to come*, and *all Things*, i. e. all Persons belonging to both who receive Benefit by Christ, constitute the *Body of the Church* over which he is the *Head*. A Parallel Place is that in *Eph.* 5. 23. *Christ is the Head of the Church*, and that in *Col.* 1. 18. *He is the Head of the Body, the Church*, which refers (as you may see in the immediately foregoing Verses) to the Members of his Church *that are in Heaven, and that are in Earth, visible and invisible*. So that the Word, both here, and in the other Place, takes in the whole Society of *Men* and *Angels*, whom God, passing by all other Creatures, made capable of Bliss and Glory. This is called *the whole Family in Heaven and Earth*, Eph. 3. 14. the whole Body of the Elect, both Angels and Men. These are the Parts of the Universal Church, Angels and glorified Saints above, all Believers and Holy Men and Women here below. In short, the *Church*, in the most comprehensive Meaning of that Word, signifie both the Militant and Triumphant Church, the whole universal Number of chosen Persons that ever were, are, or shall be gathered in one Body from the Beginning of the World to the End of it.

2*dly*, The Word *Church* is taken in a more restrained Sense for the Society of *Men* here upon *Earth* professing the true Religion. Thus of old God had his *Church*; from *Adam* to *Noah*, from *Noah* to *Abraham*, from *Abraham* to *Moses*, and in all the succeding Ages of the World, God had his chosen People; *i. e.* such as

as were *call'd out* from the rest to own and profess the true Religion. More signally the *Jews* were his *People* and *Church*: Whence we read of *the Church in the Wilderness*, Acts 7. 38. *i. e.* the *Jewish* People travelling through the Wilderness to *Canaan*. And when the Fulness of Time was come, God sent forth his Son, who erected a more Glorious Church than ever had appeared before under any of the other Dispensations. This is the *Christian Church*, called, *The General Assembly and Church of the First-born*, *Heb.* 12. 23. For *Church* here, is not to be taken in the largest Acception of that Word (which I mentioned before) because it is contradistinguish'd from *the innumerable Company of Angels*, v. 22. and *the Spirits of just Men made perfect*; namely, in Heaven, in the Close of this *ver.* 23. which constitute the *Universal Church* before spoken of; and therefore it is evident that here is meant the *Christian Church here upon Earth*, consisting of the whole Number of those that acknowledge the Christian Faith and Institution, and they are call'd the *General Assembly*, because the whole Body of Christians is here understood, though more especially all true Believers.

And this now brings me to give a *more particular* Account of this *Church* which is made up of *Mankind*, and which is necessary to be given in order to the right Understanding of those Places of Scripture which speak concerning the *Church*. We must know then that the Church which is spoken of there, is either that Body of Men who are sincerely faithful, and are true and living Members of Christ, or else it is a Body of Men, consisting of those who make an outward Profession and Shew of Christianity. This *Distinction* of the Members of the Christian Church, is very necessary to be observed, in order to our having right Apprehensions of the Things that are spoken in the New Testament concerning the *Church*.

First, I say, according to the Language and Style of the Sacred Writers the *Church* is to be understood concerning that Society of Men, which not only outwardly profess the true Faith of Christ, but sincerely believe in him, and live accordingly. Of the *Church*, taken in this Sense, the Apostle speaks, *Eph.* 5. 25. telling us, That *Christ loved the Church, and gave himself for it, that he might sanctifie and cleanse it with the washing of Water, by the Word, that he might present it to himself a glorious Church, not having Spot or Wrinkle, or any such Thing, but that it should be Holy and without Blemish.* No Man can possibly Question, Whether this be the *Church* I am speaking of, *i. e.* the truly Faithful, the Company of all those who are called out of the State of Sin into the State of Grace, *and shall be saved by Christ*. So when it is said, *God added to the Church daily such as should be saved*, Acts 2. 47. it is meant of those that truly believe, for this Church consists of *such as shall be saved*, such as were appointed and ordained by God to Salvation in his Eternal Decree. This Church is made up of all those, and those alone, who are elected by God, and regenerated by the Power of his Spirit.

And it is call'd by Divines the *Invisible Church*, because the Reality of their Election and Regeneration are known only to God himself: And likewise in Respect of several Effects and Benefits of saving Grace which are invisible, and because very often they that partake of them, are not easily discerned from those that have no Share in them. The Writers of the *Romish* Perswasion, look upon the Notion of the *Invisible Church* as a Chimera, and they boast that the true Catholick *Church* is always *Visible*. And some Protestant Writers seem not to relish the Distinction betwixt the *Visible and Invisible Church*. But if we duly weigh the Thing, it will be found that there is no Reason to dislike it, for when we say the Church of the Elect, and truly Godly is *Invisible*, we don't mean that it is absolutely and altogether so: For the true Church which shall be saved, is the Company of those who *profess* as well as believe. They are not only really sanctified in their Hearts, which is something inward: But they profess and serve the true God, which is outward. Whence it follows that the Church of the Elect is partly *Visible*, so far as it makes open Profession of Christianity, and unites together in God's Publick Service: But it is *Invisible* on this Account, that the Truth of their Belief in Christ, and the Sincerity of their Obedience are not seen by Men. True Faith and Piety are *Invisible*, therefore the *Church* is so called, in Respect of these, because they can't be seen by mortal Eyes. Who are truly Religious, is known only to God, who knoweth who are his. But by Men they can't be

discerned from the Wicked and Reprobate till the Last Day. Thus we see on what Grounds we may distinguish between the *Invisible* and the *Visible* Church.

This *Latter* Part of the *Distinction* I come to consider next, and to speak of the *Church Visible*, that is, as it is taken in Scripture for that Body of Men who profess the true Christian Faith, and join in the Worship of Christ, and perform the External Acts of the Christian Religion, though there is no certainty of their Sincerity in any of these; yea, though it may in some Measure be suspected that they are insincere, and have not the true and saving relish of Religion on their Hearts. Yet because their Hearts and inward Intentions cannot be known to Men, and as to outward View they pass for Christians, they are therefore reckoned to be of the *Church*; and of that denomination we find them to be, and to be called in the Writings of the Apostles. The Assembly of Believers at *Corinth* were call'd *the Church* and *Saints*, 1 Cor. 1. 1, 2. though (as it appears afterwards in that Epistle) many of them were very loose in their Principles and Practices. But they made visible Profession of Christianity, and were of the same Communion, they are therefore reputed as Members of a true Church, and have a Title to an External Saintship. *John Baptist* baptiz'd all that came to him confessing their Sins, *Mat.* 3. 6. *Simon* the Sorcerer, and other Hypocrites were baptized, and so admitted into the Church, *Acts* 8. 13. and till they were discovered, and ejected, they were of the Church. And this is call'd *the Visible Church*, because it is a Society of Men in visible Communion, who as to outward Appearance are of the Number of the Faithful. Thence our Church in its Articles hath thus defin'd *The visible Church of Christ*, It *is a Congregation of faithful Men* (professing the true Faith) *in which the pure Word of God is preached, and the Sacraments be Duly ministred according to Christ's Ordinance, in all those Things that of Necessity are requisite to the same*, Art. 19.

Thus those that are inwardly wicked, yea Reprobates, may be Members of the Church. *Sheep* and *Goats* may be together; *wise* and *foolish Virgins*; Sincere and Hypocrites. The visible Church is a Garden, where there are Weeds as well as Flowers: It is the Floor, where there is Corn and Chaff: It is that *Net*, in which are good and bad Fish, *Mat.* 13. 47. This is that *Field*, in which are Wheat and Tares, 13. 30. Of whom Christ speaks, *many are called, but few are chosen*, Mat. 20. 16. As they are *called*, they are of the Ἐκκλησία, of the *Church*, which is a Company of Men *called out* from among other Persons, as Pagans, Infidels, Jews, openly prophane Livers. The *Visible Church* consists of all those who are outwardly Christians, who make Profession of Faith, and so in the judgment of Charity are Christians, and of the Church. They have this Denomination, and that even in the Sacred Writ, if they live under the outward Means of Salvation, and joyn in Christian Communion, though they are not true Converts and unfeigned Believers, and living Members of Christ's Body. But we reckon them in the *Church* out of Charity, because we do not certainly know what they are, and can't judge peremptorily of their Condition. Thus I have shew'd, That there is Foundation for that Distinction of *Visible* and *Invisible*, as it is applied to the Church.

Now, I will shew in the next Place, That this Visible and Invisible Church put together make up all the Churches that are upon Earth. And from this arises this Five-fold Denomination of Churches, *viz.* 1. Catholick or Universal. 2. National. 3. Parochial or Congregational. 4. Representative. 5. Domestick. Which I will distinctly explain.

1. The *Catholick* or *Universal* Church (as 'tis styled in the Creed, and is call'd so, because 'tis spread over the whole World) is either *Catholick Visible*, or *Catholick Invisible*. The Latter is made up of all true Believers throughout the World: It is Christ's true Flock dispersed here and there in the Earth. This Church Christ speaks of in *Mat.* 16. 18. and 'tis the first Place where the Word *Church* is mentioned, *on this Rock will I build my Church*, I will establish my mystical Body, and the Universal Number of the Elect over the Face of the whole Earth. It is thus defin'd by our Church, *It is an Universal Congregation or Fellowship of God's faithful and elect People, built upon the Foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the head Corner-stone*, (Second Part of the Homily for *Witsunday*.) And this *Holy Catholick Invisible Church* is chiefly meant in the Creed. But the former, *i. e.* the *Catholick Visible*, is made up of all professing Faith and true Worship

Worship throughout the Universe, and is *the Holy Church throughout all the World*, which the Hymn used in our Church's Service speaks of. And it is styled *Holy*, because it professes the Holy Faith of Jesus, and enjoys his sound Doctrine, and Divine Ordinances.

Now this whole Body of Christians which I have been speaking of, can't meet all together in a Body to Worship God, and therefore for the conveniency of meeting together, and partaking of Church-privileges and Ordinances, it is distributed into *particular Churches*, This Distribution is like that of Kingdoms and Empires, where there are several *Cities*, *Provinces*, and *Regions*, but they make but one *Kingdom*; so there is one Church divided into several lesser Churches or Congregations, like the main *Ocean*, which tho' in it self but one entire Element, yet assumes several Titles and Names according to the various Regions and Shores which it washes. The Church-militant, like one and the same Ocean is distinguish'd into several parts, according to the different Places and Regions it belongs to. For the Catholick Church is that which consists of divers particular Companies or Assemblies of Believers, or such as profess the Belief of the Articles of the Christian Faith. And all these particular Companies and Churches make one *Catholick Church*.

Secondly, I am to speak of a *National Church*, which is the first and most conspicuous part of the Catholick Church. Now *a National Church* is that which hath in it many particular Congregations united under one Form of Church-Government, and consenting in the same Articles of Faith, and Way of Worship. Thus there is the Church of *England*, of *Scotland*, of *Denmark*, of, *&c.* Thus the whole Body of the *Jews* is commonly call'd in the *Old Testament*, *Cahal*, (which we Translate the *Congregation*) the same with *Church*; and is therefore rendred by the *Seventy* ἐκκλησία. It was a *National Church* in the most proper Sense; but there was no *Christian* Church of that Kind or Denomination in Christ's or the Apostle's Time, because there could be none in those Circumstances; for though some Cities, yet no whole Nation embraced the Gospel. But *since* it hath been otherwise, and whole Kingdoms have agreed in the Profession of the same Faith of Christ, and joyn'd in the same way of Worship, and on that account are to be esteem'd as National Churches. But they are made up of the Members of the Visible and Invisible Church, *i. e.* some of them are only a Church by external Profession and Communion, but others are inwardly and really Christians. There is this mixture in all National Churches.

But, *Thirdly*, The Universal Church, and National Churches being a large and dispersed Society, and not able to assemble together in one place, these were distributed into several *particular Congregations*, and these according to the Style of the Holy Writings are call'd *Churches*, and that most frequently, as in *Acts* 8. 1. *The Church which was at Jerusalem.* Acts 13. 1. *the Church at Antioch.* 1 Cor. 1. 2. *the Church of God at Corinth.* Acts 18. 22. *the Church of Cæsarea.* 2 Thes. 1. 1. *the Church of the Thessalonians*, and so in *Acts* 5. 11.—14. 23. And in *Acts* 20. 28. the *Church* is a particular Congregation; for 'tis the same with the *Flock* belonging to some particular Pastor; and so such and such a Company of Christians met together, and instructed by their Pastor, Constitute a Church. Thus we read of *all Churches of the Saints*, 1 Cor. 14. 33. *the care of all the Churches*, 2 Cor. 11. 28. And sometimes the particular Assembly of Christians belonging to one Province or a great City are call'd Churches, as *the Seven Churches in Asia*, Rev. 1. 4. Thus the lesser Bodies of Christians in particular Cities and Towns under the care of particular Pastors and Guides are *Churches* of Christ. And in these also the former distinction of the *Visible* and *Invisible* Church takes place; for these Parochial Assemblies, or otherwise denominated Congregations are made up generally of true Believers, and of those that have only a shew of Faith and Godliness. And if any Man thinks that true Holiness be necessarily requir'd in every Member of a particular Church, he is in a mistake; for it can't be expected that all the Members of every Congregation should be possessors of real Sanctity, and be Pure and Spotless.

Fourthly, There is a *Representative Church* which also the Scripture owns, *Mat.* 18. 17. *Tell it unto the Church*; bring your Case before the Governors of the Church, *i. e.* either the Pastor of the particular Church you are of, or more met together, (with some select Persons of the *Laity* joyn'd with them, as we find it must be understood by what was done in the *Apostle's* Times) to hear and determine

mine concerning Ecclesiastical Matters. The *Church* here spoken of can't be the *Catholick Church*, because that can't be conven'd in one place, and for the same reason it can't be the *National Church*, taken in its full Latitude; nor is it the *whole Body* of a *particular Congregation* or Church; for it is improper for the Members to appeal to themselves only; wherefore 'tis probable that those that are the Heads and Guides of the People, they that exercise the Ministerial Function, are here meant. The *Church* is taken for them that execute the Ministerial Office, and have, and use a Power and proper Jurisdiction and Government for the Good of all the Church. For though all the People are the Church, yet there are some chosen and set apart to be the Officers and Governours of the rest, and they are call'd peculiarly the *Church*. The *Church* comprehends all, Lay and Clergy; yet for Debating about, or Decision of Controversies Ecclesiastical, the Clergy are the proper Members of the Church. They being set apart and Ordain'd to holy things, and Christ's Presence and Spirit being particularly promis'd to *them*, [Lo, I am with *you* to the end of the World] these are fittest to determine concerning Ecclesiastical Government and Discipline, and the like; they have a special Commission for this.

But it will be objected, that *the Spiritual Man judgeth all things*, 1 Cor. 2. 15. and such is every Christian; therefore every Christian is a competent Judge of these Matters. I answer, he judges only as to himself, for his own Direction to Salvation, but not to govern others, he being a private Person, and without Authority and Warrant.

The *Catholick* or *Universal Church Representative*, are the principal and chief Persons of the Ecclesiastical Order Assembled together to debate and decide Matters appertaining to Christianity.

A *National Church Representative* are the eminent Ecclesiasticks of such or such a Nation met together about Religious Affairs, and to settle and establish them. So saith our Church very rightly, *Can.* 139. *A National Synod of the Clergy of England is the Church Representative.* And it would be according to the Primitive Pattern, if some chosen out of the Laity were joyned to them, for in the Apostle's Times the *Brethren* were admitted to Consultation, and concurr'd in their Sentence concerning the Controversies that were in the Church, *Acts* 15. 21, 23. It is true this was before there was a *National Christian Church*, but the Practice of the Apostles is very applicable here, and therefore seeing all the Church can't be Assembled into one place, some Person's Representative of the whole Clergy and Laity should be Assembled and Entrusted with the common Voice and Suffrage of all, and be look'd upon as the whole Body.

And so there is likewise frequent occasion for a *Church Representative of a particular Congregation*, i. e. the Ministers and Pastors of particular Congregations, and, if Occasion require, some of the Members of those particular Assemblies are to be added to them; and such a Body Representative hath the Power of the whole Assembly, and of every individual Person in it, to do whatsoever the whole Body of the Church, (if they could be Assembled together) could do.

Fifthly, And lastly, there is a *lesser Church*, that is, of a *Family*, which the Scripture mentions. The *true Faith* which began in *Adam*, and was retain'd in the Families of *Seth*, and *Enos*, and *Noah*, and thence dispers'd through the World, was afterwards in its Purity to be found only in *Abraham*'s *Family*. The Church may be said to have been confin'd to his House, at the calling of him out of *Chaldea*. In the *New Testament* we read of a *Church in a House*, Rom. 16. 5. 1 *Cor.* 16. 19. And this Domestick Church is mention'd again in *Col.* 4. 15. where by the *Church* are meant the Christians who usually assembled there to Worship God. So the faithful of one Family, namely, of *Philemon*'s, are call'd *the Church in his House*, Epist. v. 2. And according to *Tertullian*, * *Three make a Church*. And even in this small number, (as well as in Churches of other Denominations before-named) the *Visible* and *Invisible Church* may have a share. And thus I have shew'd how *diversly* the *Church* is taken in the style of Scripture, the observing of which is of very great use. Most of our Disputes in Divinity are about the acceptions of words; for these are differently taken in the Bible, and thence arise our Controversies. Wherefore if we can rightly distinguish between words, we solve the Difficulty. Thus it is in the present Case concerning the *Church*, and that is the reason why I have so largely and particularly gone through the various Acceptions of this Word.

* Ubi tres, Ecclesia est. *Exhortat. ad Castitat.*

And

And, now, *Thirdly*, We may gather from what hath been said the *true Nature and Notion* of the Church, which is the next thing I undertook to shew; for I have propounded and explain'd these different Considerations and Denominations of the *Church*, on purpose to give us Light as to this Matter. We have heard then that there are *greater* or *lesser* Assemblies of Christian People, and these are either of the *Elect and truly Godly*, or they are of those that are *seemingly only Godly*; and it appears that a mixture of these is in all Churches. But the *truly Catholick Invisible Church*, we are chiefly, and in the first place to joyn our selves to the Body of true Believers throughout the World. This is *the Holy Catholick Church* which the Creed mentions. This is no other than the Faithful consider'd as one Collective and Mystical Body, having Christ for their Head. This is the *Kingdom of God*, the *Body of Christ*, *Christ's Spouse*, (Cant. 6. 9.) and is properly called ἐκκλησία, which if you turn into *Latin*, 'tis *evocatio*, a *calling out*, i. e. 'tis the Company of Men that are called out of the World. The Church of Christ is gather'd out from the *Heathens* and *Jews*, &c. and separated from them; and it is gather'd and separated again from Formal and Carnal Christians, and those that are Christians in outward Profession only. The Church is taken from among these, to Believe and Repent, and to be of the number of the Spiritual and truly Faithful, and such as are to be Eternally saved. This *Catholick Church* is but one all the World over, and it being but one, there can be no Salvation out of it. It is true, many shall be saved who are not now *of the Church*, because they are not yet converted and call'd; many are Predestinated to Eternal Life who yet for a time are not of this Body. But all that are to be saved must first or last be of the *Church*, i. e. the Catholick Church, that being the Collection of all Regenerate, and chosen Souls, and true Believers. Every one therefore ought to be very sollicitous to be of the Catholick Church, that Body of true Believers throughout the whole World, who tho' their particular Rites and Usages are different, yet their Faith is one and the same, and their Holiness is not counterfeit, but real, and Salvation is as it were entail'd upon them. No *Particular Church*, (as a *Particular* one) can claim this; and no Man shall be Damn'd for not being of this or that Particular Church, but because he is not of the Catholick Church. Not but that there is *Salvation* in Particular Churches, (as *Episcopal*, *Presbyterian*, *Lutheran*, *Calvinian*, &c.) but not *quatenus* such; but we are saved *as* we are of the *Catholick Church*.

But I say not this to disparage, much less to throw down the *Visible Particular Churches* of Christ, for they are of Christ's Appointment, and they are of absolute necessity; for as there is an entire *Invisible Church of the Elect*, so there are also by God's Order and Appointment *Particular Visible Churches*, and Communities of Persons joyning together in the same Profession of Faith and Practice, consisting also of some Members of the Church which is call'd *Invisible*. Yea, I might observe that *Particular Churches* of Christ are denominated from the *Catholick Church*; for the Epithet *Catholick* was given anciently, not only to the whole Church of Christ, but to Particular Churches. The Church of *Smyrna* calls her self the *Catholick Church*, in an *Epistle* which she writ to the Churches of *Pontus*, *Euseb. Eccl. Hist.* l. 4. c. 15. So the Church of *Alexandria* is call'd in the Inscription of an Epistle which *Constantine* sent to them, *Athanas. Tom.* 1. And as for the Church of *Rome*, I might produce several Epistles of very ancient Bishops of *Rome*, as *Leo* the First, *Symmachus*, and others, who subscribe themselves Bishops of the *Roman Catholick Church*. Thus sometimes *Catholick Church* express'd a *particular* Company of Churches continuing in the true Faith with the rest of the Church of God, in opposition to *Hereticks* and *Schismaticks*, as the Catholick Church in *Smyrna*, the Catholick Church in *Alexandria*, and in *Rome* before it was corrupted. These Churches were call'd *Catholick*, because of their coherence with the Church, which is properly so call'd, *viz.* the Christian Church dispersed over all the World. And indeed it was the Title of all individual Persons that profess'd the Orthodox Faith; *Catholick* was the usual Name, and by this they were distinguish'd from *Hereticks*, as we learn from *Augustine* in *Psal.* 67. and other Writers. And therefore here I must declare that I see no reason why the Church of *Rome* should be blamed for styling her self *Catholick*, supposing she held the true Catholick Faith. Some Writers object it to her as a great Solecism; they say it is as much as an *Universal Particular*. But you see there is little ground for this Objection; they had not read or observ'd that this Epithet is conferr'd on *Individual Churches*; but this by the bye.

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The main thing here to be observ'd is this, that whilst we assert and defend the Dignity and Eminency of the *Catholick Church*, we do at the same time assert and vindicate the *Particular Churches* of Christ. And no Man can *believe* the one, (as here in this Article of the Creed) unless he believes the others; for some of these, or some parts of them are parts and Members of that. And this is certain that the Holy Ghost hath order'd that the Particular Churches, whether *National*, or *Parochial* that we are Members of, should prepare us to be fit Members of the *Catholick* Church. We are to hold visible Communion with the former in the visible Offices of God's Publick Worship, and in the acknowledg'd Profession of Faith and Manners, that we may give Testimony to others, as well as to our selves, that we appertain to the latter. Nay, I may add, that we cannot prove our selves to be true Members of the Catholick Church, if we refuse to maintain Communion with the Servants of God in particular Assemblies. And no Man of sober Thoughts will attempt to deny this, if he considers this one thing, that the Design or End of God's Erecting and Constituting both the Catholick Church and the Particular Churches is the very same, *i. e.* the promoting of the Salvation of Men. And therefore it is a good Definition which Mr. *Thorndike* (in his *Epilogue*) gives of the Church, *The Church is a Society or Body founded by God, to have Communion in the Service of God, for the attaining Everlasting Life.* For this takes in all the kinds of the thing defined, all true Churches, the *Jewish*, as well as the *Christian* Church. Or, if we should enlarge the Definition of the *Christian Church*, and make it compleat; I conceive it may be express'd thus, A Society of Men joyn'd together in the Profession of the same Christian Faith and Truth, and in Communion with God and one another, in the use of such Ordinances and Institutions as God hath appointed, as Praying, Hearing the Word, Receiving the Sacraments, and in all other things conducing to the Worship of God, and leading their Lives in some measure according to the Rules of the Gospel, and this under the Conduct and Discipline of lawful Pastors and Governors; or in case of necessity, such as be reputed and taken to be so. This short but comprehensive Account of a *Christian Church* presents us with the *true Nature, and right Notion* of it; and we see, all the Ingredients of it tend to make Men happy, and to advance and effect their Salvation. I might shew this in the several parts of it, but I think it will not be required of me, it is so plain and obvious.

I proceed to the Fourth Thing I undertook, that is, (after this general Nature of the Church, and especially the Christian Church visible) to acquaint you with the *Particular* and *Distinct Jurisdiction* of this Christian Visible Church, or, which is all one, to prove that it is a Society distinct from that of the *Common-wealth*. This is manifest from its having its *Officers*, its *Offices*, its *Laws*, its *Penalties*, its *Ends*, distinct from those of the Common-wealth. *First*, The *Officers* of one are distinct from those of the other. As it was in the Church of God among the *Jews*, which was of his own Appointment, the Priests and the *Levites* were Church-Officers distinct from Magistrates and Judges who were Ministers of State; for none of these could Sacrifice, or execute the Priest's Office: So did Christ Ordain it in his Church, which is to last to the Consummation of all things; those that bear Office in it, those that are the Rulers and Governors of it are Persons of a distinct Character from those that preside in civil Affairs, as we may satisfie our selves from 1 *Tim.* 5. 17. *Heb.* 13. 17. *Acts* 20. 28. 1 *Pet.* 5. 2. 1 *Cor.* 12. 28: 1 *Thes.* 5. 12. *Rom.* 12. 8. where the former are distinguish'd by their Titles of *Apostles, Prophets, Bishops, Overseers, Elders, Pastors, Teachers, Ministers.*

And truly the difference between the Clergy and others hath been more plainly and distinctly kept up and maintain'd under the *Gospel* than ever it was before. *Ecclesiastical* Power, as well as *Civil*, seems to have been founded at first on Paternal Authority, for the Fathers of Families were not only Rulers over their own Progeny, but they executed the *Priestly Office*; which descended by course, together with the Princely Dignity to the First-born of each Family. Whence 'tis thought by some that *Esau*, for selling his Primogeniture, is styl'd *a profane Person*, Heb. 12. 16. depriving himself thereby of the Right of Priesthood. He should have been both *Prince* and *Priest* by virtue of his Birthright. Thus in *Melchisedeck* the *Priesthood* and *Principality* were together, and so they were before in *Noah*, and afterwards in *Job*, of both whom we read that they offer'd Sacrifice, and accordingly they were both Sacred and Civil Rulers. And among the *Jews at first* all the Eldest Sons in Families were Priests as well as Governors. So it was among the *Heathens*,

Heathens, at *Athens* and *Rome* their Kings were invested with the Sacerdotal Dignity; and in all Countries and Kingdoms of the World the Soveraign Power and the Priesthood were united in the same Persons. *Moses* was the first that distinguish'd them, or rather God, by whose Appointment *Moses* was *Ruler*, and *Aaron Priest*, and ever afterwards these two Functions were distinct, and more entirely separated than they were in *Moses*'s Time; for there may be some ground to think that he did exercise *some part* of the Priestly Office upon occasion. But in the succeeding Times the Priesthood was wholly disjoyn'd from the Regal Power, excepting only what happen'd in the close of the *Jewish* State, by reason of the Corruption and Degeneracy of that Age. But when our Saviour came he renew'd and continued the *Distinction* between these Powers, and solemnly confirm'd it by Ordaining his *Apostles*, and settling the distinction between them and the *People*. And afterwards this Distinction was more amply establish'd when the *different Orders* and *Degrees* in the Evangelical Ministry were particularly set down and determin'd by the Inspired Writers. Of which I shall speak under the next General Head; and indeed I have partly anticipated what I was to say there.

Secondly, As the *Officers* of the Christian Church, so it follows that their *Offices* are distinct from those of the Civil and Secular Body. It is peculiar to the Ministerial Function to Administer the two Sacraments, Baptism and the Lord's Supper, to offer up Publick Prayers, to Preach, and to exercise the Power of the Keys, and to Govern the Church, which are things wholly of a different nature from what the civil Rulers, or any of the Laity are employ'd about. And therefore it is plain that those who are displeas'd that a peculiar and distinct rank of Persons engross these Offices to themselves, do not consider the true nature of things, for when the *Offices* are distinct, it is necessary that the *Officers* should be so too.

Thirdly, The Church hath different *Laws* and *Constitutions* from those of the Common-wealth, which argues her to be a distinct Society. As it was in the *Jewish* Church, the Rules and Laws which belong'd to it, as it was an Ecclesiastical Body, were distinguish'd from those of the State and civil Polity; so the Christian Church, by our Saviour's own Appointment, had from its beginning peculiar Laws and Injunctions relating to the Sacraments, to Prayer, to Preaching, to Singing, to all the Evangelical Administrations, and also to Discipline and Government. The Common-wealth receives its Laws from the civil Magistrate, but the Church receives her's from Christ himself, and in the Holy Scriptures of the *New Testament* they are plainly set down. There is a certain Rule for this Church-Government as to the *essential* parts of it; Christ and the Apostles have particularly set down the Laws appertaining to this Government. These are not to be changed, it is not in the Power of any to alter the Offices for Rules of Government; such are Ordaining of Ministers to Preach the Gospel, and to Administer the Sacraments, Admonition, Excommunication. Yet the things relating to this Government which are not Essential, but Circumstantial only, may be alter'd, as Occasion, Time, Emergent Reason require. And the Church, by Virtue of its Power derived from the Apostles, hath Power of making Laws at this Day, for Preservation of Peace, Order, and Decency.

Fourthly, The *Punishments* of the Church, and of the civil State are different, and consequently the former is a distinct Body from the latter. It is true, the Church, *as Church*, hath no coactive Power; for it is the civil Magistrate, not the Church-governor that hath the Power of the Sword. But because no Church, or any other Society can be upheld without Discipline, therefore Christ hath given to his Ministers a Power to Rebuke and Chastise Offenders, and if they reform not, to debar them Communion, and to eject them from the Assembly of the Faithful, that they may be asham'd of their Sin, and repent and amend, which when they do, they are admitted again into the Communion of the Church. The Writings of the Evangelists and Apostles, (*Mat.* 18. 17. 1 *Cor.* 5. 5.) acquaint us that there is this Spiritual Jurisdiction in the Churches of Christ, they have a Warrant thus to Censure and Punish wilful and obstinate Transgressors, and to expel them from their Society. But this severe part must be acted, as with great Gravity and Authority, so with as great Wisdom and Prudence, and with Christian Tenderness and Compassion.

Fifthly, and lastly, The Church and the civil State are constituted for *different Ends*, and therefore we may rationally inferr thence that the Church is a distinct Body or Society. This was erected for Spiritual, the other for politick Ends. The Ecclesiastick task is to rule Souls; the Magistrate's Power is over Men's Bodies, and outward Concerns; which, by the way, proves that which I said before, that the Power of the Church is wholly Spiritual; for the Church, as the Church, looks to the Souls of Men, and brings them to Eternal Salvation and Happiness. Now as the End, so the Means must be Spiritual. In short, the Common-wealth rules us as *Men*, the Church as *Christians*; and this, (as well as what I have said already) shews that the Church is to be look'd upon as a distinct Body from the secular one, and that the Magistrate's Power is quite of another nature from the Spiritual Power, tho' it is not in the least inconsistent with it, much less opposite to it. *To assemble and meet together* is an essential Right of the Church, and abstract from civil Power; but the Time and Place, and other such external Circumstances are in the Prince's Disposal. Yea, because the Common-wealth is not in the Church, but the Church in the Common-wealth, (as was said against the *Donatists*, who vilified the Magistrates) in all Ecclesiastical Matters he is ever suppos'd to be the Temporal Judge and Moderator, and no Laws of Christian Churches are esteem'd valid without his consent, if it may be had. But still it is undeniable that there is a Power belongs to the Church as 'tis the Church; and there is an Ecclesiastical State, (as I may so say) distinct from the civil State, and Common-wealth. For the things that I have here mention'd distinguish it from all other Societies in the World.

To prove which further, let me add this to all that hath been said, that *the Society of the Church* flourished without the Aid of the Common-wealth; nay, when it was Persecuted and Opposed by it; therefore it is a peculiar Society which can subsist *alone*. And as for *Church-government* it appears that it is not Arbitrary, for there was a Church-Government appointed by the Apostles, and this Government was exercised by them and the Church that succeeded, not only without, but against the Approbation of the civil Magistrate. Before the Empire was Christian, the Christians had and exercis'd this Ecclesiastical Government; which is a confutation of the *Erastian* Doctrine, which places it wholly in the civil Magistrate; for there was Church-Government when there were not any Christian Magistrates. The Church had this Jurisdiction from *Christ*, and exercis'd it even before any civil Governors medled with the Church, and when the *Roman* Emperors were Heathens. Afterwards, the Church call'd Synods by its own Power, before the Time of *Constantine*. This makes it manifest that the Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction is independent on the *State*, and can't be taken from the *Church*, and that the Church can subsist alone of it self; which is an irrefragable Argument that it is a Society distinct from that of the civil State.

And to authorize and confirm; yea, to perpetuate all these different Rights and Privileges of the Ecclesiastical Society or Corporation, there is a peculiar Charter granted to it by Christ the Lord and Head of the Church, *Mat.* 28. 18, 19. *All Power is given unto me in Heaven and in Earth; go ye therefore*, (depending on this my Power, and back'd by my Authority) *and teach all Nations, Baptizing them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the World*; I am not only with *you*, but with all your lawful *Successors* in the Ministry of the Gospel, to assist and bless them in the faithful discharge of all their Ecclesiastical Duties, and in their upholding the Rights of that Society which I have solemnly Instituted and Appointed. This is the Divine Commission or Warrant which we of the Clergy act by. It is, you see, by particular Order from Christ that the Church *still* remains instated in those Privileges, and in that Power which it had *at first*. The Offices are the same, and the Divine Authority by which we act is the same; for we see that the very same Administration which was vouchsafed to the Apostles themselves is transmitted by Christ to their Successors, and shall continue *to the end of the World*. If we consider this, and the great Importance of it; we can't wonder that the *Being of the Church* is an express *Article* of our *Christian Faith*. So much concerning the *First General Head* of my Discourse on this former part of the Article, wherein I undertook to treat of the *Names* and *Nature* of the *Church*.

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Officers and *Ministers* of the CHURCH.

THE Second General Head that I am to insist upon is concerning the *Officers* and *Ministers* of the Church; under which Head I will treat of these following things: 1. That there is a *distinct Order of Persons* to Officiate in the Church, and to preside over holy things. 2. *Who* those Persons are, and what their particular Office is. 3. What *Call* they must have to it. 4. What *Maintenance* and *Provision* they are to have.

First, It is evident that there is a *distinct Order of Men* appointed by Christ to preside in the Church, and to exercise the Ministerial Function. This is conformable to the Divine Administration under the *first* and *Patriarchal* Oeconomy, when the Priesthood, and the Execution of that Office were invested in the First-born, and in Masters and Governors of Families, as was said before. In those Times the Ministerial or Sacerdotal Power was seated not in the Community, but in select Persons. Every Patriarch in his respective Family discharg'd the Office of Sacrificing, as may be gather'd from sundry Passages in the Sacred Records. But afterwards under the *Law* we find the Priesthood more particularly and solemnly establish'd; the Publick Ministry in the Church belong'd to some peculiar Persons, and not to others. But I have already observ'd that our greatest and solidest Proof is from the Scriptures of the *New Testament*, where a *distinct Order of Men* in the Church, is plainly and expressly establish'd. We read that the Evangelical Ministry of the *New Testament* was at first wholly seated in *Christ* alone, that Great High-priest and Bishop of our Souls; but soon after he was pleas'd to Institute a Ministry in the Church Subordinate to his own; namely, *Twelve Apostles*, Luke 6. 13. and *Seventy Disciples*, Luke 10. 1. who had Commission to Preach the Gospel, and perform the other Offices appertaining to the Christian Ministry. This was the Form and Face of the Ecclesiastical Administration when Christ was on Earth. After his departure the Apostles planted Churches, conferr'd Orders, and manag'd Spiritual Affairs; and for Attendance on them, and for Distribution of the Eucharist and Alms, they appointed *Deacons*, Acts 6. 3. and Ordain'd *Presbyters* by Imposition of Hands, *Acts* 14. 23. who were to succeed them in the Ministerial Office, and to take care of the particular Churches committed to their Trust, and to Edifie the People that were their proper Charge.

But to return to the Times of our Saviour, in *Mat.* 28. 20. There was not only a distinct Order of Men settled in the Christian Church, to *Baptize* and *Teach*, but we have taken notice before that it shall continue *to the end of the World.* It was Christ's Pleasure and Appointment that there shall in all Ages of the World be a peculiar Rank of Persons who are to be Successors to the Apostles in Preaching and Baptizing, and the like Ecclesiastical Offices; for the Apostles themselves were to be upon Earth but a short time, and consequently Christ could not be *with them* here; therefore Christ's Words must be meant concerning his being with their *Successors*. Whence it is undeniably gather'd that there shall be a standing Office of Ministers in the Church throughout all Generations. Of these our Saviour speaks in another place, *John* 20. 21, 23. *As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you; whosesoever Sins you remit, they are remitted, and whosesoever Sins you retain, they are retain'd.* Here is their Mission, and here is their Office, and both are peculiar to them; for this Power of remitting and retaining Sins, (which is the Power of the Keys) was not given to all that were Christ's Disciples, but to the Apostles only and their Successors; that is, the Ministers of the Gospel in their ordinary Office of Presbyters. Every Believer and Saint had not this conferr'd upon him, but a distinct Order of Persons was honour'd with it.

Again, what is more clear from the Writings of the Apostles? There is a plain difference made by St. *Paul* between Ministers and others, 1 *Cor.* 12. 29. *Are all Apostles, are all Prophets, are all Teachers?* As much as to say, they are not all so, but peculiar Persons are invested with these Dignities. In *v.* 17. he had compared the Church to an humane Body, in which there is difference of Members; and in 27, 28. Verses he applies it, *Now ye are the Body of Christ, and Members in particular. And God hath set some in the Church, First, Apostles, Secondarily, Prophets, Thirdly, Teachers.* These Principal and Ruling Members are *set in the Church*, appointed distinct from the inferior and meaner ones, and they are designed to superintend over the others. This Distinction of Officers in the Church from other Persons is again maintain'd by the same Apostle in *Eph.* 11, 4. 12. *He gave some Apostles, and some Prophets, and some Evangelists, and some Pastors and Teachers*; for the perfecting, (or rather according to the *Greek* Word * *for the joyning or knitting together*) *of the Saints, for the Work of the Ministry, for the edifying of the Body of Christ*, that is, the Church. And this is to be *till we all come in the Unity of the Faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect Man, &c.* that is, till the Church be consummated. So that the Perpetuity of the Evangelical Ministers is hereby confirm'd. There is a select Company of Persons who are to preside in the Church of Christ, to Teach, to Administer the Sacraments, to exercise the Power of the Keys, *&c.* and this their Ministry is fixed even till the end of the World, and the final Consummation of all things.

* πρὸς κατ-αρτισμὸν.

Moreover, that the Ministry and Government of the Church belong not to all the Faithful, but to particular Ministers and Overseers, is manifest from such Texts as these, *Know them who labour among you, and are over you in the Lord*, 1 Thes. 5. 12. *Obey them that have the rule over you, for they watch for your Souls*, Heb. 13. 17. And other places of the like nature and import might be mention'd, wherein the People are commanded to be Subject to their Ministers, as their Spiritual Governors set over them by God. From whence it directly and unquestionably follows that Ministers and People are really distinct, and that there is a peculiar Rank of Men in the Church who are different from the Laity. So from *Gal.* 6. 6. where the Apostle distinctly mentions *Teachers, and those that are taught in the Word*, it is clear that in the visible Catholick Church of Christ there are two sorts of Persons, Teachers and People.

But some *Socinians* and *Anabaptists*, who hold that there is not a peculiar Order of Men to Preach, but that any one that is Gifted, (as they are wont to speak) may publickly exercise that Office, alledge the Practice of the Church of *Corinth*, 1 *Cor.* 14. 26. *When you come together, every one of you hath a Doctrine, an Interpretation*, yea, in a foregoing Chapter the Apostle permits *Women* to Pray and Prophecy in the Publick Assemblies, *Chap.* 11. *v.* 5, 6. To which I answer, the Apostle doth not speak here of the *ordinary* way of Teaching, (which he had settled in another place) but the *Extraordinary*. This ought to be observ'd for the right understanding of these Passages. And that the Case was really so, is evident from this, that the Apostle allows *Women* to Prophecy here, but when he speaks of the *usual* and *settled* Order of the Church, (as towards the close of the 14th Chapter, *v.* 35, 36. and in 1 *Tim.* 2. 11, 12.) he absolutely declares it unlawful and unsufferable for that Sex to Speak and Teach in the Congregations. Whence it must needs inferr that the Apostle Treats in this place of the Extraordinary, not the Ordinary and Stated Practice of the Christian Church. According to the former, any Persons of either Sex might Teach in the Publick Meetings of the Faithful, they being extraordinarily stirr'd up by the Holy Spirit, and enabled to speak with divers Tongues; but according to the latter Practice and Course of Teaching, one single Person only spoke to the People as their Pastor, and he deliver'd what he said in his Mother-tongue. Wherefore let those that plead the other Practice in the Church of *Corinth* as Universal, and to be receiv'd now, speak with divers Languages when they Preach, or else they say nothing to the Purpose; for the Apostle in the places afore-cited speaks of what was Extraordinary in the Church, and therefore it is not to be applied to the perpetual Practice of it. It is plain then that those places are alledg'd in vain, and that from what hath been said before, it is evident that the Writings of the *New Testament* are a full Proof of this Proposition, that there is a particular Office of the Ministry, not in common with other Christians.

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It is true, if we respect the bare Words *Clergy* and *Laity*, that Distinction is not to be found in the Sacred Writings, but Terms equivalent (as I have shew'd) occurr frequently there, which is Satisfactory to any wise Man. And as for those very Words themselves, they are to be found *before the Erection of Popery*, which some have doubted of. But their doubts may easily be cleared, by consulting not only *Clement* the *Roman* in his *Epistle* to the *Corinthians*, but *Origen* in his 11th *Homily* on *Jeremiah*, and *Eusebius* in his *Ecclesiastical History*, Book 10. chap. 7. and *Jerom* in his *Epistle to Nepotian*, who gives the * Reason of the Title of *Clergy-men*. And tho' I lay no stress on the Terms *Clerus* and *Clerici*, yet this must be said that these Words themselves import, That the Ministers of the Church are *distinct* from the People. But we have gone upon higher Grounds than this, and have prov'd that the Distinction of Officers in the Church from the People is founded on our Saviour's own Institution, and on the express Doctrine of his Apostles. Our Lord having erected a Church, it was requisite in Order to the preserving and keeping it up, to institute a Ministry who are to preside over it, to teach and rule it. It was necessary to appoint a distinct Company of Persons, to take care of it, and to perform those Offices and Trusts which are needful for its Preservation and Edification. They that think and act otherwise, confound those two Ranks of Men, which are made really distinct by Christ and his Apostles.

* Propterea vocantur Clerici vel quia de sorte sunt Domini, vel quia ipse Dominus sors, id est, pars Clericorum est.

But *Reason* (as well as *Scripture*) is of our Side, for even this dictates a particular Order of Men to officiate in Religious and Divine Matters. This we see in the *Gentile* World, the common Suggestions of Nature, and the innate Reverence of a Deity, taught them that some Persons are to be peculiarly appointed for the Mysteries and Ceremonies of their Religion. As they had the common Direction of Reason to pitch upon some External Rites, so likewise to chuse certain Ministers and Officers of Religion, and to make them distinct from the rest of the People. The same Principle dictates the like in the *Christian* Church. For First, the Ministry is founded in the Necessities of Mankind. The whole Community of Christians cannot execute the Offices which are requisite in the Church, and therefore it was necessary, that the Execution of them should be devolved on some particular Persons. Though some take it ill, That a select Order hath monopolized the Ministry, and are very angry that they have got as it were a Patent for it; yet herein they act very irrationally, and are displeased without Cause, for a standing Gospel Ministry is most agreeable to the Needs of the Church: For the whole Work, as it respects Instruction, Worship, Discipline and Government, can't be discharg'd by all, and therefore some peculiar Men must be chosen out for that Purpose, to take care of the Church, and to look to the right ordering of it.

Secondly, There must be these distinct Officers in the Church, because all are not fit for this Employment. In order to the due discharging of the Ministerial Function, a Stock of Humane Learning ought to be layed in, and other great Preparations are requisite. All Holy Men make the Church, but they are only some choice Persons that are fit to be Rulers of it. Natural Reason taught them of old that the most excellent and accomplish'd Persons were to be employ'd in Divine and Spiritual Offices, whence it was that the Regal and Sacerdotal Rights met sometimes in the same Man. This is certain, and unalterable, That those who are called to the Sacred Function in the Church should be of great Worth and Eminency. *Who is sufficient for these Things?* Said One who had more than ordinary Sufficiency for this so important a Work. How then shall others be able to stand under this heavy, but honourable Burthen? This is enough to perswade us of the Necessity of a distinct Order and Officers in the Church, who are to be chosen from among the rest, because of their Transcendent worth and Excellency, and their peculiar Fitness for that Sacred Task.

Thirdly, It is necessary that such be appointed and settled in the Church, because the Offices themselves which are to be performed by them, ought to be discharged with the greatest Exactness. Therefore they must be executed by those that are separated to this Work, and can entirely attend upon it, such as are not only fit and able (as we said before) but devote themselves to this alone, according to that of the Apostle, *Give thyself wholly to it*, 1 *Tim.* 4. 5. For Religion is the highest Concern, what is Sacred is of the greatest Moment; and therefore

therefore, the Administration of Divine Things ought to be very Accurate and Solemn: And consequently there ought to be those who shall make it their Business to attend to this great Work. God hath appointed that the Covenant of Grace and Salvation shall be preach'd to the World by his Ministers, he gathers his Church by them, and by them he upholds and governs it. The Professors of Law and Physick are busied about the Estates and Bodies of Men, but it is Divinity only that takes care of their Souls. It is the Task of this, and the Pastoral Employment to disappoint the Devils Malice, to rescue Souls from Hell, to render the Purpose of God for the Salvation of Men prosperous and successful: And consequently there ought not to be any Worldly Avocations and Employment to divert them from their Great Concern. For this, this alone is enough to fill up all their Time, to employ all their Thoughts, to exhaust all their Powers. It is fit and reasonable, That the Service and Worship we pay to God be the best and purest, the fullest and perfectest we are able to give: It ought to be in all Respects, and as to all Circumstances compleat: And from thence it will follow, That some peculiar Persons should be set apart to attend it, and it only, and to manage it with the greatest Skill and Zeal. This yields a sufficient Reason why the Publick Offices of Religion are consigned to some certain Persons, some few that are set apart for that End. Thus in respect of the Officers themselves, it was necessary that there should be a particular Order or Society of Men in the Church, on purpose to take Care of Men's Souls, and more immediately to advance the Ends of Religion: And these Men are really distinct from the *Laity*.

But though this be a grand Truth, and of the first Rank, yet I conceive there are some *Restrictions* that it is liable to. They are such as these,

First, As the foresaid *Distinction of Persons* in the Church, was appointed by Christ for the Edification of it, so when the Persons thus distinguished from others, take *no Care* to edify the Church, but on the contrary, do *all* they can to corrupt, and even to destroy it, not only as to its Doctrine and Principles, but as to its Worship and Discipline, when they openly and professedly do this, they cease to be Officers of the Church of Christ, and in such a Case the Ministerial Power falls to some private Christians, and they by the Laws of *Necessity* (which is indispensible) are authoriz'd for a Time to Exercise that Function, Power, and Jurisdiction which the other had.

Secondly, In Places where there is *Persecution*, and the *Ministers* of the Church are swept away by it, I conceive the Distinction of Persons before mentioned is vacated. For though *Teachers* and *People* are two Ranks of Persons in the Church, and by Christ's Institution, yet now the *Necessity* of the Case requires, that the Distinction be partly laid aside, for some of the *People* are forced to become *Teachers*. In this Case we are not to imagine, That there is any Violation of the Sacred Institution of the Ministry, as a distinct and peculiar Office.

Thirdly, In such Foreign Plantations where there are *no Ministers*, all Christians are alike, and may officiate by Turns, or order some particular Persons among them to do it. For here (as before) the Necessity of the Case authorizes the Fact.

Before I dismiss this Head which I have been treating of, I will solve or reconcile that harsh Passage in *Tertullian*, "**The Difference*, saith he, *between the* "*Clergy and Laity is from the Churches Authority, and that sacred Honour* "*which is conferred on them by the Ordination of the Presbyters jointly concurring.* "*So that though thou beest not in Orders, yet thou mayest administer both the Sacra-* "*ments, and thou art a Priest alone to thyself. Where there are Three, though they* "*be Laymen, they make a Church.*" These Words are brought in as an Argument to prove that *Laicks* were to abstain from Second Marriages as well as *Priests*, they being obliged to Chastity, no less than Priests, though they be not formal Priests. But it seems according to this Writer, who perhaps was at this Time tainted with the Enthusiastick Notions of *Montanus*, they may be said to perform Ministerial Offices. I look upon this either as a Rant of *Montanism*, or an *Hyperbo-*

* Differentiam inter Ordinem & Plebem constituit Ecclesiæ auctoritas, & honor per ordinis consessum sanctificatus; adeo ubi Ecclesiastici ordinis non est consessus, & offers & tingis, & sacerdos es tibi solus. Sed ubi tres, Ecclesia est, licèt Laici. *Exhortat. ad Castitat. cap. 7.*

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lical Way of expressing himself, of which there are many Instances in this Writer; or we are to understand it as 1 *Pet.* 2. 5. *Ye are a Holy Priesthood*, and *Rev.* 1. 6. *He hath made us Priests unto God.*

Some other pious Persons have spoken Words sometimes that seem to null the Distinction of Ministers and People. So *Luther* after his blunt Way tells us, that *every good Christian, whether Man or Woman, is a Preacher*: But read his Works, and you'll find that he defends the Order of Ministers. There is a high-flown strain in some others, but they mean no such Thing as the nulling of the Ministry. Let the disputing World say what they will, there are these *two distinct Ranks* of Persons in the Church. All that are sober and intelligent agree in this, that there are Ecclesiastical Officers distinct from all others, and that they are not Man's Invention, but by Divine Appointment.

The Character of the Officers *and* Ministers *of the* CHURCH.

THE Second Thing to be enquired into is, *who* and *what* these Officers and Ministers in the Christian Church are, and what are their particular Names they are known by, and what are their Offices they are to perform. The first Place of Scripture from which we may receive Satisfaction in this Matter, is *Rom.* 12. 6, 7, 8. *Having then Gifts differing according to the Grace that is given us, whether Prophecy, let us Prophesie according to the Proportion of Faith: Or Ministry, let us wait on our Ministring; or he that teacheth, on Teaching: Or he that exhorteth, on Exhortation. He that giveth, let him do it with Simplicity: He that ruleth, with Diligence; he that sheweth Mercy, with Chearfulness.* Here the Apostle enumerates the several Publick Offices (that is, the ordinary and standing Ones) in the Church, and he reduces them to these Two, *Prophecy* and *Ministring*. The former contains in it the whole Employment of a Gospel-Minister or Pastor: The latter signifies the Work and Task of those that are appointed to aid and assist the Evangelical Ministers, and the Church itself. The one is a Spiritual Function, the other is an officious Ministration. The one is strictly and properly Ecclesiastical, the other is subservient to it. The former of them; namely, *Prophecy* is subdivided into the Office of *Teachers* and *Exhorters*. To *teach* is to inform and instruct Men's Minds, by laying before them the Truths of the Gospel, and by explaining and interpreting the Word of God. To *exhort*, is to apply the Word to the use of the present *Hearers*, who are the Preacher's particular Flock, and to stir them up to the Practice of it by the most moving and powerful Arguments. These are the Two grand Parts of the Ministerial Function, and though the Apostle seems to speak as if these were singly and separately to be found in Two Sorts of Persons, yet his Meaning, I conceive, is not that there is a Necessity that they should be divided, that one Man should teach and another *exhort*. No: One Man may discharge both these Offices in the Exercise of his Function. And yet, if there be Occasion for it in the Churches of Christ, (as when Men differ very much in their Gifts and Endowments) these Offices may be distributed among different Persons. But this is certain and unalterable, That there must be the exercise of both these Gifts in the Church: There must be both *Teaching* and *Exhorting*, there must be *Doctors* and *Pastors*, as you shall hear it afterwards express'd.

The latter Part of the Ecclesiastical Administration, Διακονία, *Ministry*, is divided by the Apostle here into two Employments; namely, that of *Deacons* and of *Rulers*. The former is expressed by *giving*, and by *shewing Mercy*: For the *Deacon* is he that manages the Publick Stock of the Church, that gathers the Alms for the Poor, that looks after the sick and weak, and afflicted Members of the Church. The latter is called *Ruling*: And some have thought that here is meant a *ruling Presbyter*, that by his Office looks into the Manners and Conversations of the Church

Church, and is helpful in discovering of scandalous Persons, and bringing them to Censure and Punishment. These are the two Species comprehended under the general Office of *Ministring*, or Assisting. And thus the Apostle hath given us a full Account of the *Officers* that are appointed in the Church of Christ. But those that more especially and peculiarly challenge that Title are the *Teachers* and *Exhorters*; that is, the Instructers and Guides of Souls, who by the Word and Sacraments instruct and build up the Church, and in the Exercise of Discipline do rule and govern it. In short, there is the *Teacher* and *Exhorter* (both which may be united in one Person) there is the Officer that takes care of the *Indigent* and *Necessitous*, and there is the *Lay-Administrator* (who for his Gravity and Prudence is call'd an *Elder*) who assists the Pastor in inspecting and ruling the Flock. These are Three Officers in the church of Christ according to some Interpreters, and they are thought to be plainly set forth to us in the fore-mentioned Text. Though some Expositors have endeavour'd to obscure and perplex it, yet others apprehend that it is very clear and obvious, and gives us an exact Account of those Persons that are employ'd in the Ministry of the Christian Church.

The next Place where the Apostle reckons up the several Officers and Ministers of the Church is 1 *Cor.* 12. 28. *God hath set some in the Church, first Apostles, Secondarily, Prophets; Thirdly, Teachers: After that Miracles, then Gifts of Healings, Helps, Governments, diversities of Tongues.* Here he enumerates the *extraordinary* and *ordinary* Officers in the Christian Church. The First are comprehended under the Title of *Apostles*, whom he sets in the Front of all, and though in another Place, upon the like Occasion, (as shall be shew'd afterwards) he mentions other extraordinary Ministers, as *Evangelists*, yet there was no need of naming them here, they being not Persons struck at in the Quarrel; for in this Chapter the Apostle is allaying that Emulation and Envy which were at that Time among the *Corinthians*, on the Account of Spiritual Gifts: And Besides, whilst he vindicates the Dignity of the *Apostles*, he doth in Effect assert the Power and Authority of *Evangelists*, and other *extraordinary* Ministers. As for the *ordinary* ones, he proceeds, and reckons up, first the Superior ones; namely, *Prophets* and *Teachers*, by which Terms there is no Necessity of understanding two distinct Officers or Ministers in the Church, but rather generally two distinct Branches of the same Spiritual Office, *i. e.* the Pastoral Office. The Apostle here acquaints us, That *Prophecying* and *Teaching* are the ordinary and perpetual Institutions in the Church of Christ, and the executing of them is lodged in peculiar Persons that are distinct from all other Christians. And because in *those Times* when the Apostle writ this Epistle, those ordinary and stated Ministers of the Gospel, were endued with the Gift of working *Miracles*; therefore he adjoyns these here, namely, *Miracles*, by which he means those Evangelical Ministers and Preachers, that at that Time had Power given them to confirm the Faith of their Hearers by doing Miracles. And he particularly mentions *the Gift of Healing*, and *the Gift of Tongues*, or *Diversities of Tongues*, by which we are not to understand those Gifts themselves, but (according to the usual Way of speaking in the New Testament) Those Overseers and Guides of the Church, who had at that Time these particular Gifts of curing Diseases and speaking divers Languages. Then the Apostle proceeds again to reckon other ordinary Officers in the Church, but of an inferior Nature; and they are these Two, *Helps* and *Governments*; that is, (according to the former Way of speaking) and putting the Abstract for the Concrete) Helpers and Governors. The former are *Deacons*, whose Office it is to look to the Goods of the Church, to take care for the Maintenance of the Minister, to relieve the Poor and Indigent. And they are deservedly call'd *Helps*, because they help and succour the Poor, and are serviceable and helpful to the Pastor. The latter are interpreted by some to be *Ruling Presbyters*, whose Work is to observe the Manners of the People, and to promote and forward good Discipline and Government in the Church, and thence they have the Name of *Governments*. Thus some gather from this Place of Scripture, That *Pastors* or *Presbyters* properly so called, and *Deacons* and *Assisting-Elders* are Three Officers in the Christian Church.

A Third Text that I will produce, to give Light to us about that so much obscured Controversy of Church-Government, is that of the same Apostle in *Eph.* 4. 11. *He gave some, Apostles; and some, Prophets; and some, Evangelists; and some, Pastors and Teachers.* Where he begins first with the *Extraordinary* Officers of the Church, the highest Rank of whom were the *Apostles*, Divine *Missionaries*, Persons *SENT*, as the Word imports. It was peculiar to them that they were not chosen by Men, but immediately by Jesus Christ, to divulge the Gospel, and to plant Churches, and to have the general Oversight and Care of them, in order to which they were endued with Supernatural Gifts, *Acts* 13. 3.---15. 32. *Eph.* 3. 5. The next Ecclesiastical Ministers of an extraordinary Character, are *Prophets*, that is, Expounders of Scripture, by an immediate Inspiration of the Holy Ghost.

There were many such *Prophets* in those first Times of the Gospel, as is clear from 1 *Cor.* 11. 4, 5—.12. 28. and the whole 14th Chapter. They unfolded Sacred Mysteries to the People; they instructed them in difficult Points; they could even search into Mens Hearts, and reach the secret Vices of Persons, and accordingly apply themselves to them in an extraordinary manner, 1 *Cor.* 12. 29.—14. 24. Besides this they had a Foresight of Futurities, and did actually foretell things to come. Such *Prophets* were *Agabus*, *Acts* 11. 28. and *Judas* and *Silas*, *Acts* 15. 32. and the four Daughters of *Philip* the Evangelist, *Acts* 21. 8. The 3d. sort of Extraordinary Ministers were *Evangelists*, that is, as their Name signifies, such as in a peculiar manner were Commission'd to Preach the Gospel, as *Philip*, *Acts* 21. 8. *Timothy*, 2 *Tim.* 4. 5. *Titus*, *Tit.* 1. 5. *Apollos*, *Barnabas*, *Sosthenes*, *Clement*, &c. They were Companions and Coadjutors of the Apostles in settling of Churches, as *Mark*, *Luke*, *&c.* or they were sent by them to those Churches which they had before planted themselves, *Acts* 19. 22. 1 *Tim.* 1. 3.

Next, The Apostle lets us know in the forecited Place, who are the *Ordinary* Ministers of the Church, and such as are of perpetual Use in it. For as under the Legal and *Mosaic* Dispensation God was pleas'd to make known his Will to his People by Extraordinary Messengers, as *Prophets* immediately call'd and inspir'd by him, and also at the same Time had Ordinary Ministers, as *Priests* and *Levites*, who were the usual Teachers of the People, and officiated in all Spiritual Things; so it is in the Church of Christ under the Gospel. There were at first Extraordinary Embassadors sent by him, and of these I have spoken already; but there are likewise Leiger-Embassadors, as I may so say, such as are to be permanent and lasting in the Church. And these are comprehended here by the Apostle in those two Words, *Pastors* and *Teachers*. It is an idle Fancy of a late * Writer, that these *Pastors* and *Teachers* are of the Number of the *Extraordinary* Ministers appointed by our Saviour; which Notion confutes itself, because, it confounds those Extraordinary Ministers, mention'd before in the same Place with these *Doctors* and *Pastors*; for if it was the Office of these latter to teach and govern the Church in an extraordinary manner, then they were *Prophets*, or *Evangelists*, or *Apostles*; from which this Absurdity would follow, That the Apostle here reckons up *Teachers* and *Pastors* as different Officers from *Apostles*, *Evangelists*, and *Prophets*, and yet they are the same with them.

* *Philip à Limborch Theolog. Christiana l. 2. cap. 2.*

But the grand Thing now before us, is, Whether these *Pastors* and *Teachers* be one and the same Office; or, Whether they be two distinct ones. The former seems to be most consonant to Truth, as appears from comparing this Place with the afore-cited one, 1 *Cor.* 12. 28. *God hath set some in the Church, first Apostles, secondarily Prophets, thirdly Teachers.* Where we see the Third Division is *Teachers*, and comprehends both *Pastors* and *Teachers*. Which is expressed in *Rom.* 12. 7, 8. *By him that exhorteth, and him that teacheth*; *i. e.* Him that is both *Pastor* and *Teacher*. And it may be observed, That the Apostle doth not say, *Christ gave some, Pastors*; *and some, Teachers* (as was said before, *He gave some, Apostles*; *some, Prophets*; *and some Evangelists*); but he joins them together, *Pastors and Teachers*, to shew, That he meant the same Office, though there are different Parts of this Office. The *Pastors* and *Teachers* then are the standing Ordinary Ministers of the Church, who preside over it, and instruct it; the same with *Bishops* and *Elders*, of whom afterwards: As they are *Pastors*, their proper Work is to exercise Discipline, to administer the Sacraments, and to govern the Church they are set over. As they are *Teachers*, they are oblig'd to expound the Scriptures, to divide the Word of God aright, to Preach the Gospel in Season, and out of Season.

If you ask the Reason why the *same* Person or Officer is express'd by two Words, *Pastor* and *Teacher*, I question not but this is done to set forth the Difference of Gifts and Endowments in the Ministers of the Gospel; for tho' all of them by their Office are *to feed* and *to teach*, to *govern* and *instruct* the Church, yet for as much as these are different Gifts, and some are more eminent for one than the other; therefore they are thus distinctly express'd. The *Teacher*, as such, excells in Doctrine, Theory and Principles; he deals with the Understanding chiefly, his Business is to make Men Knowing. It is his Province to interpret difficult Places of Scripture, to resolve Doubts, to reconcile seeming Contradictions, and to handle all the necessary Heads of Christianity, for the Edification of the Church. But the *Pastor*, as such, excells in Practical Application, and brings his Doctrine down to the particular Conditions and States of Men; and pathetically stirs Men up to a holy, obedient, and exemplary Life. And another part of his Talent is to Rule and Govern, and discreetly and compassionately to manage the Censures and Discipline of the Church. Thus we see that *Pastors* and *Teachers* in this Text which is now before us, are not different Officers, but signifie two different Exercises of the same Officer. The *Pastoral* and *Teacher's Office* should be join'd together, and in some degree at least, meet in that Person who is chosen and appointed to be a Minister of the Gospel.

But as to the *Inferior Offices* in the Church, the Apostle saith nothing of them in this Place; and it is probable he omits them, because he had mentioned them in the two Places before-named, and (as we shall see afterwards) in other Places of his Writings. And another Reason why he makes no mention of them is, because here he is more peculiarly speaking of the *Principal* Officers of the Church, and such as are immediately and directly useful, yea absolutely necessary and indispensable, in order to the great Work design'd by Christ in the Gospel. This is evident from the Connection of the Apostle's Words before cited, with what follows, as thus, *He gave some, Apostles; and some, &c. for the perfecting of the Saints, for the Work of the Ministry, for the edifying of the Body of Christ, till we all come unto a perfect Man*, 11, 12 v.

So much for those Three principal Texts, which purposely treat of the Officers of the Church, where, before I pass to other Texts I might observe this, That wheresoever the Scripture *designedly enumerates* the *Officers* of the Church, it never expressly mentions *Bishops*, nor *Presbyters*, nor *Deacons*; whence some are inclin'd to gather, that *Bishop*, and *Presbyter*, and *Deacon*, are equivalent to those other Titles of *Pastors* and *Teachers*, *Helpers* and *Governors*. This must be inferr'd thence, they think, or else they can make nothing of the Office of *Bishop* and *Presbyter*, and of *Deacon*; or they must be forced to multiply Officers in the Church, above the Enumeration of them which is allow'd and agreed upon by all Persons generally.

Wherefore let us now consult some other Places, to inform our selves yet *further* concerning the Church-Officers that are constituted by Christ and his Apostles. And some are of Opinion, that they still find that there is the like Account of them as before, only they have *different Names* given them, and they are more *compendiously* set down. For whereas before the Superior Ministry of the Church was express'd, under the Titles of *Teachers* and *Exhorters*, and *Pastors* and *Teachers*; *&c.* And whereas the subordinate and inferior Officers appointed in the Church, came under the Denomination of *Guiding* and *Ruling*, *Helps* and *Governments*, now St. *Paul* himself, and other Inspir'd Writers, think fit to use other Terms to set forth both sorts of Officers; and they are pleas'd to contract them as it were, and to reduce them to a narrower Compass, but still not diminishing their Number. Tho' indeed, in all the Enumerations of Officers, we may take notice, that *some* of them, either *Ordinary* or *Extraordinary*, are left out, and therefore must be *supply'd* from the other Places.

That Place, 1 *Pet.* 4. 10, 11. *As every Man hath received the Gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good Stewards of the manifold Grace of God. If any Man speak, let him speak as the Oracles of God; if any Man minister, let him do it as of the Ability which God giveth*, seems to be the same with *Rom.* 12. 6, 7. already cited, *Whether Prophecy, let us Prophesie; or Ministry, let us wait on our Ministry.* For *speaking as the Oracles of God* is the same with *Prophesying*, which

which is the Work of a Pastor or Teacher; and *ministring* (διακονία), signifies not only the Office of a *Deacon* properly so call'd, that is of one that takes Care of the Poor and the Churches Maintenance, but, as some think, of him, that by inspecting the Manners of Persons is serviceable to the Church.

Again, in 1 *Tim.* 3. (tho' an *Enumeration* of Ecclesiastical Officers is not here design'd) the Church-Ministers are express'd under those two Names, *Bishops* and *Deacons*, 1 and 8 *v.* which some interpret thus. Those, whom before the Apostle call'd *Pastors* and *Teachers*, he here stiles *Bishops*: Those he call'd *Helps* and *Governments*, he here comprises in one Word *Deacons* or *Ministers*.

So in *Phil.* 1. 1. he greets the *Bishops* and *Deacons* at *Philippi*, meaning, as some think, by the *Bishops* the *Pastors* and *Teachers*, (as he had before stiled them) and by *Deacons* the other inferior Officers, who are join'd with the Pastors; either for relieving the Poor, or for the correcting of Manners.

Thus in the forecited Texts, some have found this Triple Office of the *Teaching Presbyter* or *Pastor*, of the *Deacon*, and of the *Inferior Elder*; and our Divines generally hold, that a Fourth Order, that of *Bishops*, as distinct from, and superior to Presbyters, hath its Foundation here, and in other Texts of the *New Testament*. Wherefore, let us examine these Things more particularly and distinctly, by looking into other Texts which are thought, (not jointly, but separately) to mention these Four Offices in the Church.

First, That of *Presbyter*, as he is the same with *Pastor* and *Teacher*, and as his Office is distinguish'd from that of *Lay-Presbyter*, is expresly mention'd. We meet with it first of all in *Act.* 11. 29, 30. where 'tis said, *The Disciples determined to send Relief to the Brethren which dwelt in* Judea; *which also they did, and sent it to the Elders by the Hands of* Barnabas *and* Saul, that is, They sent it to the *Pastors* of those Churches, as all the antient Writers that have commented on this Place have asserted. This Office (as distinct from that of the Lay-Presbyter and the Deacon) is next mention'd in *Acts* 14. 23. where we read, that the Apostles *ordain'd Elders in every Church*, that is, in the Churches of *Lystra*, and *Iconium*, and *Antioch*, as we are told in the Neighbouring Verse. Even our learned Champions of Episcopacy grant that bare Presbyters, not Bishops, are here meant. See *Dr.* Turner's *Vindication of the Rights and Privileges of the Christian Church*, page 43. Afterwards, in this Book of the *Acts*, those Pastors and Teachers are frequently stil'd *Elders* or *Presbyters*, as in Chapter 15. 2, 4, 6, 22, 23 Verses, in all which Places the *Apostles* and *Elders* are join'd together, and so in the 16th Chapter and the 4th Verse, to let us know that these, being the proper Ministers of the Gospel, were the fittest Judges of Ecclesiastical Controversies. *The Elders or Presbyters of the Church of* Ephesus, are mentioned in *Acts* 20. 17. And we may certainly know what Elders or Presbyters they were by the Exhortation which is given them by St. *Paul*, *Take heed unto your selves, and all the Flock, over which the Holy Ghost hath made you Overseers, to feed the Church of God, which he hath purchased with his own Blood*, v. 28. They were Pastors of particular Congregations or Churches, and the forecited Writer confesses no less.

Thus we can shew the Time when we are sure there was a *Presbytery*, but we can't say there was *Episcopacy* at *that time* in the Church. This is own'd by some of the most Celebrated Writers of our Church, and even Mr. *Dodwell*, who was thought by his Friends to be as able a Defender of Episcopal Government as any that they had, confesses that * *there were no such Fixed Rulers as Bishops in the Church at first*. Dr. ‖ *Whitby* sheweth the same, and is large in the Proof of it. Where then is our Great † Boaster, who *challenges all mankind to prove that Presbyters were before Bishops*? Is it not plain from all the forecited Scriptures, and the Suffrage of Episcopal Writers themselves that Presbyters had the Start of Bishops, whatever this bold Pretender makes a shew of, and notwithstanding his telling us that *this is the single Point on which the whole Controversy depends*? If it be so, he must own himself baffled, and all his Pretensions are empty and insignificant.

* De Jure Laic. cap. 5. Sect. 14.

‖ *Annotat. on 1st. Epist. to the Thessalonians, Chap.* 5.

† *The* Rehearsal.

But I have not finish'd my Catalogue of Texts yet. In the Apostolical *Epistles* we read of these *Presbyters* often, as in *Tit.* 1. 5. *For this Cause left I thee in* Crete, *that thou shouldest ordain Elders or Presbyters in every City*, that is, plain

Presbyters, Pastors and Teachers to instruct the several Congregations of People in *Crete*, and to perform all other Ministerial Offices. So in *Jam.* 5. 4. those that are visited with Sickness, are enjoyn'd *to call for the Elders of the Church*, that they may *pray* for their Recovery, and in order to that for the Pardon of their Sins. Again, these Elders or Presbyters are mention'd in 1 *Pet.* 5. 1. *The Elders which are among you I exhort*; and from the next Verse we learn what kind of Elders or Presbyters they were, namely, such as were to *feed the Flock of God which was among them*. And the Apostle calls *himself* an *Elder* in that first Verse, which informs us further what he means here by the Office of an Elder, namely, the solemn preaching of the Gospel, *the labouring in the Word and Doctrine*, the feeding of the Flock of Christ. And in other Places of the *New Testament* these *Presbyteri* (as distinct Officers) are mention'd; but what I have alledg'd already is sufficient.

Secondly, As to the Office of *Deacons* in the Church, tho' the Greek Word be of a large Signification in the Sacred Writings, yet some times we see it is confined to one particular Officer in the Church; which is sufficient to constitute that Officer, especially when the History of his particular Rise and Institution is recorded in Holy Writ. Thus we read in *Act.* 6. 1, &c. That the Deacons were chosen upon Occasion of a Complaint made by the Hellenist Jews, That *their Widows were neglected in the daily Ministration*, and therefore some Care must be taken about this Matter, and Persons must be chosen to look after it. So that the primary Design of the Office, was to inspect the Wants of those Christians that were poor and needy, and to relieve them. The Apostles being busied in Teaching, had not time to *serve Tables*, v. 2. which were then used to be prepared for the Poor, and so they ordain'd *Deacons* for that Work. And without question, this was the chief End of appointing those Officers at first, nor do we find that any thing else was intended for them to do. We do not read that they had any Commission to pray or preach publickly, for 'tis said, *Look ye out Men whom we may appoint over this Business, but we will give our selves continually to Prayer, and to the Ministry of the Word*, Acts 6. 3, 4. Where we see *Praying* and *Preaching* are oppos'd to the *Deacon*'s Office, and therefore, according to the Primitive Institution, they seem not to be part of it. And if the Deacons had not Authority to do either of these, it will be granted, I suppose, that they had none to administer the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper; and there is nothing said of their Ability to celebrate the other Sacrament. But it evidently appears from the *occasion* of instituting their Office, that their Business was to look after the Poor, and to distribute to them what was contributed by the Christians for that End.

But some think that there was more than this contain'd in this Office, and that they were authoriz'd to *preach* and *baptize*. For this, they alledge the Practice of *Philip*, who preach'd, *Acts* 8. 5. and baptized, *v.* 12. and consequently Deacons may now Preach and Baptize. But this Consequence may be thought not to be good and valid, because *Philip*'s Preaching and Baptizing were *Extraordinary*, *Acts* 8. 26. And therefore we can't argue thence to what should ordinarily and regularly be done. We may as well hold, that any other Persons may preach and baptize; for in the same Chapter, where 'tis said, Philip *Preach'd Christ*, *Ch.* 8. 5. 'tis also said, that on Occasion of the *Persecution of the Church which was at* Jerusalem, *they were all scattered abroad throughout the Regions of* Judea *and* Samaria, *except the Apostles*; *and they that were scattered abroad, went every where preaching the Word*: This they might do in Case of Necessity, and in that unsettled State of the Church. But this must not hinder us from distinguishing between the standing Office of the Deacons, and what they did in an extraordinary Case. We can't infer from *Philip*'s Preaching or Baptizing, that this was part of the Deacon's Office.

Some think that Deacons were authoriz'd to assist in the administring of the Eucharist, for which they quote the forementioned Place in the *Acts*, *serving of Tables*, where they think are meant *Sacred*, as well as *common Tables*, and accordingly it was the Deacon's Work in the Primitive Times, to serve first the Lord's Table, *i. e.* to help and assist at the celebrating the Lord's Supper, to distribute the Elements, tho' not to consecrate them: Secondly, to serve the Poor's Table, to furnish distressed Widows and Strangers with Provision and Maintenance. This seems to me to be a strain'd Interpretation, for we find, that

that *Serving of Tables, Acts* 6. 2. answers to the *daily Ministration, v.* 1. which is confessed by all to be the Ministring to the Poor, the providing Food for their Sustenance; and for the executing of this very Employment Deacons were chosen.

Yet I am enclin'd to believe, that tho' the Deaconship was at first Instituted for the Relief of the Poor, yet this Office did *not exclude* some other considerable Acts, and perhaps those of Preaching, and of distributing the Bread and Wine at the Communion. To which purpose I must needs say, the *solemn Ordaining* of these Deacons prevails much with me. It shews that they were something more than bare Overseers of the Poor, or Collectors and Distributers of Alms. *The People chose* these Officers, *and set them before the Apostles; and when the Apostles had pray'd, they laid their Hands on them, v.* 6. Which is the very same Solemnity that was us'd by the Apostles in Ordaining and Constituing of those that were the proper Ministers of the Gospel, namely, Preaching Presbyters, and who had also Power to Administer the Sacraments, *&c.*

Besides, let any indifferent and impartial Man read 1 *Tim.* 3. 8, 9, *&c.* and tell me whether that Description of a *Deacon* be not above a *meer Collector for the Poor.* He will certainly acknowledge, that that Character (which goes along with the other of a *Bishop*) was calculated for one of a higher Station; he will own this, and that the Dispensing of the Word, and Administring of the Eucharist appertain to him. Or, if the Church of *England*, and some other Churches think fit to make the Deacon a Clergyman, *properly* so call'd, by conferring Orders on him, and giving him Authority to Preach, it is not to be doubted but that they have good Reason for it. Only this I must declare to be my Opinion, that the *Deacons* should be the same *now* that they were in the Apostles Times, as to that particular Member of their Office, *taking Care of the Poor.* Whatever *Accessions* are since made to the *Deaconship*, this Branch of it ought not to be laid aside; especially those that plead for Antiquity and Primitive Usage, should take care that the Persons who are made *Deacons* should be employ'd in the Primitive Work of *Charity*, which they were at first ordain'd to. The Deacons *were appointed over this Business*, Acts 6. 3. and therefore they are still to be employ'd in it, that is, they are to distribute the Alms of the Church for relieving of its indigent Members. We are sure that this was the Primitive Meaning of a *Deacon*, and it should be so now, as I shall further evince afterwards.

Let me add, that I read no where in the Apostolical Writings, that the *Deacons* Office must *necessarily* be a Preparative to that of a *Presbyter*, and that none must be Presbyters till they have been Deacons. No Man can imagine that the *Elders* or *Presbyters* of *Jerusalem*, spoken of in the *Acts of the Apostles*, were first *Deacons*. None can think that the *Presbyters* whom *Titus* was enjoin'd to ordain in every City in *Crete* had been *Deacons* before. Who believes that *Ambrose* and several others were not made Bishops, without being Deacons first? Which shews that the Distinction and gradual Succession of these Orders in the Church was not observ'd *perpetually*.

Thirdly, According to some there is this Third Office in the Church of Christ, namely, that of *Lay-Elders*, and their Foundation for it is in *Rom.* 12. 8. *He that ruleth with Diligence*; where *he that ruleth* is distinguish'd from *him that teacheth and exhorteth*, and therefore they say he is a different Officer, and they observe that he comes after him that *teacheth* and *exhorteth*, which shews, that he is an Officer inferior to the Teacher and Exhorter. And therefore there is Reason to infer, that ὁ προϊσταμενος, *he that ruleth*, is the *Lay-Presbyter*, whose peculiar Business it is to be an Overseer and Censor of the Manners of those who belong to the Christian Congregation. So it is thought to be clear from that other Text, 1 *Cor.* 12. 28. which mentions *Helps* and *Governments*, that by them are meant Ruling Elders in the Church, who are not *Pastors* or *Teachers* (for they are distinguish'd from them) but are helpful and serviceable in the Governing of the Church, by taking care of the outward Behaviour of its Members. And as before *he that ruleth* was plac'd after the *Teacher* and *Exhorter*, so here they observe, that *Helps* and *Governments* are plac'd after *Teachers*, to let us know that they are not the Preaching nor Teaching Governors, nor Bishops of the Church.

That

That is look'd upon another plain Text, 1 *Tim.* 5. 17. *Let the Elders that rule well be counted worthy of double Honour, especially those that labour in the Word and Doctrine.* Where are two Sorts of *Elders*, those that *Rule*, and those that both Rule and do *other Offices* in the Church. The *Lay-Seniors* that are appointed to keep Things in good Order, and to assist in the Governing and Disciplinary Part, are said to *Rule well*, and therefore deserve a high Degree of Honour and Praise; but there is another Rank of *Elders*, who *labour in the Word and Doctrine*, whose Office it is to instruct and guide Men as to all Spiritual Affairs, and these are *especially worthy of double Honour.* The Emphasis lies in the Word μάλιστα, *especially*, which, where-ever it is used in the *New-Testament*, signifies *another Thing*, or Person, *different* from what was before-mention'd in the Place. So here it makes a *Distinction* between *Elders*, between the *Ruling* and the *Teaching Elder.* But here some Object (and with great Weight and Reason) that the καλῶς προεστῶτες are the same with προϊστάμενοι, 1 *Thess.* 5. 12. who are acknowledg'd to be Bishops, or else Preaching Elders. But the Answer that is given to this Objection is this, That *to Rule*, or *to be set over others*, is applicable to both that sort of Elders I'm now speaking of, and to the others. The Lay-Elder is said to *Rule*, not because the others do *not Rule*, but because he doth *nothing else but Rule*, he doth not Preach or Perform any Office that belongs to the Ministry. Besides, if by *ruling Elders* in this Place be meant Bishops or Preaching Ministers, then the Apostle here would have those who take no Pains and Care in the Word and Doctrine, to have *double Honour*, yea, and he lets us know that they are *worthy* of it; which is a Meaning unworthy of the Apostle. For the Pastoral Office requires Pains and Labour, and therefore it is certain the Apostle would not speak thus concerning those that labour not: Whence some conclude, that by the *Ruling Elders* here we are not to understand the Teachers of the Church, but that the plain Interpretation is this, *To labour in the Word and Doctrine* is here the Periphrasis of a Preaching Elder or Minister, and so it is opposed to that *other* Office, which consists only in *Ruling.*

And as for the Word κοπιᾶν, it doth not signifie here *Extraordinary Labour* (as some suggest) but such as every Minister should undergo in his Ministry, for this we learn from other Places of St. *Paul*, 1 *Cor.* 3. 8. 1 *Thess.* 5. 12. where κοπιᾶν denotes the ordinary and constant Care which Ministers are to take in the discharge of their Office. The contrary is against the Sense and Practice of the *Objectors*, who would have the Bishops and other Clergymen that *rule well* have *double Honour and Maintenance*, rather than those that *Labour in the Word and Doctrine* only. So that they expound the Apostle's Words in a Way that confronts their own Principle and Practice. The short is, that some are of Opinion that *labouring in the Word and Doctrine* comprehends here the whole Ministerial Employment, as it is usual to express the whole by a Principal Part, and it is contradistinguish'd from, and preferr'd to the *ruling well*, that is, the bare Office of those who were Lay-Men, but appointed by the Church to *look into* the Manners of the People, and so to govern and preside over the Congregation. Whence it is inferr'd by some, that Lay-Elders are an Evangelical Appointment in the Church.

And they tell us moreover, that this Office of a *Ruling Elder* is according to the Practice of the Church of God among the *Jews*, his own People. It is certain that there was this kind of *Elders* under that Oeconomy. The *Sanhedrim* was compounded of *Priests* and *Lay-Elders*, as is evident from *Num.* 11. 16. 24, 25.—33. 16. *Deut.* 17. 8, 9. as well as from other *Jewish* Writers since, who acquaint us that there were two Sorts of Elders among the *Jews*, the *Ruling* ones, who govern'd in their Assemblies and Synagogues, and the *Teaching* ones, who read and expounded the Scriptures. Accordingly Dr. *Lightfoot* in his *Harmony of the New Testament* inclines to interpret 1 *Tim.* 5. 17. of the Elders in the Christian Congregations, who answer to the Lay-Elders in the *Jewish* Synagogue. For this Learned Writer, who was well vers'd in the *Jewish* Customs and Practices, tells us, that in every Synagogue among the *Jews* there were *Elders that ruled chiefly* in the Affairs of the Synagogue, and other *Elders that labour'd in the Word and Doctrine.*

And

And so it was in the *Christian* Church, there was a Mixture of Clergy and Laity in their Consults about Church-Matters, as we see frequently in the *Acts of the Apostles*. The concurrence of the *People* was thought necessary in the Apostles Times in the publick Censures of the Church, in Election of Pastors, and in all Ecclesiastical Concerns. But more particularly the Practice of those Times with regard to *Lay-Elders*, is said to be manifest from what is recorded in the *Apostolical Epistles*, which hath been already produc'd to confirm this Office in the Church. Perhaps that Text (which is not thought of) in *Acts* 20. 17, 20, doth the same, for 'tis said that St. *Paul called the Elders of the Church* of *Ephesus*; and 'tis said farther, that St. *Paul taught them publickly, and from House to House*, whence it may be gather'd, that among those *Elders* some of them were Lay-Men, for some of them were not Teachers, but were *taught*, and these were those that we call Lay-Elders. And afterwards the Christian Church retain'd this Usage, for which they quote St. *Augustine*'s 137th Epistle, where he mentions the *Clergy*, and the *Elders* and the *People*. So in his 3d. Book against *Cresconius* he mentions *Deacons* and *Seniors*, that is, Lay-Elders, for he distinguishes them from other Presbyters. One of his Epistles to his Church of *Hippo*, is thus superscrib'd, *To the Clergy and the Elders*. See chap. 56. in the fore-named Book against *Cresconius*, where he mentions *Peregrinus the Presbyter*, and the *Seniors*. And nothing can be plainer, than that of St. *Ambrose* *, "Both the Synagogue, "and afterwards the Christian Church had their Elders, without whose "Counsel nothing was done in the Church. I know not by what Negli- "gence this Practice hath grown out of use, unless it were by the Careles- "ness, or rather the Pride of the Doctors and Clergy, who affected to act "alone, and thereby thought to be accounted something.

* *Et Synagoga, & postea Ecclesia (sc. Christiana) Seniores habuit, quorum sine consilio nihil agebatur in Ecclesiâ. Quod quâ negligentiâ obsoleverit nescio, nisi forte Doctorum desidiâ, aut magis superbiâ, dum soli volunt aliquid videri.* In cap. 5. Epist. 1. ad Timoth.

In which Passage we may observe, that the *Doctors*, the *Teachers*, or *Learned*, are distinguish'd from the *Elders*, which shews that by these latter we are to understand *Lay-men*; and further, we are inform'd, that *Presbyters Regent*, who were to look after the Manners and Behaviour of the Congregation, were an ancient Constitution in the Christian Church, and that they were duly consulted in all Ecclesiastical Affairs, and nothing was determin'd without them; and we are further told how this Office came to be laid aside; namely, by that want of Care which should have been taken of the Church's Welfare, but chiefly by the supercilious and arrogant Humour of some Ministers and Pastors who affected to Rule alone, and would not brook any Rivals in Church-Government. Thus this Good and Godly Father lets us know, that this Rank of *Elders* ceas'd in the Church, tho' it was of great Antiquity, yea tho' it is thought by some to have been Instituted by the Apostles.

Further, We read of these *Seniors* in the Writings of *Optatus*, p. 41. and in the *Epistles* annex'd to him, which the Reader may consult. Yea, there is an Ancienter Testimony yet behind, namely that of *Tertullian*, who speaking of what was constantly done in the Christian Congregations and Assemblies in his Time, tells us * That there were certain *Elders that presided there, who were approv'd of, and obtain'd that Honour not by Bribery, but by the Testimony that was given to them by others*. Thus it appears, that this was an Ancient Office in the Church, and not invented by *Calvin*, as some have thought and writ.

* *Apol.* cap. 39.

And then, as to the *Reason* of the Thing, some think there should be no Ground of Quarrelling with this Office in the Church, seeing it is so *Useful*. For it was Instituted for the Ease of the Preaching Elders, that they might not be over-burden'd with Business, and that they might more conveniently apply themselves to that Employment which is purely Ecclesiastical and Spiritual. And it was wisely appointed to take off the Envy and Odium from the Ministers, which would be their Lot if they intermeddled too much with Affairs. And it is a Way to cement the Clergy and Laity, and to bring them to a Friendly and Christian Correspondence, and to unite them firmly in the same great Interest, that of Religion. It might here be remembred, that they had a very great Opinion of *Laymen* in the former and best Times of the Christian Church, for they were admitted to Synods and Councils, and they were advanc'd to the highest

highest Ecclesiastical Dignities. Thus *Spyridion*, tho' a plain Countryman and a Shepherd, was made a Bishop. *Ambrose*, a Secular Magistrate, and Governour of *Milan*, was chosen Bishop of that Place by the People. *Nectarius* a Layman was put into the same Office at *Constantinople*. *Sidonius*, a *French* Soldier was made Bishop of *Auvergne* in *France*. And if Laymen were admitted to Bishopricks, it can't be thought indecorous that they are placed in a much lower Station in the Church, than that of *Ruling Elders*.

These seem to have been allow'd of by our *Reformers*, as is evident from the *Injunctions* which were given by King *Edward* the VIth. to those Persons who were to take care of Reforming and Settling Ecclesiastical Affairs in his Reign. See the Chapter *de Divinis Officiis*, where the *Minister* and *the Elders* are particularly mention'd, and are commanded to look after the Discipline of the Church. See the Reverend Bishop *Burnet's History of the Reformation*.

Nor is this esteem'd by some to be against the Genius of the *Evangelical* Administration, which suffers not Secular Men to discharge Spiritual Offices; for the *Lay-Elders* Office is not properly and strictly such, they take care only of the External Matters of the Church, and are only Assistants in the outward administring of Discipline, and look into the Manners and Carriage of the Christians belonging to such or such an Assembly. But they excuse no part of the Ecclesiastical Ministry, which *properly* appertains to the Ministers of the Gospel.

Truely, if there were no such Office mention'd in the *Scripture*, we might reasonably wish for such a one, if *our Governours* pleas'd, (not else) it being so useful and serviceable to the great Purposes of Religion. What can be more desireable than that there should be one or more appointed to observe the Conversation of the Flock, in order to the exercising of Discipline? The Pastor himself can't be suppos'd to have an Eye on every one of his Charge, and therefore (with Submission I speak it) 'tis fitting that out of those who are Fellow-Members, and daily converse with one another; and therefore are capable of acquainting themselves with their Manners and Behaviour, there should be chosen these Elders I'm speaking of, to inspect the Carriage and Deportment of the Flock, and to report it to the Pastor and the Assembly, and to the *Bishop* of the Diocese, if it be requir'd, who is the next and the *chiefest* Ecclesiastical Ruler to be mention'd here.

A Fourth Office in the Church, is that of *Bishops*, as really distinct from the other of *Presbyters*. Many Learned Persons have maintain'd this, and they found it on several Places of Scripture, even on some of those *before-mention'd*, which were produc'd (according to the Judgment of some) for the Proof of bare *Presbyters*. St. *Paul call'd for the Elders of the Church of* Ephesus, *Acts* 20. 17. that is, say they, the *Bishops*, as is inferr'd from the 28th. Verse, where they are bid *to take heed to themselves, and to all the Flock over which the Holy Ghost had made them* Overseers, or *Bishops*, as 'tis in the *Greek*. *He that ruleth*, *Rom.* 12. 8. is a Bishop; and *Governments*, 1 *Cor.* 12. 28. are the Episcopal Power and Jurisdiction. *Laying on the Hands of the Presbytery*, 1 *Tim.* 4. 14. is the Bishops laying on his Hands in Ordination, say Doctor *Hammond* and others. *Titus* was left in *Crete to ordain Elders in every City*, *Tit.* 1. 5. Where by *Elders* are meant *Bishops*, as is gather'd from the 7th Verse, a *Bishop must be blameless*, *&c.* From the Epistles to *Timothy* and *Titus* 'tis argu'd, that St. *Paul* constituted one of them Bishop of *Ephesus*, and the other Bishop of *Crete*; from several Passages in those Epistles it appears that they had an Ecclesiastical Power and Jurisdiction over Presbyters, and consequently they were proper Bishops. This Office is prov'd from 1 *Thess.* 5. 12. *Know them who Labour among you, and are over you in the Lord*; and from *Heb.* 13. 17. *Obey them that have the Rule over you*; and from *Jam.* 5. 14. *Call for the Elders of the Church*, namely the Bishops. The *Elders* are bid *to take the Oversight of the Flock which is among them*, 1 *Pet.* 5. 1, 2. therefore they were *Bishops* or *Overseers*. In the Book of the *Revelation*, the Bishops are meant by the *Angels* of the *Asian* Churches. These are the main Texts that the Patrons of Episcopacy make use of.

And *Ecclesiastical History* is alledged to this purpose, for there we are told, that St. *James* was Bishop of *Jerusalem*; St. *Peter* of *Antioch*, and of *Rome* too; St. *Mark* of *Alexandria*; *Dionysius* of *Corinth*; *Polycarp* of *Smyrna*, *&c.* And the Superiority

Superiority of Bishops over Presbyters is confirm'd by *Ignatius's Epistles*, by the *Canons of the Apostles*, and the *Canonical Constitutions*, (for these are thought by some to be Authentick Records), by *Cyprian*, *Justin Martyr*, *Origen*, and several other antient Fathers. Add to this, that the *Jewish* Church had a *High Priest*, as well as *Priests* and *Levites*, and 'tis well known that both these latter were inferior to the first: So now, under the Gospel, Bishops are above Presbyters, they are the προεστῶτες, the *Presidents* and *Heads* of the Clergy, and rule and govern the Church (with the Assistance and Concurrence of their Presbyters) in their respective Dioceses and Ecclesiastical Precincts. Our own Church, to which certainly we ought to give the greatest Deference, asserts that * *from the Apostles time there have been these Orders of Ministers in Christ's Church, Bishops, Priests, and Deacons.* And the known Constitution and Practice of our Church are a real Comment upon this their Judgment. And truly we have Reason to be thankful to Divine Providence, that our Church is bless'd at this Day with such excellent Persons of that Order, than whom no Church in the World can shew Brighter Examples of Learning and Piety. Who is there therefore that pays not a profound Reverence and Respect to these admirable Prelates, both because of their Lordships Personal Qualities and Endowments, and because of their High Station and Dignity in the Church, to which our Princes have been pleased to advance them?

* *Preface to the form of making Bishops, Priests and Deacons.*

Of ORDINATION.

THE Third Enquiry under this Head of the *Officers* and *Ministers* of the Church, is, Whether it be requisite that they be *called* to this Office, and what this *Call* is. We must know then, that as there is a *Ministry*, as I have proved before, so there is *Ordination*, which I shall now prove. As God hath appointed a distinct Order of Men to preside over Peoples Souls, to administer to all their Spiritual Necessities, and to build them up in their most holy Faith, so it is his Will and Pleasure, that this Rank of Persons (those I mean who are *properly* and *strictly* the Ministers of the Gospel) be solemnly set Apart, and devoted to this Sacred Work. It is not lawful for any to take upon them the Office of Publick Preaching, or Ministring the Sacraments, unless there be first this Lawful Call to execute the same.

We have sufficient Ground for this in the Writings of the *Old Testament*: There we find, that a Solemn Designation is always necessary, in order to the Publick Administration of Sacred Things. *Aaron was separated, that he should sanctifie the most holy things, he and his Sons for ever, to burn incense before the Lord, to minister unto him, and to bless his name for ever*, 1 Chron. 23. 13. This Consecration was performed by *Moses*, *Exod.* 29. 35. For this *Moses* had a double Character, and he was both Priest, yea, High-priest, and Magistrate, as appears from *Exod.* 24. 5. *Lev.* 8. 22. *Exod.* 25. 22. *Psal.* 99. 6. With Reference to this Solemn Consecration of the chief Minister of the Jewish Church, the Apostle thus speaks, *Every High-priest is taken from among Men*, Heb. 5. 1. He is set apart from the rest, and (as it follows in that Place) *he is ordained for Men* (i. e. for the Good and Benefit of Men) *in things pertaining to God.* And again, *v.* 4. *No man takes this honour*, i. e. of the Priesthood, *unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron.* The more particular and distinct Designation of the *High-priest*, and of the *Priests* and the *Levites* to their Offices, is in 28 and 29 Chapters of *Exod.* and 8 of *Numb.* from 10 *ver.* to the 15. where we read that the *High-priest* was consecrated by Anointing, and the *Priests* by sprinkling with Oil, and both High-Priests and other Priests were set apart by *Washing*, and *Bloud*, and *Sacrificing*, and putting on of peculiar Vestments, and by putting of pieces of the Sacrifice into their Hands: Whence the Consecration of the Priests, or taking Holy Orders, is in Hebrew, call'd *filling the hand*, 1 King. 13. 33. And the *Levites* were initiated into their Function by some of these Ceremonies, and by Imposition of Hands, *Numb.* 8. 10. Thus it was under the Legal Dispensation; The Laws of *Separation* and *Consecration* of Ecclesiastical Persons were set down, and they were exactly observ'd. Another Man might have

Skill to dress and order the Sacrifice, and to carry the Tabernacle and Utensils of it, as well as the Priests and Levites, but he did not take either of these Offices upon him, because he was not Consecrated to them; and because indeed it was dangerous and fatal to do so, as *Uzzah* and King *Uzziah* knew by dear-bought Experience. The one was struck dead for touching the Ark; the other usurp'd the Function peculiar to the Priests, and was smitten with Leprosy, and degraded from his Regal Office.

And as *Priests* were not suffer'd to officiate, so *Prophets* had no Authority to preach, till they had their particular Commission and Order. It is particularly recorded of *Isaiah* and *Jeremiah*, that they were *sent*, Isai. 6. 8. Jer. 1. 7. And so if I should mention any others who were to exercise the publick Ministry, I could shew that their Mission is set down in Scripture. But on the contrary, we know what was the Complaint and Charge against the false Teachers, *I have not sent these Prophets, yet they ran*, *Jer.* 23. 21. Thus 'tis manifest, even from the *Old Testament*, that those who officiate in holy Things, ought to have a lawful Call to it.

But I proceed to the Writings of the *New Testament*, where this is further confirm'd. There being distinct Persons, in whose Hands Christ hath left the Stewardship of the Mysteries of the Gospel, the Word, and Sacraments; he hath particularly appointed, that these Persons shall be solemnly initiated into their Office, and be set apart by the Ministers of the Church for that great Work. God the Father sent Christ into the World, to be the great Prophet and Instructer of it; and he, before his Death, communicated this Office and Power to his Apostles, *As my Father sent me, so send I you.* And these imparted their Office to others, for the propagating of the Gospel, as the *Acts of the Apostles* inform us. Thus the Power invested in Christ was derived to his Apostles, and by them to others, and thus there is a perpetual Succession. We are to observe, that the same way of setting apart to the Ecclesiastical Offices is used in the *New Testament* that was in the *Old*, viz. *by Imposition of hands*, Acts 6. 6. —13. 3.—14. 23. 1 Tim. 5. 22. 2 Tim. 1. 6. Tit. 1. 5. So St. *Paul*, with the Presbytery, *laid hands* on *Timothy*, 1 Tim. 4. 14. From which, and other Places, 'tis clear, that Laying on of Hands in Ordination, was an Evangelical Institution. I shall not now insist upon the Words here used χειροθεσία and χειροτονία, but take it for granted that the latter, tho' it sometimes signifies to *choose* or *give Suffrage*, which used to be done by the Heathens, by *stretching out*, or *lifting up the Hands* (which the Word properly signifies), yet, in vulgar Use, among Christian and prophane Authors, it signifies barely to *constitute* or * *ordain* (without any respect to giving of Suffrages). Neither will I critically dwell on the other Words which are used to express *Ordination*, namely καταστήσω, Acts 6. 3. Tit. 1. 5. (which we render to *appoint* and *ordain*) and ἀφορίζειν, Acts 13. 2. to *separate* or *set apart*: But I only propound the using of them as a solid Argument of the thing I am speaking of, that is, that solemn Ordaining of Persons to the Ministerial Function, is an Apostolical and Primitive Institution.

* Χειροθεσία ferè semper sumitur pro eâ manûs impositione quæ χειροτονία aliis dicitur. Du Fresne Gloss. in verbo χειροθεσία.

Which further appears from those express Words of St. *Paul*, *How can they preach, unless they be sent?* Rom. 10. 15. For a *Mission* implies *Ordination*, as this supposes that. For in Ordination, there is *first* an Authoritative Mission, or sending of Pastors; and *secondly*, a laying on of Hands, which is the outward Sign of the former. Every one, that has Gifts and Abilities, may not discharge the Office of the Ministry, unless he hath a Mission likewise; and those that have this, are to be solemnly set apart to the Office, which is that which we call *Ordaining*: and this is it, whereby they are invested with Ministerial Power and Authority.

That is very remarkable which we meet with in *Acts* 13. 2. *The Holy Ghost said, Separate me* Barnabas *and* Saul *for the Work whereunto I have call'd them.* And accordingly, *v.* 3. *They fasted and pray'd, and laid their hands on them, and sent them away.* And *ver.* 4. 'tis added, *So they were sent forth by the Holy Ghost.* From which Passages we cannot but observe that the *Holy Ghost* himself dictated and appointed *the Ordination* of *Barnabas* and *Saul*. Likewise, that tho' Persons are *called to the Work* of the Ministry by the Spirit, and are endued with Gifts fitting them

them for the Ministry, yet Laying on of Hands is required. And further, that those who are lawfully separated and ordained to the Work of the Ministry, are *sent forth by the Holy* Ghost. These are the Natural Deductions from this Place of Scripture. And from the whole, 'tis rational to infer, that 'tis not sufficient that Persons have the Call of the *Spirit*, but they must be call'd by *Men* to exercise the Ministerial Function. Even *Paul* and *Barnabas*, extraordinarily moved by the Spirit, and bless'd with extraordinary Gifts, must have Imposition of Hands, to fit them for that Work they were design'd for, and by the Holy Ghost himself called to. From hence we may know what it is that constitutes a Minister of the Church at this Day, and what is the Call that authorizes him to discharge the publick Offices of the Church.

There is, it is true, *an inward Calling*, which consists in due Qualifications, as sufficient Knowledge, and a Holy Life, and a being inclined by the Holy Spirit to undertake the Office of the Ministry, (which our Church particularly takes Notice of in the *Form of Ordination*, and mentions it, as one requisite or preparatory to the Ministry), but there is also an *outward Call*, and that is by the Pastors of the Church, who have Power given them to set apart such by Imposition of Hands, who are qualified for the Sacred Function. This Call, tho' it be by the Ministry of Men, yet it is of God, because it is appointed by him. And consequently none must be admitted to the Ministry in the Church, but those that are thus lawfully called to it. *No man taketh this Honour on him but he that is called of God*, that is, in an orderly way, solemnly set apart by the Church. It is the Commission that makes an Embassador. It is Ordination that constitutes a Minister of the Gospel, on whom the Apostle hath bestow'd the Title of *Ambassador*. No Man under the Gospel hath Authority to exercise that Office without a peculiar Designation and Call to it. The orderly Approbation of the Pastors and Rulers of the Church is requisite, as well as Gifts and Abilities. I conclude this Head with the Words of our Church, "It is not lawful for any Man to take upon him the Office of publick Preach- *Article* 23.
"ing or Ministring the Sacraments in the Congregation, before he be lawfully
"called, and sent to execute the same. And those we ought to judge lawfully
"called and sent, which be chosen and called to this Work by Men, who
"have publick Authority given unto them in the Congregation, to call
"and send Ministers into the Lord's Vineyard.

Having thus proved, that the *Ordination* of Ministers is of Divine Institution, and therefore on that very Account is necessary and indispensable, I will in the next place assign the *Reasons* and *Ends* of this Sacred Institution; the chief of which are these, First, It is for *Discrimination*. This solemn Rite is to distinguish Ministers from others. If we respect the bare common Work of the *Priests* and *Levites*, under the Law, we shall be apt to look upon the former but as a better sort of *Butchers*, and the latter as a better sort of *Porters*; but the solemn Separation to the Employment made a Distinction betwixt them and others, and none without that Separation was permitted to undertake that Work. Much more then under the Gospel, where the Function is so Excellent and Worthy, the Persons employed in it ought to be solemnly set apart and consecrated to it. Our Priests are not like the *Emaums* or Parish-priests among the *Turks*, whose Work it is only to call the People to Prayers, and to repeat on Fridays certain Sentences out of the Alcoran. And the great Difference between them and the *People* is this, That the one wears a longer *Turbant* than the other, and that there is some little Difference in folding it up. Wherefore they are not ordained to their Office, but whenever they are laid aside, and others put in their Places, they return to their Secular Employment, and they are again numbred with the Laity. But the Employment of the Ministers of the Gospel doth lift them up above all private Christians; and therefore 'tis fitting they should be *differenc'd* from them by a solemn Investiture and Regular Installment into the Office which is so singular and choice.

Secondly, This is necessary to prevent and disappoint all false Teachers and Impostors. The Apostles instituted this Way of initiating Persons into the Ministry, thereby to set a Mark as it were upon them, that they might be known and discern'd from those who are not legally sent. And at this Day there is the same use of it, and those only are to be look'd upon as God's

Messengers who are lawfully call'd and commission'd by those who have Power in the Church to Ordain. It is the Church's Care to defeat the Designs of Heretical and Unsound Teachers by this Means, as also to exclude Vitious and Scandalous Livers from the exercising of the publick Ministry. This was the Design, I say, of Solemn Ordination, tho' 'tis to be lamented that it too often hath not its due Effect.

Thirdly, Another end of this Sacred Institution, is for the conferring of a Blessing on the Persons towards whom it is used. The first mention of *Imposition of Hands* is in a way of Religion and Benediction, *Gen.* 48. 14. Where we read that old *Jacob* made use of this Ceremony in blessing *Ephraim* and *Manasseh*. And ever since it hath been generally used to *that purpose*, both in the *Old* and *New Testaments*, especially in the latter, where 'tis accompanied with Prayer, or Fasting, or both, to shew that a *Divine Blessing* is convey'd by it through Solemn and Devout invoking of God. It was intended that by ardent Supplicating of the Almighty, the Ministers of the Church should be fitted for their Sacred Profession and High Calling.

Fourthly, The End of this Solemnity was to remind them of their peculiar Duty. For, if there be a special Designation and Consecration to the Ministerial Office, it is necessarily implied, that there must be a remarkable Consecration of their Persons and their Lives. Those who are so solemnly deputed to the Sacred Function, ought to be endued with an eminent Degree of Divine Knowledge and Wisdom, and with more than ordinary Measures of Grace and Sanctity. In Praying, Preaching, and Administring the Sacraments, and all the other Ministerial Offices, they are to be Upright and Faithful, and entirely to aim at God's Glory, and the Welfare of Mens Souls. The Lives of Ministers should transcend those of other Men. *No Minister shall use himself in the Course of his Life, as a Lay-man, upon Pain of Excommunication*, saith the 76th. Canon of our Church. It is expected of him that he do Things proper to his Calling and Function. It is highly unbecoming Men in Orders to live disorderly and loosely. They are *Holy* Persons, as they have a more *immediate* Relation to God and Religion, and the Divine Offices. But this Relative Holiness calls for that which is Inherent. Those that are separated to such a singular and special Dignity, ought to excel all other Degrees of Men in their Behaviour and Carriage in the World. They should take care to approve themselves to God and Mankind, to be exceeding regular in their Lives, to fulfil their Ministry, and do Things worthy of their Calling.

Fifthly and Lastly, This Evangelical Ceremony may be useful to conciliate Honour and Respect to those of the Clergy. The People hence may gather, that the Ministerial Office is of great Value and Worth, and that the Officers themselves are to be regarded and venerated. If God esteems them, Men deservedly may. The Patriarchs of old dedicated their First-born to the Priesthood, whence *Esau* is thought to be call'd *profane*, because he sold his Birth-right, and with that his Priesthood. Of old to derive ones Pedigree from the *Priesthood* was sufficient Nobility. He was a Gentleman that was *ex Sanguine Sacerdotali*. To be any ways related to the *Church* was accounted Valuable. *Julian*, who was Heir in a manner to the Empire, and afterwards was actual Emperor, was admitted a *Reader* in the Church. It was *Honourable* to have any Employment there among the Primitive Christians. The lowest Office of the Ministry was thought Worthy and Creditable: Especially, to be employed in the highest, must needs be thought Great and Honourable. For those who are solemnly sent by God, and have a Warrant and Commission from his Church, ought to be treated with great Respect, and a double Honour is to be paid to such.

And thus we see, that this Sacred Institution, which I undertook to discourse of, is founded on *Scripture* and *Reason*. The Consequence of which is, that we assert and defend it against all Gain-sayers. Such are some *Anabaptists*, *Socinians*, and Men of Fanatic Principles. They leave it at Liberty to any that are Gifted to Preach or Administer the Sacraments, without a Solemn Mission. So * *Socinus* himself saith, and so the *Racovian Catechism*, † "They

* *Brev. demonstrat.*

† *Qui docent in Ecclesiâ, & ordini tuendo atque conservando invigilant, nullo modo opus habent ut singulari aliquâ ratione mittantur*, p. 240, 241.

"that

" that teach in the Church, and look to the Order and Discipline of it, have " no need at all of any special Mission, which from what hath been premised cannot but appear to be contrary to the Doctrine and Practice of the Apostles and the Primitive Church.

It is true, I deny not, that before the Church was settled, and when extraordinary Gifts prevailed in the Church, private Men took upon them to expound the Scripture, and teach and instruct publickly, as we learn from the *Acts* of the *Apostles*, and from St. *Paul's Epistles* to the *Corinthians*; but this was done by the extraordinary Help of the Spirit in those first Times. *Now* it is otherwise, and we must look to what is ordinary and settled in the Church; not to what was extraordinary, and for that Time only. Nor is it denied, that many private Christians at first, in Time of *Persecution*, preached without being Ordained. For in those Times there were not Presbyters, enough to Preach, therefore it was † permitted that Laymen might exercise that Office. These, by the leave of the Bishop, might publickly interpret Scripture, as *Eusebius* proves from the Example of *Origen* and others. Nor doth any Man doubt that they may do so now, if there was a Raging Persecution, and Christians were forced to fly from their Habitations, and were depriv'd of their Ordained Ministers. In such a Case of Necessity, any Layman, by the consent of the rest, may become a Preacher. Yea, Queen *Elizabeth* gave License to Laymen to Preach at the beginning of her Reign, Protestant Preachers being at that Time very scarce. She Licens'd a High Sheriff of *Oxfordshire*, being a Gentleman of Parts and Learning, to Preach publickly to the Judges at the Assizes, that Year he was Sheriff. But, abstracting from this, and the foregoing Cases, it is an undeniable Truth, that *Laymen* have no Authority to Administer publickly in Sacred Things. The Office of a *Minister*, *viz.* to Preach with Authority, to Administer the Sacraments, to Exercise Discipline, is not common to All; but proper only to those who are lawfully call'd. As there is a peculiar and distinct Order of Persons to perform Holy Offices in the Church; so these are to be Ordained and Separated to that Employment. We must shew our *Commission* to exercise the Ministerial Function, and that is *Regular Ordination* conferr'd by *Imposition of Hands*.

† Niceph. Calist. Hist. Ec. L. 5. C. 14.

Of the MAINTENANCE *of* MINISTERS.

Fourthly, OUR propounded Method requires of us to speak in the next Place concerning the *Maintenance* of those that Minister in Holy Things. For their Attendance upon these should not debar them of a Temporal Gain and Livelihood; yea, whilst they serve at the Altar, they should more-especially be provided for. As there is a *distinct Order of Persons* to Officiate in Holy Things, so there are *distinct Revenues* due to those Persons. Which is the subject I now enter upon. And first I will prove, that the *New-Testament* requires it. Secondly, I will answer some Objections that may be raised against it. Thirdly, I will speak of the *particular Way* of Maintenance, and shew, that *Tithes* are lawful under the Gospel.

First, I will make it evident, that the Support and Maintenance of the Clergy, in the Discharge of their Function and Office, is required in the *New Testament*, which also makes use of the Authority of the *Old Testament* for this purpose. When our Blessed Saviour sent out his Twelve Apostles to Preach the Gospel, he assur'd them that they should be provided for; for, saith He, *The Workman is worthy of his Meat*, *Mat.* 10. 10. that is, he deserves a fitting Sustenance and Maintenance for the Work he doth. And afterwards, when our Lord commission'd his Seventy Disciples to go abroad upon the same Account, to wit, to Preach the Gospel, he encourag'd them, by telling them that *the Labourer is worthy of his Hire*, *Luke* 10. 7. This is enlarg'd upon by St. *Paul* in several Verses together, in the 9th. Chap. of his 1st. Epistle to the *Corinthians*. *Have we not Power*, saith he, as we are Labourers in the Gospel, *to eat and to drink*? Ver 4. that is, to require Sustenance of you. *Have we not Power to lead about*

about a Sister, a Wife, as well as other Apostles, that are married? ver. 5. That is, is it not lawful for me, suppose I was in the Conjugal State, to demand of the Churches I preach to, to maintain me and my Family? And then the Apostle proceeds to argue from the Parity of Reason thus, *Who goes a Warfare any time at his own Charges? Who planteth a Vineyard, and eateth not of the Fruit thereof? Or who feedeth a Flock, and eateth not of the Milk of the Flock?* v. 7. As much as to say, if it be fit and reasonable that others who take Pains in their Callings and Professions should be recompensed for it; if Soldiers, Vine-Dressers, and Shepherds get their Living by the Employments they are in, it is as just and equitable that the Ministers of the Gospel should do so too. We see it is the Apostle's Argument, and therefore it must not be despised, but must be held to be strong and valid.

Which baffles those ridiculous Scoffers, who object it to us as a reproachful Thing that we are paid for Praying and Preaching, as Tradesmen for their Commodities, and therefore our Office is Vile and Mercenary. The Apostle, who understood the Right Notions of Things, discourses otherwise, and argues from what is thought reasonable in *other Callings*, to that of the *Ministry*, *viz.* as to the Point of *Maintenance*. Some will say, there is a great Difference between *Ministers*, and those other Persons before-mention'd. It is true; but *herein* St. *Paul* tells us, there ought to be no Difference; as those are and must be maintain'd by their particular Callings, so ought the Preachers of the Gospel. We must contribute towards their Maintenance, if we partake of their Studies and Pains. If we see by their Light, we must afford Oyl to their Lamps. Thus the Apostle Reasons from the Parity of the Case, and the Reasonableness of the Thing, and then shews the Obligation that lies on the People to maintain their Ministers. If they will act reasonably, and as is practis'd in other Cases of the like Nature, they can't but discharge this Duty conscientiously. Accordingly we find, that the very *Heathens*, who had only the faint Light of Nature to direct them in this Business, were not defective in taking particular Care of the Ministers of their Religion. The *Egyptians*, in their great Extremity in the Famine, when the Lay-mens Lands were put to sale, took Care that the *Priests* should not sell and alienate their Lands, *Gen.* 17. 22, 26. The common Principles and Notions of Reason so far shined in their Minds as to discern the Equity of providing for those peculiar Persons who administred in Sacred Things, and of paying great Honours to them.

But the Apostle argues not only from Reason and common Equity, but from the Law of God, *Say I these Things as a Man? Or saith not the Law the same also?* For, it is written in the Law of *Moses*, *Thou shalt not muzzle the Mouth of the Ox that treadeth out the Corn. Doth God take Care for Oxen?* v. 9 As if he should say, The Divine Intention in giving that Law was not so much to provide for Oxen, as to declare what Equity should be used in recompensing those that labour for us. Or, saith he, *is it altogether for our Sakes? for our sakes no doubt this is written; that he that ploweth should plow in Hope, and that he that thresheth in Hope, should be partaker of his Hope*, v. 10. That is, This *Mosaic* Law was design'd to teach us Humanity towards those we deal with; that those that are employ'd to work for us, should have certain Hopes of receiving a meet Reward for their Pains; and more-especially, that the Ministers and Pastors of the Church should hereby be encourag'd in their great Work of the Gospel, and that none should dishearten them by covetous subtracting from, or denial of, their Maintenance.

The great Apostle goes on, and shews, that if other Labourers are to be maintain'd, (as he had said before,) then much more those that labour in the Word and Doctrine, in as much as their Calling is much higher and nobler. *If we have sown unto you Spiritual Things, is it a great Thing if we shall reap your carnal Things?* As much as to say, There is a vast Difference between *Spiritual* Things, and those that are merely *Carnal* and Temporal, and therefore your Obligation to reward your Ministers, is greater than that which lies upon others to recompence those who labour for them only in worldly and secular Things. You receive *Spiritual* and *Divine* Things from those whom God hath set over you as Instructors and Guides of your Souls: Therefore act not so absurdly as to refuse to return *Carnal* and *Worldly* Things for them. Be at any Costs, tho' never so great, for the purchase of Divine Knowledge from their

their sacred Lips. *Buy the Truth*, is *Solomon*'s excellent Advice, *Prov.* 23. 23. Buy it at any Rate; let no Expences and Charges dishearten you. It was a generous Resolve of him, whom we read of in the Sacred Records, that he would not offer to God *that which cost him Nothing*. They that are generous and resolute Christians, will scorn to be Masters of a Knowledge which costs them little or nothing. They will not suffer themselves, or those whom they are concern'd in to continue in Ignorance, only to save Charges. They will count those Expences very reasonable, whereby they may procure the Means of attaining saving Knowledge, which being attained, will be their greatest Riches.

Next, our Apostle argues for the Maintenance of the Ministers of the Gospel, from the Practice under the Law, *Do ye not know*, saith he, *that they, who minister about Holy Things, live of the Things of the Temple? and they who wait at the Altar, are Partakers with the Altar? Even so*——*v.* 13, 14. The Argument runs thus, The Priests and Levites, who were the Ministers of the *Jewish* Church, had allowed them by God's own Appointment a considerable Maintenance; therefore 'tis not fit that the Dispensers of the Sacred Mysteries of the Gospel should be destitute of the like. If those that served the Tabernacle and Temple were well provided for, shall not the Servants of Jesus be taken Care of, and abundantly recompenc'd for their Pains about the Spiritual and Evangelical Sacrifices? Now, here it is proper to take Notice of the great Revenues of the *Jewish Priests*, allotted them by God himself. They had the First-Fruits of every Thing that the Earth produced, which was no mean Profit to them. They had also the First-born of all Cattle, and besides the First-born of Men after the Rate of five Shekels, *i. e.* five Half-crowns apiece. They had a Share in the Sacrifices, and a certain Portion in the Meat-offerings, Sin-offerings, Wave-offerings, Thank-offerings, besides their Vows and Free-will Offerings. Moreover, they had the Tithes of all Increase, which amounted to a great Income yearly. And besides this, They had a considerable Advantage from the three Terms of the Annual Appearance of all the Males at the Tabernacle or Temple, at which times none were to appear empty-handed. Add to all that hath been said, That God gave them a large Glebe, consisting of 48 whole Cities, with large Suburbs: A great Portion of Land for one single Tribe in that Country, which was all of it but 140 Miles in length, or thereabouts. Notwithstanding this, so many Cities, with Lands and Grounds belonging to them, were allotted to this small Tribe, which was not the 40th part of the 12 Tribes. The short is, that upon Computation of all this, it will appear that the Priests and Levites had a Revenue almost thrice as much as any of the largest of the other Tribes. If then God was pleased to make so great Provision for his *Priests* under the *Law*, is it not rational to gather that it is his Will and Pleasure, that his *Ministers* under the *Evangelical Dispensation* should have a liberal Maintenance?

This way of arguing is thought to be valid in the Dispute about *Infant-Baptism*: For we say, If God thought fit under the Jewish Dispensation to admit Infants into his Church by the Sacrament of Circumcision, it is not to be doubted that the same Persons may be admitted now, under the Gospel OEconomy, into Christ's Church by the Sacrament of Baptism; for 'tis not to be thought that God would vouchsafe greater Privileges to the Children of the *Jews* than he is willing to grant to those of *Christians*. So here, if the Jewish Ministers were so well provided for of old, it is an unworthy Thought concerning God, to imagine that he would not make as good, if not better Provision for the Officers of his Church under the Gospel. This is the very Inference and Argument which the Apostle here uses. The Priests and Levites, *who minister about holy things, live of the things of the Temple; even so* (saith the Apostle) *hath the Lord ordain'd that they which preach the Gospel should live of the Gospel*, ver. 14. *Even so*, that is, according to the Equity of that *Jewish* Law, Christ also himself hath *ordain'd*, as in *Mat.* 10. 11. Luke 10. 7. that the Christian Ministers should be supplied with a comfortable livelihood in the discharge of their ministerial Office: For he will not suffer the Evangelical Clergy to come short of the Mosaic in Benefits and Privileges. Therefore the Apostle tells us in down-right Terms, that this Maintenance was ordain'd and enjoyn'd

by

by *our Lord himself*; and consequently it is the Peoples indispensible Duty to allow their Pastors such an Income as may be sufficient for the necessary Uses of Life, for the support of their Families, and for the maintaining of Charity and Hospitality. This is no indifferent thing, unless Christ's Command be indifferent.

And not only in this Chapter of his 1st Epistle to the *Corinthians*, but in other Epistles the Apostle urges the Reasonableness and Equity of this Practice, as in *Gal.* 6. 6. *Let him that is taught in the Word, communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things.* And, that this, κοινωνία ἐν πᾶσιν ἀγαθοῖς, this imparting and contributing of a Portion of all their *good things* (call'd before *carnal* Things) to their Teachers, is the indispensible Concern of those that are taught, may be learnt from what follows in the next verse. *Be not deceived: God is not mocked: for whatsoever a Man soweth, that shall he also reap.* As much as to say, do not flatter and delude your selves, as if you might safely detain from your Teachers their Maintenance. Let me tell you, tho' you may deceive your selves, and defraud God's Ministers, yet you can't deceive God himself; but as you deal with them, so will He with you, and your Recompence shall be according to your Works. I will add one Place more, 1 *Tim.* 5. 17, 18. *Let the Elders that rule well be counted worthy of double Honour, especially they who labour in the Word and Doctrine.* Reward and Maintenance, included in the word *Honour*, are more peculiarly due to those that preach the Gospel, yea, *double Honour*, i. e. a very great Portion of it, a liberal Maintenance (such as might set them above the Vulgar, as the *First-born by their double Portion* were preferr'd before the rest of their Brethren) is due to such. And he backs this with divine Authority, *For the Scripture saith, Thou shalt not muzzle the Ox that treadeth out the Corn: and the Labourer is worthy of his Reward or his Hire*, as in *Luke* 10. 7. to which without doubt this place referrs. And thus I have proved the Ist. and the main thing I undertook, namely, that Maintenance is due to the Ministers of the Gospel, and that the *New Testament* requires this, and makes use of Arguments from the *Old*.

But there are some *Objections* rais'd by ill Men against what hath been said; and therefore the *second* Thing I undertook, was to give an *Answer* to these. First, They think that those Words of our Saviour, *Freely ye have received, freely give*, Mat. 10. 8. destroy all that hath been said in Defence of the Maintenance of the Gospel-Ministers: For Christ reminds his Apostles of this, that they had *freely receiv'd* the Gifts of the Spirit, whereby they were enabled to preach the Gospel, and therefore they must as *freely give*, that is, preach without Reward. But any unprejudic'd Man may see, that this is not applicable to the present Purpose; for,

1. This Text speaks of miraculous and extraordinary Gifts of the Spirit, as we read in this very Verse, *Heal the Sick, cleanse the Lepers, raise the dead, cast out Devils*; these indeed were *freely* bestowed on the Apostles, they had them without any Charge or Pains. But Ministers now have none of those Gifts, and therefore this doth not affect them.

2. If we should grant that those Words do also include Preaching, and may be said to have respect to the 7th Verse, *As ye go, preach*; yet, if we consider that the Apostle's Preaching at that time was an extraordinary Gift, and by an uncommon Inspiration and Assistance (as certainly it was) then we must conclude, that these Words of our Saviour do not forbid Ministers now to receive Maintenance, for they have not this extraordinary Endowment bestowed upon them, but acquire their Knowledge and Learning by the use of proper Means, that is, by Reading and Study, and Industry, and in the use of those Helps which are chargeable. So that they are not to be said to *receive freely*, i. e. without Charges, and therefore it is not to be expected that they should be obliged to bestow their Pains freely, tho' it could be proved that the Apostles did. It might as reasonably be required, that Physicians now should cure without Money, because the Apostles, and others that had a miraculous Gift of healing, did so.

3. It is evident from the 10th Ver. of this very Chapter that Maintenance is not forbid, for these are our Saviour's own Words, *The Workman is worthy of his Meat*, or, as the Parallel Place expresses it, *his Hire*. Therefore our Lord allows

allows of a *Provision* to be made for those that preach the Gospel.

4. Then, if we restrain the Words *freely give*, to *Preaching*, the meaning of this Injunction is no other than that of St. *Peter*, 1 *Ep.* 5. 2. *Feed the Flock of God, which is among you, taking the Oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly: not for filthy Lucre, but of a ready Mind.* Christ doth not forbid his Disciples or any Ministers of the Gospel to take a Reward for their Pains, but he forbids them to be anxious and sollicitous about this, and to make this their Design in preaching. He would not have them to be covetous and craving, and look chiefly after their Profit, and study to hoard up Riches. This is the main Thing design'd in this Precept; and who sees not that it is nothing at all to the Purpose of the *Objectors*? And here, by the way, an Answer may be given to those who brand the Ministers of our Church with the Name of *Hirelings*, because they take Maintenance or *Hire* of the People; which is a very idle and vain Reproach, for they may have *Hire*, that is, a due Allowance for their Labours, and yet not be *Hirelings*, as is clear from our Saviour's Words, who tells us *John* 10. 12. that he is an *Hireling who is not the Shepherd, and whose own the Sheep are not*, one that aims only at his own Advantage and Profit, and hath no true Affection for the Sheep, and, as it follows in the next Verse, *careth not for the Sheep.* This is the true Definition of an *Hireling*, and it can't be applied to the True Ministers of the Gospel.

Again, there is an *Objection* form'd from *Acts* 20. 33, 34. and 1 *Cor.* 9. 12. whence it appears, That St. *Paul* refus'd to receive any Maintenance for preaching; therefore other Ministers of the Gospel ought to follow his Example. In answer to the 1st Place, *I have coveted no man's Silver or Gold, or Apparel. Yea, you your selves know, that these Hands have ministred to my Necessities, and to them that are with me*; this is to be said, that the Apostle sometimes did work with his own Hands, that he might not be *burdensome* and *chargeable*, (as he saith in 2 *Cor.* 11. 9.) to those poor People that he preach'd to. And all Ministers of the Gospel, even at this very Day, if they were *in the same Circumstances* with the Apostle, ought not to require a set Maintenance, but ought, if they are able, to work with their Hands, or in some other lawful Way, to gain a livelyhood. In the time of extreme Poverty or Persecution this is to be done: But this is not the Case of Preachers now in most Parts of *Christendom*; and therefore this Text can't be alledg'd to favour the Unlawfulness of allowing a Maintenance.

As for that other place, *We have not used this Power*, i. e. of demanding a Recompence or Stipend for our preaching, the following Words of the Apostle give an Account of this his Practice, *We suffer all Things, lest we should hinder the Gospel of Christ*, i. e. we undergoe all kind of Hardship, and particularly are willing to deny our selves as to an Allowance for our Labours in the Ministry, lest we should at this time render our preaching of the Gospel ineffectual, by putting our Hearers to Charges. For we must know, that at that time, among the *Corinthians*, there were *false Teachers*, who preach'd *gratis*, to the People, and gloried in it: Wherefore it was not convenient for St. *Paul*, at such a Juncture, to look for a Recompence of his Labours. If he had taken Wages of the *Corinthians* for preaching the Gospel, the false Teachers would have made use of this to his Disadvantage, by persuading the People, that he was selfish and covetous, and acted in Religion upon Secular Designs, and for worldly Gain and Profit. Wherefore 'twas prudently done of St. *Paul* to do as he did: In such Circumstances, it was expedient to preach, without expecting any Stipend or Allowance. For by this Means he stopt the Mouths of those Impostors, and (as he represents the Case in short) *he cut off occasion from them which desired occasion, that wherein they gloried, they might be found even as he*, 2 Cor. 11. 12. This was the Apostle's Case, and this was the true Reason why *he used not his Power* in the Church of *Corinth*. But when he said he did not make use of his Ἐξουσία, his Power, it is imply'd, That *he had a Power*, and *might use it* on Occasion. Yea, and he made use of it when he thought fit. He both required, and took Wages for the Gospel. He did actually accept of a Maintenance from other People whom he preach'd to; he expressly tells us, that he *took Wages* of other Churches, 2 *Cor.* 11. 8. which he is pleased to call a *robbing of them*, because he received a Stipend of them, who at that time, could scarcely spare it; but

but his Necessity at that Season requir'd it, and made it lawful and reasonable. How much more then is it reasonable, yea and absolutely due, when the People are able to allow it? Which is the thing that this Apostle so clearly and so fully demonstrates in that 9th. Chap. of the first Epist. to the *Corinthians*, which I have insisted upon. Wherefore, notwithstanding the foresaid *Objections*, it is most evident that the Maintenance of the Ministers of the Gospel is a Divine Law, and not to be dispens'd with by any humane one, that those who feed the Flock should live of the Flock, and those, who impart to the People Spiritual Things, should receive Temporal Ones from them.

Having thus asserted and defended the Maintenance of the Clergy in general, now I come in the third place to the *particular Way* and *Mode* of it. And I will dispatch all in these two Propositions: 1. Maintenance by *Tithes* was not practis'd for above Three Hundred Years after Christ, but the Ministers were maintain'd in another Way peculiar to those Times. 2. In after-times the Governours of the Christian Church determin'd that Maintenance by *Tithes* was the most proper and convenient, and accordingly it prevail'd in most Christian Churches. We are to know in the 1st Place, That Ministers were not maintain'd by *Tithes* in the First Ages of Christianity. In the Apostles Times not only the Apostles themselves, but other Preachers of the Gospel, lived upon the voluntary Offerings and Contributions, and Charity of Christian Churches reduced into a Common Stock. I say a Common Stock, for this arose from the Oblations of the Faithful, and it was dispos'd of among the Officers of the Church, and among the poor and indigent Christians. And more particularly this Bank was increas'd by the Sale of the Lands of such as were Possessors, and by adding the Money to the Common Treasure, as we read in the *Acts*. Out of those Inheritances and Possessions which were thus sold, and out of the Yearly Incomes of others, there were daily Oblations made of Money and Goods by those Christians that were Rich and Wealthy: And as for those of the meaner Rank, they bestow'd what they could afford. And it was the Work and Office of the *Deacons* to take these Offerings *of the* People, and to disperse them among the *Clergy* and the *Poor*. With regard to which latter, the Church's Goods were esteem'd and call'd the *Poors Patrimony*. *Tertullian*, and other Ancient Fathers, do frequently make mention of those Contributions which were made at the Publick Meetings; out of which the Ministers, the Poor, the Sick, the Widows, the imprison'd Martyrs, and other distress'd Christians were maintain'd: But more-especially the Ministers and Clergy had their constant Allowance out of them for their Ministerial Work. And here 'tis Worth our observing, That even those Voluntary Offerings begun about the Entrance of the Third Century, and afterwards to be paid in the Proportion of a *Tenth Part* of every Man's Income for the whole Year, as may be gather'd from some Passages in *Cyprian*: And in the fourth and fifth Ages several *Fathers* press the Payment of *Tithes*.

Afterwards when the Clergy and other Christians saw it would be better to settle the Inheritances and Lands (which they used to sell before) on the Churches, because a surer Maintenance, both for the present and future, would be had from the constant Revenue of the Lands, than from the Sale of them; it became an usual Practice for the Rich to settle their Lands on the Mother Churches where the Clergymen resided; and these Clergymen, together with the Poor, were maintain'd out of the Annual Incomes of these Lands. And now they strove who should most enrich the Church by these free Donations of their Estates, and *Constantine the Great* was the chief and Leading Benefactor; Community of Revenues now ceas'd, and Propriety was induc'd, that is, Certain Annual Revenues and Possessions were assign'd to particular Ministers, and they became their own proper Goods and were call'd *Benefices*. But these were but few, and many of them small, and therefore a farther Provision was to be made for the numerous Company of the Clergy.

My Second Proposition then is this, That in Process of Time the Governours and Rulers of the Christian Church determin'd, that Churchmen, besides their Offerings, and particular Benefactions already settled on them (which were but rare) should have *Tithes* paid to them of all the People's Increase. In the Seventh and Eighth Centuries some *Councils* and *Synods* urged the paying

paying of a Tenth Part of the Yearly Income of the People, to the Clergy. And at the close of the Eighth Century, Tithes were settled on the Church by Civil Authority in *France* and *Germany*. And at the beginning of the Ninth Century, the Emperor *Charlemaign* establish'd it as a Law, and from those Parts the Practice was soon deriv'd into other Countries, and even into *England*, in the Reign of King *Ethelwulph*. This was the Rise of the *Civil* Right of Tithes, whereas before it was meerly *Ecclesiastical*. And so now the Maintenance became not only Plentiful and Liberal, but stated and certain, and no longer at the People's Disposal. And indeed Reason and Prudence dictated a stated and determin'd Provision. As for the particular *Quota*, whence could it be better taken than from the most antient Practice of God's own People, approved by God himself? Yea, it was his own Prescription and Direction to them; he thought fit to enjoin that People to pay a *Tenth Part* of their Incomes to those that administred about Holy Things. And thence Christians took their Directions about the Provision which is to be made for the Ministers of the Gospel. Nor are we to think, that because *Tithes* are enjoyn'd by the *Mosaic* and *Jewish* Law, therefore they are unlawful under the *Gospel*; for this way of Arguing is not acknowledg'd even by some of those that have no good Opinion of *Tithes*. They scruple not to conform to *Lev.* 28. which assigns the several Degrees of *Consanguinity* and *Affinity*, and accordingly what *Marriages* are to be prohibited. They think those *Levitical Laws* are to be practis'd now, and they hold it sinful to violate them. Why then are they not reconciled to the Law of *Tithes*, tho' tis of *Mosaic* Extraction? Yea, its being so, that is, coming from God himself, should commend it to us; for that particular *Quota* which God made choice of, is likely to be most Reasonable and Fitting. He knew what Portion of *Time* was fittest to be dedicated to his Worship and Service; and so he best knew what special Portion of our *Goods* and Incomes is to be consecrated to him. As he demands the Seventh Part of our Time, so he requires the Tenth of our Increase to be devoted unto him. This was no *Typical* Thing, nor did it refer to the *Ceremonial Law*, and therefore was not purely *Jewish*, and consequently the Christian Church may make use of it and practise it.

Yea, notwithstanding the *Jewish* Priesthood and Law are abolish'd, this Constitution seems to be yet in Force; for a Law, that was never repeal'd, continues still a Law. Many Learned Men, and our *Stillingfleet* among the rest, argue for *Infant-Baptism*, because there was under the *Law* a way of admitting Children into the Church, and this in the general Sense of it, is *still* in force, being not abrogated. If this be a good Way of Reasoning, it holds as well for *Tithes* now. The Law concerning the maintaining of Ministers by Tithes was never repeal'd, therefore it is valid still. I appeal to any Man whether he can assign any Place in the *New Testament* where Tithes are rescinded. I find that *they are the Lord's*, and that *they are holy unto the Lord*, *Lev.* 27. 30. But I never met with that Place in the Evangelical Writings, where they are alienated and given away from him and his Ministers. But they seem rather to be confirm'd and establish'd anew in *Heb.* 7. 6, 8, 9. And how indeed could the Law of *Tithes* be abrogated by the *New Testament*, seeing these (tho' enjoin'd the *Jews*) are not *Jewish* or Ceremonial, but were paid before *Judaism* was in being, and before the Ceremonial Law was instituted? It is probable that Tithes began with *Adam*, and that he taught his Sons to offer First-Fruits and Tithes. 'Tis likely *Cain* and *Abel* offer'd them to God, one of the Fruits of the Earth, the other of the First-Born, and fattest of the Sheep. But this we are certain of, that *Abraham* paid Tithes to *Melchisedech* the High-Priest, *Gen.* 14. 20. *He gave him Tithes of all*, *i. e.* of all his own Goods, and especially of the *Spoils*, which are particularly mention'd by the Apostle, *Heb.* 7. 4.

It appears hence that Oblations were due then to the Ministers of Religion, to the Priests of the most High God; but why was not a Sixth or Twelfth Part offer'd, or some other Part offer'd to them? Why this determinate Number, the *Tenth*? Because 'tis very probable that this was founded on some particular Command from God, as *Sacrifices* were, tho' that Command is not expressly mention'd in the Sacred Writings. So we read, that in those early Times the Holy Patriarch *Jacob* vow'd that Religious Vow, That *of all that God should*

give unto him, he would surely give the Tenth unto him, Gen. 28. 22. Which is to be interpreted according to the aforesaid Practice of his Grandfather *Abraham*; that is, he resolv'd to dedicate the Tenth of his Income to the Service of God, and particularly to the Profess'd Ministers of it. He had *set up a Stone for a Pillar, and pour'd Oil upon it, that is,* consecrated it into a kind of Temple, wherefore he called it *Bethel, the House of God,* 18, 19, *ver.* fitly therefore to a *Temple,* or Place of Worship he adds *Tithes,* to be paid to the Priest who officiated there. Thus we see, that in that more pure Age of the *Patriarchs,* the Law of Tithes obtain'd, and therefore was not merely *Jewish* and *Levitical.* Only God was pleas'd to continue this Law among his own People, the *Jews,* which had been in use, and 'tis likely by his particular Injunction, in the former Dispensations; yea, even from the beginning of the World. We may then esteem this practice enjoin'd by God himself, a sufficient Warrant to us to pay the *Tenth* of our Increase now under the Gospel to the Ministers of it; and these seem to have a right to this Income, even by Divine Authority.

However this may be receiv'd, we are sure of this, that *a Maintenance* is authorized by the Evangelical Law, as I have abundantly prov'd out of St. *Paul's* Epistles, as well as from the Determination of our Blessed Saviour himself. Those of the Sacred Office and Function, by whose Means the greatest Blessings are convey'd unto us from Heaven, are to be encourag'd in the discharge of their Duty, by the Allowance of a plentiful Provision for them. All Men of Conscience and Religion have duly practis'd this, and have thought themselves obliged to make a Return of their Acknowledgment of God's being the Donor of all their Earthly Enjoyments, by giving the Tribute of their Increase towards the supporting of his Ministers. Yea, they have thought that denying them their Dues in this manner, would deservedly bring down a Curse upon their Heads, and that *the Hire of these Labourers kept back by Fraud* would *cry,* and that aloud, and that *the Cries of these Labourers would enter into the Ears of the Lord of Sabbaoth.*

And to conclude, as for the particular Maintenance by *Tithes,* tho' *'tis no* wonder that those, who look upon the Ministry it self as *Antichristan,* declaim against the paying of Tithes as *such*: Yet all, who act upon sober and just Principles, esteem this Way of Maintenance as Lawful and Laudable in it self (abstracting from the *Inequality* which it is subject to in many Places, and ought to be corrected:) and, especially being established by Authority, it becomes our Duty; for a Minister hath the same Civil Right and Title to the 10th. Part of Land in his Parish, that the Possessor and Owner himself hath to the other Nine. The same Laws that have feoffed the People in their Estates, have allotted the Pastor his due Share in them.

THE

THE Third General Head; NAMELY, *Of the* Sacraments *of* BAPTISM, AND THE LORD'S SUPPER, AND *All the other* Sacred Institutions *and* Appointments *appertaining to the* Worship of God, *or the* Discipline *of the* Christian Church.

THE Third General Head I am to treat of, is the *Publick Institutions* and *Ordinances* which Christ hath appointed in his Church. For as there is a *Church*, and a *Ministry* (which I have already prov'd) so there are certain *Common Acts* and *Exercises* of Religion, in which the Ministers of the Church, and all the Members of it are concern'd, and ought to be actually exercis'd. Here then my Business is to shew, what are those *Evangelical Ordinances* which relate to the Worship of God in the Christian Church. The Writings of the *New Testament* inform us, that they are these which follow, *Meeting together in Publick Baptism, the Celebrating of the Lord's Supper, Prayer, Reading the Holy Scriptures, Catechising, Preaching, Singing of Psalms, Taking Care of the Poor, Fasting, Thanksgiving* and *Festivals, Ecclesiastical Censures.*

The first of all the Sacred Institutions of the Gospel, is the *Publick Assembling* of the Faithful together to worship God. This I mention in the first Place, because it is the Foundation of all the rest; for the publick Administration of Baptism, and of the Lord's Supper, and the great Exercise of Prayer, *&c.* suppose this solemn Meeting together, which I have now mention'd. It is necessary therefore that I begin with this, which is the Ground-Work of all. And here, 1. I will prove, that this solemn Assembling together for the Worship of God, is authoriz'd by the Divine Command, and by the Practice of the Saints in the *Old Testament.* 2. I will shew that it is further authoriz'd by the Writings of the *New Testament.* 3. I will assign the Reasons of this Practice. And lastly, I will return an Answer to the main Objection which is made against it.

The first Thing I undertake, is to shew, That the publick Assembling together of God's Servants, for the performing of Religious Worship, is authoriz'd by the *Divine Command*, and the *Obedience paid to it by the Faithful in the* Old Testament. When it is recorded, That *God blessed the Seventh Day, and sanctified it, Gen.* 2. 3. there is no Ground of Doubting whether this was an Injunction obliging *Adam* and his Race to assemble together for Divine Worship, and whether *Adam* and his Family kept this Day Holy immediately after the Instituting of it; and whether afterwards this Day was observ'd by him, and his Posterity, as set apart for the more solemn Worship of God. When the Posterity of *Cain* shew'd themselves Irreligious and Prophane, we read, that *then Men began*

to

to call upon the Name of the Lord, Gen. 4. 26. that is, the Families of godly *Seth*, (for of them 'tis spoken) did more openly and publickly invoke the Divine Majesty, and pay solemn Worship to him. If there be any Credit to be given to the *Hebrew* Masters and *Talmudists*, who tell us of the *Seven Precepts* given by God to the Sons of *Adam* and *Noah*, one of which was against *Strange Worship*, surely we may infer thence, that the *True Worship* of God was a thing not unknown, but was observ'd and kept up at that Time by the truly Pious and Devout. *Altars* and *Sacrifices* and *Priesthood* under the Patriarchal Dispensation imply this; for they erected Altars in order to assembling together in those Places where they were built, and to worship God there, *Gen.* 35. 1, 7. and such consecrated Places were esteem'd to be *Temples* or *Houses of God*, as is expressly said, *Gen.* 28. 17.

Much more under the *Jewish* Oeconomy, the setting up of Altars, and the offering of Sacrifices, and the whole Office of the Priests included in them the publick Worship of God by that People; for in the Court of the Tabernacle, and the more spacious one of the Temple the People met, and brought thither their Offerings, and here pray'd, and heard, and stood all the Time the Priests were sacrificing, joining with them in this Divine Service. And is it not evident, that the People under the Mosaick Law met together to celebrate the Divine Worship, when we frequently read in *Exodus*, *Leviticus* and *Numbers*, that God gave Order, that there should be *Congregations*, *Convocations*, *Assemblies*, *Solemn Assemblies* for Religious Purposes, and when all the * Words in the Hebrew, by which they are express'd, denote *meeting together*? And those Assemblies and *Holy Convocations* (as they are call'd) are particularly enumerated in *Lev.* 23. 3, *&c.* namely, the weekly Sabbath, the Passover, the beginning of the New Year, the Day of Atonement, the Feast of Tabernacles, all which were instituted for the Service of the most High. And the Tabernacle was erected for this Purpose, and was therefore call'd *the Tabernacle of the Congregation* in *Exod. Levit.* and *Numbers*, because the Congregation of the People met there publickly, that they might jointly serve God. And the Temple afterwards was built for the same End, that is, the publick Meeting together of the People to worship the Lord; and we are inform'd, that they were oblig'd by a positive Command, to appear at *Jerusalem* thrice a Year: And at other times, when the whole Body of the People could not come together in one Place, they met in their several Cities and Towns, where there were *Synagogues* on purpose for the Performance of Divine Service, as we have it from the Mouth of an Apostle, *Acts* 15. 21. Moses *in old time had in every City them that preached him, being read in the Synagogue every Sabbath Day.*

* *Gnedah*, *Kahal*, *Mogued*, &c.

And as there were *publick Meetings* appointed by God, so 'tis abundantly evident, that the Faithful made Conscience of resorting to them, and attending upon them, which the Sacred Records acquaint us with. But I will instance only in that holy King and Prophet *David*, who is an admirable Pattern to us of the Love of publick Devotion, and frequenting the Solemn Assemblies of God's People. *My Soul thirsteth for God, for the living God, when shall I come, and appear before God?* Psal. 42. 2. Which most Expositors understand of his appearing before God in his House dedicated to his Service; and the Exposition is fairly abetted from the 4th Verse, *When I remember these Things, I pour out my Soul in me, for I had gone with the Multitude*, (that is, a huge Throng of devout People to the publick Assemblies) *I went with them to the House of God, with the Voice of Joy and Praise, with a Multitude that keep Holy Day.* That is, he had heretofore the Liberty of serving God in the Tabernacle, which was the Comfort of his Soul; but now he is depriv'd of that great Privilege, and this is it which he so ardently wishes he may be restored to. The very same Eagerness of Soul he expresses in other Places, *I have loved the Habitation of thy House, and the place where thy Honour dwells*, *Psal.* 26. 8. And again, in *Psal.* 27. 4. *One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after, that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the Days of my Life, to behold the Beauty of the Lord, and to enquire into his Temple.* Tho' a King, tho' a Prophet, yet he thought not himself too Great, too Good to wait on the Courts of the Lord: Yea, this is that which he most earnestly longs for, as the choicest Favour and Privilege. This he more amply expresses in *Psal.* 84. 1, 2, 3, &c. *How amiable are thy Tabernacles, O Lord of Hosts! My Soul longeth,*

longeth, yea, even fainteth for the Courts of the Lord. Yea, the Sparrow hath found a House, and the Swallow a Nest for her self, where she may lay her young, even thy Altars, O Lord of Hosts, my King and my God. Blessed are they that dwell in thy House, they will be still praising thee. A Day in thy House is better than a thousand: I had rather be a Door-keeper in the House of my God, than to dwell in the Tents of Wickedness. Again, *Psal.* 122. 1. *I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the House of the Lord:* I was, saith he, transported with unspeakable Joy and Emotion of Soul, when such glad Tidings came to me, that I should have the Liberty of worshiping God in the great Congregation, and joining with them in Prayers and Praises, and thus making a Holy Consort in Devotion. Therefore, at another time, he exhorts men to prize this Liberty, and to make use of it, *O sing unto the Lord a new Song, and praise him in the Congregation of the Saints,* Psal. 84. 4. *Enter into his Gates with Thanksgiving, and into his Courts with Praise: Be thankfull unto him, and bless his Name,* Psal. 100. 4. This was the religious and pious Employment of God's People at their publick Meetings and solemn Assemblies.

And from the whole, we may see what Reason there is to explode that bold Assertion, * That before *Moses*, we don't read of *any common Worship of a Congregation, in which the Persons present join'd; and that from the time of* Moses *to the Babylonian Captivity, it doth not appear that the Jews joyn'd in Worship.* This is easily confuted from the Premisses; for tho' the figurative and ceremonial Part of Divine Worship be chiefly mention'd in the *Old-Testament*, yet the Moral and Spiritual Service of God by Prayers and Praises, and hearing his Word is likewise recorded. And tho' the Jews had no Liturgy prescrib'd them, and tho' we should grant that the Prayers they put up in the time of Sacrificing were private, yet the Service taken altogether was publick, and the Priests and People were all concern'd in it, and joyn'd with it.

* *Mr.* Bennet's *Hist. of the Joint Use of Set Forms.*

Secondly, I pass to the *New Testament*, where we find *a gathering together in Christ's Name*, with his Promise *to be in the midst of them*, Mat. 18. 20. which can signifie no other than a religious Assembling of Christians for the Service of God. We find our Blessed Saviour himself a constant Frequenter of the Temple, and the Synagogue, and some think he went thither to join with the Jewish Worship. To this they imagine those Words of his relate, *Luke* 2. 49. *Wist ye not that I must be* ἐν τοῖς πατρός μου, that is, according to the Syriack, *in my Fathers House?* And from those Places, where 'tis said, that the Apostles *were continually in the Temple, praising and blessing God*, Luke 24. 53. *And they continued daily with one Accord in the Temple*, Acts 2. 46. *And* Peter *and* John *went up together to the Temple at the Hour of Prayer*, Acts 3. 1. and from other Places, where 'tis said, the Apostles *went into the Synagogue*; 'Tis gathered by some, that our Saviour, and his Apostles joyn'd in the publick Service and Worship of the Jews. But for my part, I can gather no such thing, and I wonder that great Numbers of learned Men have had the Confidence to do it. Not that I deny, that from such and the like Texts, it may solidly be prov'd, that Christ and his Apostles met together to celebrate Divine Worship, and thereby shew'd the Lawfulness and Necessity of publick Meetings for religious Purposes; but this is that which I maintain, That we can't infer from these Texts, that Christ or his Apostles *join'd with the Jews in their Worship.*

And first, to speak of *Christ*, and then of his *Apostles*; We do not any where read, that our Saviour communicated in any Divine Offices with the Jews. And as for those Texts, which are commonly produced to prove, that he held Communion with the Synagogue and the Temple Worship; it seems strange to me, that any should be so forward as to make use of those Places which are nothing to the Purpose. The first Time of our Saviour's going into the Temple, is mention'd in *Luke* 2. 46. where, 'tis said, his *Parents found him in the Temple*; but here is not the least Intimation of his joyning with the Jews in Worship, unless *sitting in the midst of the Doctors, both hearing them and asking them Questions* implies so much, which I think no Man of Sense will affirm. Afterwards, whenever we read, that our *Lord went into the Temple*, 'tis only said, that he *taught* there, as in *Mat* 26. 55. *Luke* 19. 47.---21. 37. *John* 7. 14.---8. 2. ---18. 20. It is true, we read more than once, that when Christ went into the Temple, he whipt the Buyers and Sellers out of it; but this may well be reckon'd

reckon'd as a *severe Teaching* them their Duty; but 'tis never said, that he *pray'd* with any Persons in the Temple, or join'd in the Jewish Devotion.

So, whenever 'tis said, that our Saviour went into the Synagogue, as in *Mat.* 4. 23.---12. 9.---13. 54. *Mark* 1. 21.---6. 2. *John* 18. 20. we read not, that he pray'd there, and comply'd with the Rites and Ceremonies of the Synagogue-worship; 'tis only said, that he *preach'd* and *taught*; and more particularly 'tis recorded in *Luke* 4. 16. *That as his Custom was, he went into the Synagogue on the Sabbath Day, and stood up for to read*, and he made such a close and piercing Discourse on the Place of Scripture in *Isaiah*, that the Jews were so vex'd, that they attempted to take away his Life. Thus we see what was our Saviour's Carriage, and we can't but discern the Reason of it; he often went into the *Temple* and *Synagogue*, that thereby he might have frequent Opportunities of divulging his Doctrines in those Places of great Concourse of People; and that was the Reason why he was wont to go up to *Jerusalem* at the Passover; namely, Because at that time vast Multitudes of People were gathered together, which was a very convenient Season for the foresaid Purpose.

Next, let us take Notice of the Behaviour of the *Apostles*, after our Saviour's Ascension. Whenever we find them in the *Synagogue*, nothing is mention'd but their *preaching*, or *disputing*, or *reasoning*, as in *Acts* 9. 20.—13. 5, 14, 15.—17. 1, 2, 10.—18. 4.—19. 8, 26. which plainly shews, that they repair'd to the Synagogue, not to join with the Jews in their Worship. And so when their going into the *Temple* is recorded, there is not a Word of their holding Communion with the Jewish Worshippers, but all their Business was, to preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ, as they were particularly commanded by a Messenger from Heaven, *The Angel of the Lord said unto them, Go stand and speak in the Temple to the People all the Words of this Life*, that is, of the Christian Religion, which directs Men to the attaining Everlasting Life; *and when they heard that, they enter'd into the Temple, and taught*, Acts 5. 20, 21. They were not bid to join with the Jewish Worship in the Temple, but only to make use of that publick Place which was fittest for publishing the Gospel in. And therefore this lets us know what is the Meaning of *Acts* 2. 46. *They continued daily with one Accord in the Temple*, that is, they constantly taught, and preach'd there to the numerous Throngs that frequented that Place.

And with their Preaching they mix'd incessant Prayers and Praises, the one for the Divine Assistance and Success, the other for the Deliverances which they had already been bless'd with; which may give us a right Apprehension of what is said in *Luke* 24. 53. *They were continually in the Temple, praising and blessing God*, and in *Acts* 1. 14. *They continued with one accord in Prayer and Supplication*, that is, they continued in *Prayer* to procure a Blessing; and in *Supplication* to prevent the Evils which were threaten'd them. If this refers to what they did in the Temple, it is plain, that it signifies not the Praying us'd there by the Jews, for 'tis said, *with the Women* and *with Christs Brethren*, which shews that these were together; but 'tis well known that the former of these at the Jewish Prayers were placed in an Apartment different from that of the Men: Therefore it could not properly be said here, *with them*, and consequently the *Prayer* and *Supplication* here mention'd, are to be understood of the Apostles own Conceiv'd Devotions, not of the Temple Worship. And this helps us to understand aright that Passage in *Acts* 3. 1. Peter *and* John *went up together into the Temple at the Hour of Prayer, being the Ninth hour*, that is, They chose that set Time of the Jewish Worship to go up to the Temple, tho' they did not worship there. No: this was inconsistent with the Christian Service; and *now* especially, when the Apostles were inspir'd by the Holy Ghost, and were enlightned in all Truths, it is not to be believ'd that they would return to the Jewish Service. It is particularly said, That they repair'd to the Temple at the *ninth hour*, (Three a-clock with us) the Time of the *Evening Sacrifice*, but we can't think that after Christ had offer'd himself a Sacrifice on the Cross, they wou'd joyn with the Jews in the Mosaic Sacrifice, which was but a Type of the other.

In short, I have consulted all those Texts where 'tis recorded that Christ and the Apostles *went* to the *Temple* or the *Synagogue*, and I find that there is nothing implied of their joyning with the Jewish Worship in either of those Places:

Places: But the true Reason why they went thither, and at the Time of the Jewish Service, was because then and there they knew they should meet with great Numbers of People, which wou'd be serviceable to them on the Account of gaining Converts to the Christian Religion, and the easier and speedier Propagating the Gospel. Wherefore I reckon it as a vulgar Error, that the Apostles held Communion with the Jewish Church, notwithstanding its Corruptions. There is no Ground at all for this Assertion which is so commonly to be met with in the Writings of our Divines; and it very much surprizes me, that so many Learned and Judicious Persons have been mistaken and overseen in this Matter. Before I quit this Subject, I will take notice, That * one of these Learned Men, who had professedly undertaken to prove from our Saviour's frequenting the Temple, that he join'd with the Communion of the Jewish Church there, yet expressly owns, that the nature of the Temple-worship was such, that Christ could not possibly conform to it; yea, he abolish'd it; so unwarily doth this excellent Writer confute himself.

Dr. Lightfoot, *in a Sermon before the Natives of* Staffordshire, *on* John 10. 22, 23.

But tho' neither our Saviour nor his Apostles did resort to the *Temple* or *Synagogue* on the account of Divine Worship, after the manner of the Jews, and consequently did not join with the Jewish Church in its Religious Rites; yet they *often assembled together for the Exercise of Devotion*, and the *Service of God*, after the *Christian* manner: Which is the thing that I'm now to prove, and it is the Main that I design'd, in Prosecution of what I undertook; namely, to shew what *Authority* we have for Publick or Solemn Assemblies for the *Service of God*. I have already shew'd it from the *Old Testament*; it remains now that we consult the *New*. Indeed there was no need of the Evangelists recording the solemn Meeting together of Christ and his Apostles and Disciples to perform their Devotions, for every Day was a Day of Assembling, and he continually pray'd with them and for them, and consequently preach'd to them, and at last he and they celebrated the Holy Sacrament together. However, the Evangelical Writings are not silent, and St. *Luke* acquaints us, that our Saviour after his Resurrection still maintain'd the foresaid Communion, as we read in *Acts* 1. 4. *He assembled together with them*, and again, *v.* 6. *They were come together*, the same Word, [συνελθόντες] that is used in 1 *Cor.* 11. 20. and 14. 26. to express the Coming together in a Religious Manner to perform Divine Worship.

We read further, That these devout Christians *went up into an upper Room*, (some upper Part of a House sequester'd on purpose for that Religious Use) *and there continued with one accord in Prayer and Supplication*, Acts 1. 13, 14. On the Day of Pentecost *they were all with one accord in one place*, chap. 2. ver. 1. which in the next Verse is call'd *a House*. It is added in *ver.* 42. That *they continued stedfast in the Apostles Doctrine and Fellowship, and in breaking of Bread, and in Prayers*; which is a brief Description of the whole Exercise of Religious Worship. In chap. 4. ver. 31. we read of the *Place where they were assembled together*: Again, chap. 11. ver. 26. *they assembled themselves with the Church*, and chap. 12. ver. 5. *Prayer was made without ceasing by the Church*, which may imply their Meeting together for that purpose, and accordingly 'tis said, *ver.* 12. *Many were gathered together Praying*. We are told, That *on the First Day of the Week the Disciples came together to break Bread*, and to hear the Word preach'd, for 'tis expressly mention'd, that Paul *preached unto them*, Acts 20. 7. and without doubt he *pray'd* with them, (tho' 'tis not particularly here express'd) for *Prayer* and the *Ministry of the Word* were to be inseparable, *Acts* 6. 4. And in this Twentieth Chapter they are both of them found in the Practice of St. *Paul*, who called the *Elders of the Church of* Ephesus, ver. 17. and with them part of their Flock (as I have shew'd before) and *when they were come*, he preach'd to them a most Affectionate Sermon, *and kneel'd down, and pray'd with them all*, ver. 36. And I might add, That from all, or most of those Places, where 'tis said, that those First Christians *went into the Temple, and taught*, it may probably be inferred, that they Assembled together for Worship; tho' not for the *Jewish* Worship (as I have already prov'd) yet for that which was Christian and Evangelical. Finally, the whole Fourteenth Chapter of the First Epistle to the *Corinthians*, gives us an Account of these Religious Assemblies of the Primitive Christians, wherein was *Praying, Blessing*,

sing, and *giving of Thanks*, and *Prophesying* or *Preaching*, and the People by saying *Amen*, testified their joyning with the Minister in what he had said. Thus we see, that the *solemn Meeting together* for Divine Worship, was the Practice of the Apostles and Primitive Christians, which was the Thing I was to make good.

And here I might observe, That the Places in which the Christians in the Apostles Times met together, had the Name of Churches in those early Days. Thus 'tis said of the Christians that were at *Antioch*, that *a whole Year they assembled with the Church*, Acts 11. 26. where it is probable ἐκκλησία signifies the *Place* where they were assembled, for tho' our Translators render it *with the Church*, yet there is no occasion for it, because in the Greek it is ἐν τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ, *in the Church*, *i. e.* in that Place which they had chosen to meet in generally, to perform publick Service to God. So in 1 *Cor.* 11. 18. *when ye come together in the Church*, ἐκκλησίᾳ is meant of a Material or Local Church. So St. *Chrysostom* and *Theophylact* on that Text, and so St. *Augustine* on *Levit.* Quest. 57. They understand the *Church* to be the Place where the *Corinthians* usually met. As is clear from *v.* 20. of the foresaid Chapter, where this 18th is explain'd, *when ye come together in one Place*, i. e. the Place of your religious Worship, call'd the *Church*. And this is confirm'd by the Antithesis that follows, *v.* 22. where we find οἰκίαι, private and ordinary Houses oppos'd to Ἐκκλησία the Church, *What, have ye not Houses to eat and to drink in, but despise ye the Church of God?* That is, are ye not only disorderly in your own Houses and Families, but likewise when you assemble together on the Account of Religion, in the Houses or Rooms which are made use of for God's Worship? So in 1 *Cor.* 14. 34. *Let your Women keep silence in the Churches*, Ἐκκλησίαις signifies the Houses wherein they usually met to serve God, distinct from private Houses; for the Apostle would have the other Sex to be silent in those Places of publick Preaching. Which Sense seems to be establish'd by what follows in *v.* 35. *If they will learn any thing, let them ask their Husbands at home, for 'tis a Shame for Women to speak in the Church.* Where we see οἴκῳ, *Home*, is distinguish'd from Ἐκκλησίᾳ, the House where they met publickly to worship God.

And this Way of speaking, (that is, using the Word Ἐκκλησία for a Place of Meeting) is comformable to the Style of the *Old Testament*, whence without doubt it was borrow'd by the Apostles. Among the Inspired Pen-men, and the *Seventy Translators*, we may observe that the Hebrew *Kahal* and *Gnedeth*, and the *Greek* Ἐκκλησία signify the Place of Meeting, as well as the Persons that meet in it. *The Congregation of the Lord* (Ἐκκλησία according to the LXX.) *Deut.* 23. 1. is the same with the *Sanctuary*, or Place of Divine Worship, as we may satisfie our selves by comparing this Text with *Lam.* 1. 10. Thus *the Assembly of the People of God* (Ἐκκλησία in the *Septuagint*) *Judg.* 20. 2. is the *Place* were the People of God were assembled; for *Kahal* (which is the Hebrew Word here, as in the forementioned Texts) or Ἐκκλησία, is distinguish'd from the *People of God*, and therefore must be the *Place* of their Assembling. It is no Wonder then, That Ἐκκλησία is used sometimes in this Sense by the Writers of the *New Testament*: For 'tis well known and acknowledg'd by the Learned, that these do frequently take Expressions and Phrases, and also single Words and Terms from the Version of the *Septuagint*. From both these the Use of the Word was derived to the Greek Fathers and Ecclesiastical Historians, and the Latin Word *Ecclesia* hath this Denotation in * *Cyprian*, † *Eucherius*, ‖ *Augustine*, * *Salvian*, and in the *Civil* and *Canon* Lawyers, among whom it sometimes signifies the Place where the People are gathered together for Divine Worship. In like manner among Pagan Writers ἀγορὰ and *concio* denote the *Place* where Persons are assembled, as well as the Persons themselves assembled. But this by the way only. The Thing designed was this, To prove that there were *Churches*, that is, *Select Meeting-Places*, distinct from other common Houses, in the Apostles Times, for the Service of God; and that the Christians constantly met together in those, to celebrate Divine Worship publickly and solemnly.

* *Epist.* 31.
† *Lib.* 2. *in* Gen.
‖ *De C. D.* l. 22. c. 8.
* *Lib.* 4. *de Provid.*

And we read, that afterwards the Primitive Christians met secretly together in Places under Ground in Time of Persecution. These *Cryptæ* (as they call them) these Caves and dark Cells were their only Churches and Chapels, and the great Charge against the Christians (as we learn from *Celsus* and others) was

was, that they kept up these Clancular Meetings against the Laws. At other Times, when they met not so privately, they *generally* had no other Places but ordinary and private Houses, as we are told by * *Tertullian*. Yet † this Writer himself, and || others say, that they had in some Places Religious Buildings and Structures in the Primitive Times, erected on purpose for Divine Worship. But how then shall we understand what is said by several of the ancient * Christian Writers, namely, that the Primitive Christians had no Temples; for when this was objected to them by the Pagans, they plainly confess'd it to be True, and defended the Reasonableness and Lawfulness of it. † "What Temple "shall we build? said they; for the whole World cannot contain God. Shall "we immure him in a narrow House? Is he not better Dedicated and Conse-"crated in our Minds, and Worship'd in our Hearts? And || *Origen* discourses after the same Rate, telling the Pagans that it was folly in them to circumscribe the Deity by a Temple, and confine him to a certain Place. He saith the Christians had no Buildings that they own'd as Temples, and he hath several Arguments to prove, that such Places are not serviceable to God's Worship, and the promoting of the Christian Religion.

Perhaps it was the Persuasion of those Good Men, that material Temples were unlawful or useless. Those poor Christians, who were miserably persecuted, and hurried from one Place to another, were prompted to such an Opinion as this, and especially in Opposition to the *Gentiles*, who built *Temples* to their particular Gods and Goddesses. To avoid such Superstition, or rather to shew their Abhorrence of such Idolatry, the Christians at first did not erect Structures to God, and for Religious Worship. It may be they were mov'd to it by what St. *Paul* said, *The most High dwelleth not in Temples made with Hands*, Acts 7. 48. and again, 17. 24. *God that made the World, and all Things therein, seeing that he is Lord of Heaven and Earth, dwelleth not in Temples made with Hands.* Which is the very Notion which even *some Pagans* had arrived to, as might be prov'd out of * *Herodotus* and † *Strabo*; but that of *Tully* shall suffice ||, the Gods are not to be shut up within Walls, for this whole World is their Temple and Habitation.

Quippe non esse parietibus includendos Deos, quorum hic mundus omnis Templum esset ac Domus. De Legib. lib. 2.

And besides, this is further to be said, that the first Christians had no such *Sumptuous Edifices*, no such *Stately* and *Magnificent Fabricks* as the Heathens had for their Gods. But that they had in the beginning of the Third Century, *some Structures* in some Places appropriated to Religious Uses, is not to be question'd, for we are inform'd by *Eusebius*, in his * Ecclesiastical History, that about Two Hundred Years after Christ, the Christians began to build Temples and Oratories; and in other Places he testifies, that the Christians before *Constantine the Great*'s Time, had publick Churches erected. And in express Terms he saith, That † they did in every City build spacious and ample Churches from the very Foundations. This was a little before *Diocletian*'s Persecution; and after that was past, and *Constantine the Great* succeeded, || very fair and large Churches were built every where, call'd *Basilies*. It is plain then, that the Primitive Saints did not retire into Caves and Grots, because they affected Privacy in their Devotion, but because the Liberty of the publick Assemblies was not indulg'd them. For when the Emperor left of Persecuting, and Christianity became the Religion of the Empire, they came into the open Light, and were forward in erecting publick Places for Worship, and frequented them with great Zeal and Devotion. For these were guided by the same Spirit and Principle that the Apostles and other Christians of that first Age were, who (as I before shew'd) counted it their indispensible Duty and Concern to keep up these Assemblies. And when they saw that any were backward and negligent, as to this, they earnestly call'd upon them, *not to forsake the assembling of themselves together*, not to relinquish the usual and orderly Meetings for Religious Purposes. For this was the great Body of Christianity in the Apostle's Days to meet together, and join in the publick Service of God. And thus I think I have said enough to shew, that *Assembling together* to Worship the Divine Being, was the Command of the *New Testament*, and the Practice of Christ and his Apostles; yea, and I have added, of those that succeeded him.

* *Apolog.* cap. 39. † *De Idolat.* & *de Virgin. veland.* || *Ignat.* Ep. *ad Magnes.* *Just. Mart. Apol.* 2. * *Orig. cont. Cels. Min. Felix. Arnob. adv. Gent. Lactantius de falsâ relig. Isid. Pelus.* † *Minut. Felix.* || *Cont. Cels.* lib. 8.

* Lib. 1. † Lib. 19.

* Lib. 8. cap. 3.

† Εὐρυχώρους εἰς πλάτος ἀνοικοδομεῖν τὰς πόλεις ἐκ θεμελίων ἀνίσχων ἐκκλησίας. Lib. 8. cap. 1.

|| *In vitâ Constantini.*

Thirdly, I am to assign the *Reasons* of this Practice. And they are these, First, Men have ever been *Sociable* in other Things, and therefore there is much more Reason that they should be so in Religion. Corporations and Fraternities are erected for Trade and Commerce; Colleges and Societies are establish'd for the communicating of Knowledge and Learning; and all useful Things become common to all by mutual Converse, and Associating together. On the same Grounds it hath been held always rational to associate in *Religion*. Men have chosen not only to serve God apart, and by themselves, but to do this in common, and partake in the Devotions of one another. They have thought it requisite to unite in the same Holy Exercises of Religion; and none but very ill-designing Men have oppos'd this Practice. It is no wonder then that Christianity, which hath taken all Things into its Constitutions that are Excellent and Praise-worthy, hath adopted this into its Laws, and that to assemble and meet together, is a Rite and an Ordinance belonging to the Church of Christ.

Secondly, We shall find our selves bound in Duty to wait upon the publick and appointed Assemblies of the Church, when we call to mind that we are obliged to an Open and Solemn Profession of our Faith, as we are Christians. Our Saviour hath made it necessary for us *to confess him before Men*, *Mat.* 10. 32. *Luke* 12. 8. And the Apostle makes *confessing with the Mouth the Lord Jesus*, (as well as *believing with the Heart*) a Condition of *Salvation*, *Rom.* 10. 9. For which Reason it was absolutely requisite to institute publick Congregations, wherein Men might solemnly declare their Sense of Religion. Observable therefore is the Connexion of those Words of the Apostle, *Let us hold fast the Profession of our Faith without wavering*, with what follows, —— *Not forsaking the Assembling of our selves together*, *Heb.* 10. 23, 25. As much as to say, The Necessity of the *Profession of our Faith* and Holy Religion, obliges us to the Practice of *Assembling together*; for by this we demonstrate to the World, (as well as we have the Satisfaction of it in our own Consciences) that we are not asham'd of our Religion, but that we dare openly vouch it, and maintain it.

Thirdly, it will appear to be our Duty and our Interest to join our selves to the publick Assemblies, because hereby we profess our selves to be Members of the Body of Christ. By uniting in the publick Service and Worship commanded in the Gospel, that is, by meeting together to offer up our Prayers, to hear the Word of God, and to celebrate the Sacraments, we do signally own our selves to be true Parts and living Members of the Mystical Body of Christ, the Church. *The Cup of Blessing which we bless*, saith the Apostle, *is it not the Communion of the Blood of Christ? The Bread which we break, is it not the Communion of the Body of Christ? For we being many are one Bread and one Body, for we are all Partakers of that one Bread*, 1 *Cor.* 10. 16, 17. The Meaning of which is, By joyning together in the Celebration of the Evangelical Ordinances, (and particularly that of the Lord's Supper) we shew, That we are united together in one Mystical Body with our Brethren; we shew that we belong to the Church of Christ: And on the contrary, by separating from this Body, by forsaking the Communion of the Faithful, we cut our selves off from Christ our Head, and do palpably renounce our Membership.

Fourthly, It is for the Honour of Him whom we serve and worship, that publick Meetings should be kept up and maintained. For hereby his Great and Glorious Name is exalted; his Dominion over all is humbly acknowledged; and he is own'd to be worthy of all Homage and Worship. With his Sovereignty, all his other Attributes are admired, set forth and extoll'd: And Christ Jesus, the Blessed Founder of our Religion, is magnified and adored by an open Declaration of our Belief, and of our approving this Sacred Institution. Thus it conduces to the Glory of the Heavenly Majesty that there are publick Assemblies for Divine Worship. And on this Account the *Jewish Doctors* used to say, in a proverbial Manner, *The Prayers of Many, are better than the Prayers of One single Person.* That is, the Worshipping of God in the Congregation, doth contribute more towards the exalting of God's Honour, than the private Devotions of a few.

Fifthly,

Fifthly, This renders Religion amiable and beautiful. * St. *Augustine* tells us, that those Words of the *Psalmist*, † *How good and how pleasant is it for Brethren to dwell together in Unity*? being decently sung, and rightly understood, produced a Monastic Life. At the Sound of those Words, the Christians united into Convents; this excited them to dwell together, and serve God within the same Walls. But with more Reason it might be said, that these Words are a solid Foundation for the United and Publick Service of God in the Church. It is *good* and *pleasant* to be thus joyn'd. This happy Agreement and Union in Devotion, render Religion easy and delightful, and set it forth in its Beauty. And thence the publick Worship of God is styled the *Beauty of Holiness*, *Psal.* 27. 4. —29. 2. —90. 17. —96. 9. 1 *Chron.* 16. 29. 2 *Chron.* 20. 21. There is nothing that represents it so decent, so comely, so lovely as this.

* *Enarrat. in* Psalm 132.
† Psalm 133. 1.

Sixthly, In the solemn and orderly Assemblies of the Church, there is a more special Presence of God to be expected, and consequently a greater Blessing to be experienced. Therefore the Meeting in the Sanctuary or Temple is, in the Style of the *Old Testament*, *to be before God*, and *to appear before Him* in an eminent and signal Manner; to let us know that we may expect the greatest Manifestations of his being present with us, when we meet together to serve Him in Publick. *Blessed is the Man whom thou choosest, and causest to approach unto thee, that he may dwell in thy Courts: He shall be satisfied with the Goodness of thy House, even of thy Holy Temple*, *Psal.* 65. 4. That is, that Goodness which thou art wont to manifest in these Holy Places. The Connexion of those Words in *Psal.* 84. 10, 11. seems to be observable; *A Day in thy Courts is better than a thousand: I had rather be a Door-keeper*, &c. *For the Lord God is a Sun and a Shield: the Lord will give Grace and Glory: and no good Thing will he with-hold from them that walk uprightly.* As much as to say, These are the Benefits and Privileges of the publick Worship of God. Thus it was under the Legal Dispensation: Much more shall we find it to be so under the Evangelical one. For though 'tis true, God is not present now in the publick Assemblies of Christians, as he was of Old in the *Tabernacle* or *Temple*; for he was there in a peculiar and singular Manner; visibly exhibiting his Presence in a splendid and glorious Cloud, which is call'd the *Glory of the Lord*, in *Exod.* 40. 34. 1 *Kings* 8. 11. 2 *Chron.* 5. 14. *Ezek.* 43. 5. and by the Jewish Writers the *Shekinah*, because God was signally said to *inhabit* or *dwell* in those Holy Places; yet he is at this Day as really present in the Meetings of his Servants, as he was then. We are assured of this from what our Saviour hath delivered in *Mat.* 18. 20. *Where two or three are gathered together in my Name, there am I in the midst of them.* For he speaks here (as is clear from the Context) of Ecclesiastical Meetings and Congregations, and lets us know, that when Christians are thus met together *in his Name*, that is, by his Authority, and for his Honour and Glory, he will not fail to be present with them by his Grace and Spirit, to assist them in their Religious Performances, to accept their Prayers, to satisfy their Desires, and to bless their Enterprizes. We cannot doubt of this, if we consider, that Christ Himself (as I have shew'd before) hath injoined his Followers to meet thus together; for he will certainly back his own Injunction with a Blessing. We may with the greatest Confidence rely upon this, That the Holy Jesus will be present with his Servants, whom he hath commanded to perform publick Worship to him; and that the Sacred Spirit will be among them to help and direct them. Thus a more than ordinary Blessing from Heaven attends the publick Administration of Religion, and the Exercise of Devotion. The Prayer of a single Person may not be heard, when God will be pleased to hear the Prayers of others in his Behalf. This, I question not, is implied in that fore-cited place, *Mat.* 18. 20.

Seventhly, The Publick Meeting together to worship God *is in its own Nature* extremely serviceable to the Maintaining of Religion and True Piety; for these are not only *preserved*, but *advanced* by it. First, I say, Religion and Piety are *preserv'd* and *upheld* by joyning in the solemn Worship of our Maker, by going with the Multitude (as the Psalmist speaks) to the House of God. For our safest Travelling to our *Jerusalem* is in *Caravans* and whole Companies. A single Drop or Parcel of Water will sooner corrupt than the Ocean. Sheep are more secure in the Common Fold, than when they wander alone. It is observ'd

observ'd by Natural Historians, That the weakest and smallest Fishes swim together in Sholes, and so are, as 'twere, a Convoy to themselves. In a resembling manner, (if I may be allow'd to compare great Things with little Ones) by maintaining Religious Society, and keeping together in Throngs, we are safe. Hereby we wisely consult our Weakness and Wants; and nothing doth more help and redress them. This Fellowship and Communion in Devotion are the best Safeguard and Security of Religion.

And they *advance* it, as well as secure it; for they are the proper Means of Edification and Growing in Grace. Certainly, if Wickedness and Vice be improved by Company, and increas'd by the numerous Clubs and Meetings of the Debauch'd and Prophane, we have Reason to think, that Vertue and Piety may be augmented and improved by Commerce and Fellowship in the Worship of God. *Life* and *Company* are expressed by the same * Hebrew Word; which, though but a small Criticism, may occasion the observing of a solid Truth, That by assembling together, and joyning our Forces in the Companies and Congregations of the Faithful, we become lively and vigorous, strong and active, and our Devotion is rais'd to its Height. We borrow Heat and Warmth from one another, and we are mutually animated and encouraged in Religion. † We grow Great and Prevalent by being Numerous, and our Prayers and Addresses become Irresistible.

* Cajah, vita, vivens, animal: item, cœtus, congregatio, turma hominum.

† *Multi animi, dum congreganturunanimes, fiunt magni, & multorum preces impossibile est contemni.* Ambros. *de* Pœnitent.

Eighthly, and Lastly, Brotherly Love and Unity are the remarkable Effect and Fruit of our solemn Meeting together and Joyning in Devotion. By uniting our Prayers, we cement our Affections. By serving God with one Heart and Mouth, we unanimously imbrace one another. Communion in the Publick Worship of God begets Union of Hearts among our selves. Whilst we jointly mingle and twist our Devotions, we procure a firm Friendship and Coalition with one another. This is the Profit and Advantage which accrues by communicating in the solemn Worship, and sharing in the devout Fellowship of the Family of God, met together to serve him. This, with what hath been said before, may shew us the *Reasonableness* of this Institution and Practice in the Christian Church, which was the Thing I undertook.

The last Part of my Task is to attend to what is generally *objected* against what I have said; namely, That there are *Corruptions* and *Disorders* in most of the publick Assemblies of Christian Worshipers, and there is generally a *Mixture of good and bad Persons* in them: But the true Church is void of Sin, and none that are Impure and Erroneous are to be found there. Wherefore that Assembly which consists of Good and Bad mix'd together, cannot be a Church; and consequently 'tis unlawful to joyn with such an Assembly. This is urged by some who we ought to think are Masters of very great Piety and Zeal, and are concerned for the Honour of God, and of the Christian Cause: wherefore I will fully and largely make Returns to this Objection; and though there are two Parts of it, one respecting the *Things* that are amiss in the Church, the other the *Persons* that are culpable, yet I will answer both these Parts together; in these Three Propositions: 1. There always were Corruptions and corrupt Men in the Church, and we may expect the same now. 2. We may lawfully communicate with a Church, notwithstanding those corrupt Things and Persons. 3. The Ministers and Flock are obliged to take Notice of these corrupt Things and Persons, and to take Care to prevent and remove them, and that speedily.

First, I say, There ever was a *Mixture*, and consequently a *Corruption* in the Church, both as to Things and Persons; and we cannot look for any other now: I mean, whilst we are under this Dispensation, and before the Arrival of the Happy *Millennium*. In the Old World before the Flood, there was this Medley in the Church: The Generations of *Cain* and *Seth* stock'd the Earth with different Parties of Men. And even *Noah's* Ark was a Receptacle of Unclean and Clean, not only as to Brutes, but as to Men. And throughout all the Dispensations afterwards mentioned in the Writings of the Old Testament, it is easy to observe, that the visible Church was a mixt Body. So in our Saviour's

Saviour's Time the Jewish Religion was corrupted, the Priests were wicked and ungodly, as well as ignorant and superstitious. Their Worship was depraved, and their Service abused, and their Doctrine in many things faulty. In the *Apostles* Times, the most eminent and flourishing Churches and Congregations of Christian Converts were guilty of great Misdemeanours, as S. *Paul's* Epistles to them sufficiently shew. In the Church of *Corinth* was not only Heresy, as denying the Resurrection, but Schism and Faction, and very scandalous Practices, as Incest, Fornication, Covetousness, Law-suits of Christians before Infidel Magistrates, to the Dishonour of the Gospel; Idolatrous Communion with Pagans at their Idol-Feasts, Prophanation of the Lord's Supper, gross Disorders and Confusions in their publick Assemblies, as abusing their Gifts to Vain-glory, *&c.* These were the Defections and Corruptions in that famous and celebrated Church of the *Corinthians.*

And other Churches had their particular Blemishes, and good and bad Men were mix'd among them. The Epistle to the *Galatians* shews, what gross Declensions there were among them as to Faith and Doctrine, insomuch that the Apostle cry'd out against them as *bewitch'd* Persons, deluded by a spiritual sort of Fascination. So from *Phil.* 2. 21. 2 *Tim.* 1. 15. —4. 16. Third Epistle of St. *John*, 9, 10 *v.* and many other Places, it appears how in the First Age of Christianity, there were evil Men in the Christian Communion, who were the Authors of Errors, Immorality, and great Disorders. And the Epistles to the *Seven Asiatick Churches*, *Rev.* 2, & 3. inform us what Corruptions there were in those First Times of the Gospel, even in the Churches that were of great Name and Repute.

And are we to look for a better State of Things during this present Dispensation? No, not at all. 'Till the *Great Change*, which is to usher in the Day of Judgment comes, there will be no pure Church on Earth. There will be Tares in this Field as well as good Corn: there will be Chaff in this Flour as well as Wheat. There will be False Doctrine, as well as Truth: there will be Evil Manners, and Evil Men, as well as Good. And there is a twofold Reason of it; First, Because of the Fallibility and Error that Mankind is liable to. Secondly, Because of the Hypocrisy which some nourish in their Breasts. There are *Judases* and *Demases*; there are Pretenders to Religion; there are seeming Saints; and it is impossible to know them to be such, 'till they throw off their Disguise. If we weigh these Things, we shall not be backward to subscribe to the first Proposition, That there have been, and are like to be in all Churches some Corruptions of one Kind or other.

The Second Proposition is, That we may lawfully communicate with them, notwithstanding their Failures and Corruptions. We are not to think that these do evacuate the solemn Meetings and Assemblies for God's Service. First, The *Corruptions of the Persons* must not break off this Communion; for notwithstanding the gross Faults of the *Jewish* Priests and Church-Officers, Christ did not bid the Jewish People separate from them, and refuse to hear them; for saith he, *They sit in* Moses's *Seat*, being his Successors in that National Church; *all therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do*, *Matt.* 23. 3. Not only hear them, but obey their Doctrine, so far as 'tis according to God's Word, because they are your Lawful Teachers, and have Authority to injoyn the Performance of it. Whence we may gather, That the Miscarriages of some Ministers and some Members of a Church, are not a sufficient Ground of separating from its Communion; for neither Christ nor his Apostles thought that the *bad Lives* of *some* could poyson the Congregation, or make them to be no true Church. Therefore the *Objection* about the Mixture of Good and Bad, *for a Time*, in the publick Assemblies, hath no Force in it; for this Mixture takes not away the Essence of a Church: But on the other side, we may safely affirm, That the Presence of unworthy Persons in the Assemblies is no just Cause for others to keep away.

Secondly, As to the *Corruptions in Doctrine and Worship*, this must be said, That if they be only as to *Disputable* Matters, and Things *Indifferent*, and *meer Modes* and *Circumstances*, we are not presently to leave the publick Assemblies on this Account. For these are Things that do not affect the Essentials of Doctrine or Worship, and therefore both Doctrine and Worship remain still intire

intire as to the main. Though there be some Defects in them, we had better wait for an Alteration and Amendment, than withdraw our selves wholly from the publick Communion. But it must be otherwise if the *Substantials* of Doctrine or Worship be corrupted: we must then leave the Assemblies, because it is absolutely unlawful to joyn in any part of Service, that is as to the Essentials and Substance of it corrupted. The Faults and Vices of the Persons we are Worshippers with, will not hurt us, as I have said already; but if the Ordinances themselves be corrupted, we are not to communicate. If then there be any thing in the publick Prayers or Sacramental Administration, or Preaching, contrary to the Scriptures, we are thereby hindred from joyning in them, and with them; for whatever is disown'd by God Himself, and is repugnant to His Word, is *substantially Evil*. But if we cannot prove the Publick and Prescribed Worship to be of this Nature, we have no Warrant to absent our selves from it, and to separate from the solemn Meetings of the Church.

But then I must add my Third Proposition, That the Governours of the Church, and the Congregations themselves (in that Way which is proper to them) ought to take Care that these Disorders and Corruptions before mention'd be remov'd, and that speedily. They must not be remiss and negligent in the Use of Discipline, for the *purging out the old Leaven*, as the Apostle speaks in the like Case, and for removing out of the Churches Bosom such as offend. More especially the vitious Lives and scandalous Behaviour of Ecclesiastical Persons are to be animadverted upon, and that great Offence is to be taken away with all Expedition; for this is not to be suppos'd to be of long Continuance. If it be, I apprehend it is a ground of Separation. The *continued gross* Miscarriages of those that minister about Holy Things, are a sufficient Occasion for abandoning that Church, or those particular Assemblies over which they preside. And this was the Judgment of that learned and pious Father of the Christian Church, St. *Cyprian*, whose positive Determination was this, * *Those that would approve themselves obedient to Christ's Commands, ought to separate from a vicious Pastor.* For certainly, it is better to have no Minister, than to have *always* a loose, idle and wicked One. Then, as to Corruptions in things (as well as Persons), there is no doubt, that if they be in the *Substantials* of Religion and Worship, we are bound not only not to join in them, but to appear against them, and to shew the Evil and Danger of them, and in a lawful way, to procure their Removal. Yea, the very Defects in the *Mode* and *Circumstances* of Worship are to be redress'd; for we are to endeavour to have the publick Worship exact, not only as to Essentials, but as to the Manner and Circumstances of it. But if our Endeavours fail of Success, we may either lawfully hold Communion with the Congregation we have hitherto join'd with, because it is not defective as to Substantials; or, because we would not be instrumental in *perpetuating* any sort of Corruptions; yea, even of an inferior Nature; we may choose some other Assembly, where we apprehend the Worship of God is more entire.

* *Plebs obsequens præceptis Dominicis à peccatore præposito separare se debet.* Epist. 68.

But to *some publick Assemblies* we must resort, for I have prov'd, that this is a Practice not to be dispenc'd with, it being enjoyn'd by Christ and his Apostles, and is an inseparable Mark of the Worshippers of Jesus; besides, that it is the Chanel wherein Blessings of all Kinds are convey'd to us. We are therefore highly to prize and value this Sacred Institution, and to reckon it utterly sinful and unlawful to live in the disregard and neglect of it. This is Excommunicating our selves, and cutting our selves off from the Benefit of the united Prayers, and joint Devotions of the Church. Let none be so unkind to themselves; but let them remember this, That as they are oblig'd to serve God duly in their private Retirements, so they ought to appear in the Publick, and solemnly to worship him there. For as there is a *Closet*, and a *Family Worship*, so there is that of the *Church*, where great Numbers of Christians assemble together, to adore the Divine Being, the Maker and Lord of all. So much concerning the First and Great Ordinance of Evangelical Appointment; namely, the *publick Meeting together* to serve and worship God.

Next to this *General Appointment* of the *New Testament*, I will insist on the *Particular* ones; namely, the Sacraments, publick Prayer, reading of the Scriptures,

Scriptures, Catechising, Preaching, Hearing, Singing of Psalms, Fasting, Thanks-giving, the Censures of the Church, and what appertains to them. These are the *Ordinances* and *Institutions* of Christ, which referr either to Church-worship or Church-Discipline; and I will treat on them in that Order that I have mention'd them. I begin first with the Evangelical *Sacraments*; and here I will undertake these three Things, I. To offer something (by way of Preface and Introduction) concerning the Nature of *Sacraments* in general. II. Particularly to discourse of the Sacrament of *Baptism*. And III. of the *Lord's Supper*.

Of SACRAMENTS in General.

First, As to the *Sacraments in General*, some conceited Sectaries have spoken and writ against them, because the Word *Sacrament* is not to be found any where in Scripture. So *Barclay* in his *Apology*, *p.* 292. And the Pen-men of the *Antitrinitarian Scheme of Religion* profess that, *they like not the Word* [SACRAMENTS], *because it is no Scripture-Word.* Thus of old the *Arians* objected against ὁμοούσιον, because 'twas not to be found in Scripture; and the *Macedonians* fansied they said something to the Purpose, when they suggested, that the *Holy Ghost* was not expressly call'd *God* in Scripture. So some have blasphemously discours'd and argued against the Sacred Trinity, because the Word *Trinity* is not to be met with in the *Bible*. But these are foolish, perverse, and deluded People, and any one of mean Capacity may answer their *Argument* (if one may call it so): For we may with as much Reason deny, that there is any such thing as the Divine *Decrees*, because that Word is not to be found in Scripture in the Sense that we use it; namely, for God's Eternal Purposes concerning the State and Condition of Mankind here and hereafter. We may as reasonably deny the *Attributes* of God, because it is no Scripture-Word. So *Original Sin* is not to be found there, nor *Providence* (as 'tis understood of God) but as apply'd to Man, *Acts* 24. 2. The Word *Church* is not used in the *Old Testament*, therefore there was no Church of God then. The *Satisfaction of Christ* is not mention'd *expressly in Scripture*, which a * late Writer vainly objects, nor the *Hypostatical* or *Personal Union*. The Word *Ordination* is not to be found there, tho' that Rite in the Church is not denied. Where do you read of the *Covenant of Works*, and the *Covenant of Grace* in those express Terms? There is not the Word *Happiness* in all the *Bible*, and several other Words and Terms, which are own'd and allow'd of by all Men, do no where occur in the Sacred Writings. Apply this to the Word *Sacrament*, and the Objectors Mouths are stopt.

* *M.* Lock's *Vindication of*, &c.

Again, this is yet a more satisfactory Answer which St. *Jerom* gives in the like Case, * *We are not to be sollicitous about the Word, when we are sure of the Sense.* It is not material, whether the bare Term *Sacrament* be made use of in the Inspired Book; seeing it is not the Word, but the Matter convey'd in it that we are concern'd for. Tho' the Word *Sacrament* be not a Scripture-term, yet the *thing* which is meant by it, is often to be met with in that Holy Book. For by *Sacraments*, we understand in general such external Actions and Things as signify and represent unto us those Matters and Events which are of a Spiritual Nature. Thus there were Sacraments of old, even at the first erecting of Religion, and in the very State of Innocence, as the *Tree of Life*, and the *Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil*. The first was an outward Symbol or Sign of that blessed Life and Immortality, which *Adam* should have enjoy'd, if he had continued in his first State. The second was a Sign and Sacrament of that Experimental Knowledge of that Good which he should lose, and that Evil which he should involve himself in if he broke the Divine Law. *Circumcision* before the Law, and this and the *Passover* under the Law were *fixt and durable Sacraments*, the one representing a Signal Duty, the other as signal a Benefit. And there were *Occasional* and *Extraordinary* Sacraments, as the *Pillar of the Cloud*, *the passing through the Red Sea*, the *Rock* gushing out with Water in the Wilderness, the *Manna* that fell from Heaven, *&c.* But the *Evangelical Sacraments* are most remarkable, as being Signs and Assurances to us of those things which are of the highest Nature and Value. Of these Sacred Rites and Mysteries, instituted by Christ Jesus, and proper to the Service of God under the Gospel,

* *Non nobis est curæ de vocabulo, cùm sensus sit in textu.* Hieron. adver. Lucif.

I am now to treat. And here I will discourse briefly, 1. of the *Number* of them. 2. Of the *Original* of them, and 3. of the *Significancy* and *Vertue* of them.

First, I say, I will speak a few Words of the *Number* of them, where I will answer this Question, *How many Sacraments are there?* The *Papists* say, Seven; and we, Two. Which of us resolve the Question righteſt, will appear from considering the thing impartially. As thus, it is true, and we of the Protestant and Reformed Religion readily grant it, that the ancient Writers and Fathers us'd to call *several Things Sacraments*, and so it may be granted, that there are *many Sacraments*; yea, more than Seven. Thus we read of the *Sacrament of the Cross* in St. *Augustine*, *the Sacrament of Martyrdom* in St. *Jerom*, *the Sacrament of Virginity* in *Leo*, *the Sacrament of Prayer*, *of Weeping*, *of Fasting* in St. *Hilary*. And *Cyprian* and *Ambrose* call Christ's washing the Apostles Feet a Sacrament. Thus the Fathers mention *other Sacraments* besides Baptism and the Supper of the Lord; they call many Things by the Name of *Sacraments*, which had a mystical Sense, which were Figures and Representations of Holy Things. And very considerable to this Purpose, are those Words of St. *Austine* (in *lib.* 3. *cap.* 6. de doctr. Christi) *Signa, cùm ad res divinas adhibentur, Sacramenta vocantur*, i. e. *Signs being applied to Holy Things, are term'd* Sacraments. And thus, by him and others, several Rites and Ordinances of the Church are call'd Sacraments. Nay, St. *Jerom* speaking of the Book of the *Revelations*, saith, *Tot Sacramenta, quot verba*, there are as many *Sacraments* as Words in it. So that if every thing that is call'd by the Name of *Sacrament*, be a *True and Proper Sacrament*, there are *more than Seven*. And thus the Papists, whilest they attempt to confute *Us*, baffle *Themselves*. And in the mean time Truth gets the Victory, which is on our Side: For though the ancient Fathers of the Church speak after this lax and careless way sometime, yet at other times (and when they are more cautious of their Words and Expressions) they restrain and confine the *proper Sacraments* to the definitive Number of *Two only*; and the *other Five* are only such things as they were pleas'd sometimes to *call Sacraments*. St. *Ambrose* in his *Treatise of the Sacraments* makes mention but of two: So St. *Augustine* (speaking of these Sacraments), saith, *These are the Two Sacraments of the Church*. Lib. de Symbol. ad Catechum. And in * another Place he hath these express Words, *Our Lord Jesus Christ hath united Christians together by Sacraments most few in number, most easy to be observ'd, most excellent in Signification, as are Baptism and the Lord's Supper*. So St. † *Cyprian* and other Fathers expressly assert but two Sacraments, and it is certain that *No* more were *anciently* received for *True* and *Proper Sacraments*.

* *Epist.* ad *Januar.* 118.

† *Lib.* 1. *Ep.* 1. *ad* Steph.

As for *some* of the *Fathers* and *Schoolmen*, they agree not in the Number of the Sacraments; according to *Rabanus Maurus*, there are three, according to *Alexander Hales* but four, and others hold there are five, and some six. But as to the Number of *Seven* Sacraments, it is clear, that it is no where to be found in the ancient Fathers and primitive Writers. There was never any Writer before *Peter Lombard*, the great Schoolman and Master of the Sentences (if *Cassander* in his *Consultation*, Artic. 13. may be credited) or rather before *Hugo de S. Victore*, who lived a little before *Lombard*; I say, there was none before him that expressly sets down the Number of *Seven Sacraments*. He was the first Author, that mention'd *that* precise and determinate Number; and therefore the *Papists*, who are such High-fliers for Antiquity, should methinks be ashamed to own a Doctrine which had its Rise from a Man who lived but two or three hundred Years ago. And besides, they should be asham'd to make such a Number of Sacraments, when they rob the People of half the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper; unless you will say, they add Five Sacraments to make them sufficient amends. I will not here trouble the Reader with the idle and groundless Pretences which the Popish Authors have for fixing the just Number of Seven Sacraments: but from one of them, you may guess at the Solidity of the rest. He was hardly put to it in his Sermon at the Council of *Trent*, who from *five Barley Loaves and two Fishes*, John 6. 9. prov'd that there were *Seven Sacraments*, no more, nor no less.

But I will go another way to work with these Men, and shew that those Things which they reckon in the Number of *Sacraments*, have no Pretence to *that Name*, and that they contain not in them the *Nature of Sacraments properly so call'd*. For we must know, that these two Things; namely, An outward Element

nient, and the Word of Institution are indispensibly requisite in a *Sacrament*, according to that of St. *Augustine*, *Accedat Verbum ad Elementum, & fit Sacramentum*. Now the Five Sacraments of the Papists want either the *Word*, or the *Element*, that is, either the Divine Institution as to Matter and Form, or the outward and visible Sign of some Reward, Benefit, or Grace. Thus there is no *Word* or Institution for *Confirmation*, as 'tis made a *Sacrament* by the Church of *Rome*, the *Matter* of which is the *Chrism* or *Consecrated Oil* and *Balsam*, wherewith they anoint the Child; and the *Form* of it is these Words, *I sign thee with the sign of the Cross, and I confirm thee with the Chrism of Salvation in the Name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost*: And the Bishop *strikes* the Child and *blesses* it. And what Grace and Vertue can be expected from this superstitious and unwarrantable Rite?

Penance or *Repentance* is another Sacrament of the Roman Church, but hath no Claim to that Title; for *Contrition* (which is one part of Penance) is inward, and therefore can't be an Outward and Visible Sign: *Auricular Confession*, (which is another Part) consists of transient Words only, and so can't be reckon'd to be of that Nature. And *Satisfaction* (which is a third Part) comes after Absolution, *i. e.* after the Sacrament is over. Besides that, as they explain and practise it, it is founded on these two Propositions; namely, That tho' the eternal Punishment of Sinners be remitted, yet a Temporal Punishment always remains to be undergone by them: And that there is a Treasury of Works of Supererogation in the Church, which Propositions have no Foundation in the Word of God; and consequently this pretended Sacrament is vain and groundless, to say no worse of it.

There is likewise no ground for the making of *Ordination* a Sacrament, for this belongs to one Sort and Rank of Persons only, whereas a *Sacrament*, properly so call'd, is common to Christians as Christians.

For *Extreme Unction* (which is another of the Popish Sacraments) there is no Institution, whether we respect the *Matter* of it, which is consecrated *Oil*, wherewith the Organs of Sense, (as the Eyes, Nose, Ears, Mouth, Hands) and the Reins and Feet are anointed: Or the *Form*, which is the pronouncing of these Words by the Priest, *By this holy Anointing, and by his Mercy, God pardon thee, wherein thou hast done amiss by thy sight, hearing, smelling, tasting, touch*. And as for that *Anointing*, which St. *James* speaks of, *ch.* 5. *ver.* 14. (on which the Papists found this Practice) it is Nothing to their Purpose, because it speaks of the miraculous Gift of Healing, which hath long since ceas'd in the Church. And besides, there was no Spiritual Grace, but only bodily Health conferr'd by it.

And lastly, as for *Matrimony*, which the Romanists make another *Sacrament*, it had it's rise merely from the Version of the *Vulgar Latine*, which renders μυστήριον, *Eph.* 5. 32. *Sacramentum*. Thus briefly I have shew'd, that the *Sacraments* which the Church of *Rome* hath set up, are improperly and equivocally call'd Sacraments. And thence we see what Reason our Church had to speak thus in her Articles, * *Those Five commonly call'd Sacraments, are not to be counted for Sacraments of the Gospel, because they have not the like Nature of Sacraments with Baptism and the Lord's Supper, for that they have not any visible Sign or Ceremony ordain'd of God*. And thence likewise it appears, how rash and impious the Council of *Trent* was in pronouncing this Sentence, † *If any one shall say that the Sacraments are more or fewer than seven, or that any one of these seven is not truly and properly a Sacrament, let him be Anathema.*

* *Article* 25.

† *Sess.* 7. *Can.* 1.

Despising such vain Language, we have reason to conclude that Baptism and the Lord's Supper are the only two Sacraments instituted by Christ. Both these are mention'd together in 1 *Cor.* 12. 13. *By one Spirit we are all baptiz'd into one Body, and we are all made to drink into one Spirit*: and they were both represented by the *Water and Bloud* that flow'd out of the wounded Side of our Lord when he hung upon the Cross. And these two Evangelical Sacraments, which Christ himself hath instituted, are not to cease untill the Gospel it self ceases; for they are adapted to the Wants and Necessities of Christians to the end of the World. So vain was the Opinion of the Followers of *David George*, and of the *Family of Love* set up by *Henry Nicholas*, and of the *Swenkfeldians*, all in the last Century, against the Use of the *Sacraments*. And *Grotius* is said to be the Author of a * *Treatise*, wherein he suggests, that there is

* *An semper communicandum per Symbola?*

is no standing Precept for Baptism and the Lord's Supper. And it is well known that a late Sect (who pretend to a greater *Light* than others) declare against both. But all Men of sober and sound Principles, acknowledge and maintain that these two Sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper are the Sacraments of the Gospel, which appertain to All Believers and true Christians in the Church 'till the final Consummation of all Things, and are of perpetual Obligation. These are the standing Ordinances of Christ's Church. These are ever solemnly to be Administred according to their different *Kinds*, and the *Persons* who are differently disposed for them. If we profess *Christianity*, we must not dare to disown *These* sacred Institutions of our Saviour. Can we blame the Romanists for their *Seven Sacraments*, and yet not make use of *Two* our selves? These have the Divine Stamp upon them, and we must reverence and esteem them for the sake of Him who was the First Founder of them. And thus I have dispatch'd the first Thing I undertook, *viz.* To give an Account of the *Number* of the Evangelical Sacraments.

I pass now to the *Second Part* of my Task, and that is to speak of the *Original* and *Derivation* of these Sacraments, which are now instituted under the Gospel. How came there to be such Outward Rites and Observances? In Imitation of *what* did our Saviour ordain them? Was there any such Thing *before*, to which these may be thought to referr and allude? In Answer, this I say, That the two Evangelical Sacraments, Baptism and the Lord's-Supper, (and so likewise *other Institutions* and *Offices*, *Rites* and *Usages*, as also several *Words*, *Phrases*, and *Forms of Speech* now used among Christians) were borrow'd from the Customs which were used among the *Jews*.

To begin with *Baptism*, it is not to be deny'd, that Christ borrow'd that *Sacrament* from the Custom of the *Jewish* Nation. They used Washing or Baptizing, towards all *Proselytes*, and towards those likewise who were *of their own Nation*. First, They used to baptize the *Proselytes*, *i.e.* Those who *came* over from the *Pagan Idolatry and Superstition*, *to* the Religion of the *Jews*: Those who were Aliens to the Commonwealth of *Israel*, and Strangers *to the* Covenant of Grace, even *Those* the Jews admitted into their Church by *Baptizing*. St. *John* therefore (who for this Reason was called the *Baptist*) begun this Institution first of all; he made way for the full and more authentick Establishment of this Usage in the Church; and he did it (it is probable) with reference to the *Design of that Custom* amongst the *Jews*, who used to baptize those who left *Heathenism*, and imbraced *Judaism*. So then he look'd upon All the Jewish Nation as *Heathens* and *Strangers*, and the *whole World*, indeed, could not be consider'd any other way. They were universally corrupted and deprav'd, and had abandon'd the Power of Religion and Godliness, and had given themselves up to the Service of their own Lusts and vain Imaginations. And now nothing was more necessary than a Saviour and Redeemer; one who should save them from their Sins, and redeem them from all Iniquity: And in order to that Great Work, should inform them aright concerning their Duty, and give them perfect Rules of living well. Before *this Saviour* came, *John* began to rouze the World, and especially to alarm the Jewish Nation, and to call upon them to receive the Tidings of Joy and Salvation, and to enter by *Baptism* (even that very Custom and Rite which they used towards Pagans when they were to be admitted into their Religion), to enter, I say, by that Ceremony into the Only *True Church*, which in a short Time was to be call'd *Christian* from the Blessed Founder of it.

There is a late * Writer that disowns *Baptism among the Jews*: He doth not believe there was any such Thing, and consequently the Christiam Baptism was not borrow'd from it; but this *Learned Critick* herein was much overseen, and by this Belief of his, doth only let the World know, that he had not consulted that Learned Jew *Buxtorf*, in his *Synagoga*, where he might have inform'd himself, that *this Custom* was much in use among the *Jews*; namely, That the Gentiles converted to Judaism were *Baptiz'd* after they were healed of their Wound in Circumcision. Hence * *Arianus* calls the *Jewish* Proselyte βεβαμμένος, a *baptized Person*, one that was *dipt*. Unless we should rather say that the Philosopher speaks there of the *Christians*, who were usually taken for the *Jews*, and call'd so (as might be prov'd from several Authors). Moreover, the

* *Sir* N. Knatchbull *on* 1 Pet. 3. 20.

* *In* Epict. lib. 2. c. 9.

the Jews *Native Children*, as well as *Proselytes*, were baptiz'd. This Washing, Lustration, and Immersion, are prov'd largely by Dr. *Hammond* out of their own Writings in his *Annotations* on St. *Matth.* chap. 3. *Maimonides* frequently mentions the Custom of Baptizing among the *Jews*, and the Learned *Selden* particularly proves, (in his Treatise *de Synedriis*, lib. 1. cap. 3.) that the *Christian Baptism* was borrowed from the like Usage among the Jews. And from the Writings of *Scaliger (de Emend. Temporibus)*, from *Ludovicus Capellus*, *Thorndike*, *Lightfoot*, and others who were well skill'd in the *Hebrew* Customs, it is evident that the *Jews* used *Baptism* or Washing in initiating both the *Native Jews* and the *Heathen Proselytes* into their Congregation; and for this they quote the *Babylon* and *Jerusalem Talmuds*, and several Jewish Rabbies. And we know likewise that under the Law divers *Washings* or *Baptisms*, *Heb.* 9. 10. (for 'tis βαπτισμοὶ in the Greek) were used: with these they purified the Priest, Lepers, Women, and all Unclean Persons; whence it was translated to the Christian Dispensation. This may suffice to prove, that the *Sacrament of Baptism* instituted by Christ, and still continued in the Church, was borrow'd from the *like Custom* among the *Jews*, which was also imitated by some of the *Pagans* (as in several other Things they did use to follow the Rites of the *Jews*.) Our Saviour thought fit to make use of this Rite to admit both *Jews* and *Pagans* into the Christian Church, and to be a Sign of the Covenant of Grace.

Next I'm to shew, That the *Sacrament of the Lord's Supper* had its Rise from the Custom of the *Jews*. Many Things which we read were observ'd at the *Celebrating of this Sacrament*, seem to be deriv'd from the Circumstances which generally attended the *Feast of the Passover*. Every Paschal Lamb was eaten by the several Φεγγίαι (as *Josephus* calls them) *Companies*; which were never less than *Ten* in Number. Before they laid down to eat, they *wash'd their Feet*. And when the Paschal Lamb was eaten, they arose and wash'd their Feet again, in order to lie down to another Collation or Second Course. Then the Master of the Family takes Unleaven'd Bread, and blesses it, and breaks it, and gives to every one there a Piece; and then takes a Cup and blesses it, and so it goes round. After this, the iii, or cxi Psalm, and others that follow'd, were sung: This they call'd the *Great Hallelujah*. Now, who sees not that the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper holdeth a Correspondence with the *Paschal Feast* as to *many* of these Particulars, (if not *All* of them) as, namely, The Nearness of the *Number of the Company*; the Ceremony of washing the Feet (which our Saviour *improv'd* to the washing of *others*, *i. e.* his Disciples *Feet*) the Rising from Supper, and beginning a new Entertainment, the Breaking of Bread, and distributing it, and the sending of a Cup of Wine round the Company: And, lastly, the Singing a Psalm, in Conformity to *which last*, we expressly read that Christ sung a Hymn. Thus it might be proved, That the *chief Circumstances* of the Sacrament were borrowed from the *Jews*; (as in *Joseph. de Bell. Jud.* lib. . . . cap. 17. in *Buxtorf*, and others from the Jewish Rabbins may be seen by *comparing*). But more-especially 'tis evident, that the Original of using the Symbols of *Bread* and *Wine* in the Lord's Supper, was from the *Postcœnium* us'd by the Jews at the Close of the Paschal Supper, and also of their other Feasts.

I will add this also, That the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper may not only have Reference to the *Jewish Passover*, and to the *Supper and Collation which was after that*, but (as I shall shew afterwards) this Sacrament being a *Federal Ordinance*, that is, being instituted in the Nature of a *Covenant*, it is probable that *the Ceremony* which usually accompanied *making of Covenants among the Jews*, was added by Christ to *this solemn Covenant*, and *that* was *Eating and Drinking together in a friendly manner*. Thence some Grammarians derive the Hebrew Word *Berith*, *fœdus*, from *Barah*, *Comedere*, as that Verb signifies sometimes. And 'tis probable the *Heathens* from this very Usage borrowed the Custom of Entertaining each other, especially with Wine, at their solemn Plighting of Faith, and concluding Leagues of Amity; as may be seen in *Diodorus Siculus*, *Aristophanes*, *Plutarch*, and others. And here might be added that *Covenanting* and *Sacrificing*, usually went together among the Jews: And the Effusion of *Blood* used in Sacrifice, accompanied the Solemnity of making *Leagues* and *Agreements*, and was made use of to confirm and ratify them. Thence among the Latines, *Sanctio à Sanguine*.

What

What if I should go yet a *little higher*, and offer *this* Consideration, That the *Jews at their Sacrifices Eat and Drank* to the Honour of God, and in allusion to *that Custom* Christ Jesus the Lamb of God, who was to give himself a *Sacrifice* for the Sins of the World, and who also intended that *this Sacrament* should be a *commemorative Sacrifice* to last to the end of the World, and to declare the Lord's Death till he come to Judgment; in allusion (I say) to that *constant Attendant on Sacrifices*, instituted *This his Supper of Bread and Wine, which is the Christian Banquet accompanying the Sacrifice of the Lamb of God*? Accordingly the Lord's Supper may be look'd upon as a *Feast after a Sacrifice*, or a Feast in remembrance of a Sacrifice: See this discuss'd by the Learned Dr. *Cudworth*. And the various Significations of the Hebrew Word *Zebech* fall out very agreeably to this purpose; for *Zebech* is *mactatio*, *Sacrificium*, or *victima*, and also *convivium* or *cibus*. It signifies *slaying*, *sacrificing*, and *eating together*. Thus Christ was *slain*, and *died* to give us *Food and Nourishment and Life*: He *offer'd* himself that he might *feed* and *feast* us. And now in *this Sacrament* he calls to us to *partake of* his Body and Blood which he offer'd without Spot to God upon the Cross. Thus I have briefly shew'd that the *Lord's Supper* was grounded on the *Jewish Customs*, which accompanied their *sacrificing* and *making Covenants*, but especially their *Passover*. Thus, tho' these Rites, which were borrow'd from the *Jews* (God's own People) were miserably abused and perverted to Idolatous Purposes, yet Christ Jesus thought fit to hallow and consecrate them, and make them serviceable to the Honour and Worship of the True God.

Here, by the way, I might shew that other *Rites* and *Customs used by Christ & his Apostles*, and derived down to us, were borrow'd from the *Jewish People and their Practices*. Few will deny (I think) that *that part* of Christian Discipline which we call *Excommunication* (and which was named so by the Antient Fathers) had its *Original and Pattern* from the *Jewish Nation*, who used to cast Offenders out of their Synagogues, and to discard them from the Great Congregation, and to Anathematize them in a formal and solemn manner; it cannot be denied (I say) That the *Excommunication* used in the Apostles Times, (as their Epistles sufficiently satisfie) and which is made part of the *Evangelical Discipline*, was of *Jewish and Hebrew Extraction*. Likewise, *Imposition of Hands*, in Blessing and Ordination, was undeniably borrowed from the usual Custom of the *Jews*, who used Laying on of Hands on those they *pray'd for*, and on *those* whom the Elders and Rulers of the Synagogue *Ordained to a Holy Office*. Now, Christ Jesus was pleas'd to take this receiv'd Custom into *Christianity*, and to use it in *Confirming the Baptized*, and in *Ordaining Pastors*, and in *Absolving the Penitent*. It is probable that Christ chose *Twelve Apostles*, in Imitation of the *Twelve Patriarchs*; and *Seventy Disciples* in Allusion to the *Seventy Elders*. So likewise the Offices and Functions of the Ministers of the Church seem to be derived from the *Jews*. The ἐπίσκοποι, whom the *New Testament* speaks of, the *Bishops*, are answerable to the Princes or Heads of the *Sanhedrim*. The same are styled also πρεσβύτεροι *Elders*, which answers to the Name of *Elders* or *Seniors* among *them*: and *Deacons* are borrow'd from the Constitution of the *Jewish Church*, in which there were those that provided for the Poor; there were Officers call'd γαζοφύλακες, *Treasurers*.

I might shew also, That our Saviour borrow'd *Words* and *Phrases*, as well as *Rites* and *Customs*, from the People of the *Jews*. The Jewish Doctors and Rabbins call'd the Time when the Messias was to come, *the Kingdom of God*, or *the Kingdom of Heaven*, and Christ makes use of this Expression frequently. The Idol-God of the *Ekronites* was styled *Baal-zebub* by the Jews, 2 *Kings*, 1. 3. The *Prince of the Devils* is called so too (in an allusive manner) by our Saviour; so willing was he to comply with the Language of those People. He follow'd the Jews in giving the Name of γέεννα to the Place of the *Damned*: For among the Hebrew Doctors this Phrase was usual; they were wont to express *Hell* by *Gehinnom*, the Valley of *Hinnom* or *Tophet*. Some think that he uses the Phrase which was common with the *Jews* and the *Rabbinical* Writers, when he bids his Disciples and Followers *take his yoke upon them*, *Matt.* 11. 29. And it is certain, that our Saviour frequently uses the *Proverbs of the Jews*, conforming therein to the Practice of his Country. It hath been attempted to be prov'd by some * Learned Men, That every Petition in the *Lord's Prayer* is taken

* *Grotius*, *Gregory*, *Lightfoot*.

taken from, or referrs to the *Noted Sayings and Sentences* of the Doctors of the Jewish Nation; but here, I conceive, they stretch too far, and fansie a Reference where there is none: For those Sayings, which they mention, are of Writers since our Saviour; and even Dr. *Lightfoot*, who saith the *Lord's Prayer* was borrow'd from the Jewish Writers, yet at another time confesses that the *Jewish Sayings* were stolen out of the Gospel. See his *Miscellanies*, chap. 20. Besides, it is derogatory to the Honour of our Blessed Lord, to assert that he patch'd up a Prayer from the Sentences of the *Rabbins*, and made it a Pattern of Devotion to all Christians. No sober Man can entertain such a Thought. But 'tis most reasonable to believe, That this Prayer was conceiv'd in Christ's own Words, and we may justly look upon the other Opinion as a meer Conceit of such Writers as boast of their Rabbinical Learning. Yet it is not to be denied, That the *Amen*, that concludes the *Lord's Prayer*, is the Style of the Jewish Church, and was taken into and used by the Christian Church at the close of their Prayers, as *Justin Martyr* in his *Second Apology* testifies.

Thus I have given a short Essay of what I propounded to make good, and which you may see further confirm'd by * Learned Writers; namely, that our Blessed Saviour thought fit to borrow several of his Institutions from the Usages of the Jews, and that the *New Testament* Rites are drawn from the *Old Testament* Practices. Mr. *Hugh Broughton*, upon *Daniel*, saith peremptorily, That there were no New *Rites* instituted by Christ. The Reason of it was this, Christ being himself a Jew, and born under the Jewish Oeconomy, vouchsafed to retain and imitate the Usages of his Country-men, and comport with their innocent and harmless Customs, and to accommodate them to his own Purpose, and to exalt them to higher Ends and Uses. That the *Jews* might the more easily be won to his Doctrine and Discipline, he adopted many of their Customs into Christianity, and used the very Rites and Ceremonies which were practised by them: He sanctify'd their Mosaical Observances, and by adding *New Mysteries, Effects, and Designs to them*, he made them not unworthy of the pure Worshippers of God in Spirit and Truth. And this is the case of the Sacred Ordinances, which I'm now treating of, the *Sacraments* of the *New Testament*; tho' the Rise and Original of them, which I undertook to give an Account of, were from the Jewish Usages, yet they are improved by Christ, and the Effects and Vertue of them are exalted.

* *Scaliger, Ludov. Capellus, Buxtorf, Selden, Salmasius, Grotius, Hammond, Thorndike.*

Which I shall make good by proceeding to the Third Head, to wit, *the Nature of these Sacraments*. Where I shall speak of the Significancy and Vertue, the Design and Effects of them. And first I must discourse of these as they are *Common* to both the Sacraments; and then as they are *peculiar* to each of them. Our Church, as to the main, gives us the *Right Notion* of the *Evangelical Sacraments* in her 25th Article, *Sacraments* (saith she) *ordain'd of Christ, are certain sure Witnesses, and effectual Signs of Grace, and God's good Will towards us, by which he doth work invisibly in us, and doth not only quicken, but also strengthen and confirm our Faith in him.* The Sacraments are *Witnesses*, and they are *Signs*, and they are both these ways *effectual* and *operative*. First, they are sure and certain *Witnesses*, they are *outward and visible Testimonies* of God's Grace. And here it is worth our observing, how Good and Bountiful the Divine Being is to Mankind, especially to those who are adopted into the Christian Religion. As he is the Author of our *Natures*, so he is pleas'd to consult the *Conveniences and Advantages* of them. He hath made us of Flesh as well as Spirit, of Bodies as well as Souls, and accordingly he hath contrived that we should *by both these* be happy: which he doth admirably effect by making our *Bodily Senses* serviceable to our *Minds and Inward Man*. He hath appointed his *Word* to be preach'd to our *Ears*; and he hath order'd the *Sacraments* to be visible Sermons (if I may so speak) to our *Eyes*. The Holy Eucharist is especially so, it being a visible Representation of our Saviour on the Cross, and is the only innocent and yet useful Crucifix (if I may so speak) that we can set before us. Here we receive *his* Body on our bended Knees, who bow'd his Head upon the Cross for us. His Soul surely is very unrelenting, who at the Sight of his Crucified Redeemer melts not into Penitential Tears, and throughly resolves to amend his Life, to deny himself, and take up his Cross and follow his Blessed Master. Nay, in this Sacrament we *taste* as well as *see* that God is Good. Thus our

Senses

Senses administer to *Religion and Godliness*. The Organs of our Bodies serve the great and most important Designs of our Souls. The Eye and the Ear (the chiefest Instruments of Sense) are hugely concern'd in the Employment of Religion.

As God *heretofore* taught People by Sacrifices and Oblations, by external Washings and Purifyings, by Circumcision and other outward Observances, so he *still* retains in some manner that ancient way of Teaching by visible, material, and external Things, as by the Rites used in *Baptism* and the *Lord's Supper*. It pleased Christ to institute visible and outward Ordinances, that by them he might convey the inward and spiritual Benefits of the Gospel. He not only enlightens our Minds, and works upon our Hearts by the Influence of the Holy Spirit, but the same Spirit, that we might be further confirm'd, operates upon us by outward Pledges and visible Tokens of Mercy, and vouchsafeth by *sensible Objects* to represent spiritual and heavenly Blessings to us. And this he doth in a more *eminent manner* in the *Sacraments of the Gospel*. And therefore *here* we are to use our *outward Senses* to excite our *spiritual Affections*. *That* was the *Design* of *both the Sacraments*, but especially of the Holy Communion of the Body and Blood of Christ. In this solemn Performance it is requisite that we *behold* the Minister breaking the Bread and pouring out the Wine; for that Sacred Transaction was *therefore* by Christ appointed to be *external and visible*, that we might take notice of it even with our *Senses*, and that our *Eyes* might affect our Hearts, and that *both* might beget in us a hearty and sincere Devotion.

Again, as the Sacraments are *Testimonies* and *Tokens*, so they are *Signs* of some sacred and spiritual Thing. A Sacrament is well defined by *our Church* (as well as by the *Antient Church*) a visible *Sign* of an invisible Grace. There are in a Sacrament, truly and properly so named, these Two Things; First an inward Grace, or spiritual Benefit and Blessing; and then Secondly, An external Sign, seen and easily taken notice of, whereby that Grace and Blessing are in a *lively manner represented* to us. It is of the Nature of a *Sacrament* thus to represent and exhibit some invisible Grace and Benefit by an Outward Sign or Figure. The *Outward Washing or Sprinkling with Water in the Sacrament of Baptism represents the* Inward cleansing and purifying by the Spirit, and the purging away our Sins by Christ's Blood. So in the *other Sacrament*, there is visibly set before our Eyes Christ's offering himself up for our Sins, and shedding his Blood for our Redemption. In an external and visible manner, namely, by the Elements of *Bread* and *Wine*, Christ Jesus is signified to be the Staff and Support of our Life, and the *Refreshment* of our Souls. Thus the Sacraments are *Signs*; they are made and constituted to *represent* Christ's Benefits and Graces to us, and so to *fix them* on our *Minds* by working first on our *bodily Senses*. And thus likewise I have proved, that they are *operative and effectual*, for they work both as they are *Testimonies* and as they are *Signs*. And so they do moreover as they are *Covenants*, and as they are *Seals*. Of *both which* I must now speak, to give a further Account of the Nature and Efficacy of the Sacraments.

Thirdly then, The *Sacraments* are not only *Witnesses* and *Signs*, but *Holy Covenants* of God with his Church, and of the Church with God. Those, that are acquainted with the several Oeconomies of Religion in the *Old* and *New Testament*, know very well that God hath usually dealt with his People in the way of *Covenant*. This was his Method with our First Parents, tho' it be not *expressly* mention'd, but the *Miseries* which befel them sufficiently inform us, that they were guilty of the breach of that Part of the *Covenant* which was to be perform'd by them. Afterwards we are *positively* told, that God enter'd into *Covenant* with *Abraham* and *Isaac*, and their Posterity, (and *Circumcision* was the *Sacramental Seal* which accompanied it) and after that with *Moses* and the whole Body of the Jewish Nation; and with *all his Chosen* he hath made a *Covenant of Grace and Mercy in Christ Jesus the Righteous*. And this Covenant is actually sign'd and assented to in the Sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper; or, if you will, the Covenant of Grace made at Baptism is solemnly *repeated* and *renew'd* at the Table of the Lord. It is certain, that in *both* we professedly *take upon us*, *engage*, and *promise* to serve God and Him only.

Sacramentum

Sacramentum in the Style of Lawyers, is an *Oath*: With them *Sacramentum* and *Jusjurandum* are the same. And *Criticks* tell us, that *Sacramentum* was *That Oath* which Soldiers us'd to take, whereby they obliged themselves to Obey their General. Very Appositely then did the Writers of the Church apply *This Word* to the Holy Mysteries of Baptism and the Lord's-Supper, those solemn Ordinances, wherein we *oblige our selves* in a Serious and Sacred Manner, to our great Commander, the Lord of Heaven and Earth. At *Baptism* we *Promise* to *fight* under his *Banner*, and to continue Christ's faithful *Souldiers* and Servants to our Lives end. Baptism is a *strict Obligation* to Holiness. The administring of it is in the *Way and Form* of a solemn *Compact or Covenant*. That Interrogatory, *Dost thou Renounce?* And the Answer to it. *I Renounce*, are taken notice of by Lawyers to be Antient *Forms of Agreeing and Covenanting*. And those Words of the Apostle, speaking of the *Sacrament of Baptism* [the *Answer* of a good Conscience] are thought by some to referr to that Primitive and Ancient Custom. I might also add, that Persons under the Notion of *Sponsors* or *Sureties*, are solemnly brought to *engage* for the Baptized. And then, in the other Sacrament, we solemnly offer up our selves, Souls and Bodies, as a Living Sacrifice unto God; and we *strictly engage* and *covenant*, to dedicate our whole Lives to the Service and Honour of our Redeemer. Therefore this Sacrament is call'd by Christ the *New Testament*, or *Covenant* in his Blood. I need say no more to prove, that the Sacraments are Federal Transactions.

Fourthly and Lastly, *Sacraments* are *Seals* to the Promises of the Evangelical Covenant. They are (as I said) not only *Signs* but *Seals, to Ratifie and Confirm* to us those Benefits and Graces whereof they are *Signs*. By these outward Rites and Signs, Spiritual Graces are not only convey'd, but *confirmed* to Christians. We have the *Divine Promises* in God's *Word*. We have the *Seals* of them in the *Sacraments*. A Promise or Covenant is made firm and valid by putting the Seal to it. Those then that take away *This*, bereave us of that which God hath appointed to be the *Confirmation* of our Faith, and the *Ratification* of the Covenant of Grace, and consequently they rob us of our Assurance of Happiness, than which there cannot be a more detestable and abominable *Sacrilege*. From whence you may know what Thoughts to have concerning the *Socinians*, the *Quakers*, and other Sectaries, who vilifie the Sacraments, and either look upon them as *mean and poor Things* (as those of *Socinus*'s Followers do), or else they live in a profess'd *Contempt and Neglect* of them (as those of the Perswasion call'd *Quakers*).

The *Papists* on the other Hand, run into as palpable an *Extreme*, and discourse very wildly and inconsistently concerning the Doctrine of the Sacraments, especially that of the Holy Communion, which they clog with divers Absurdities and Falsities, no ways reconcileable to Sense, Reason, or Scripture. But I have endeavour'd to steer my Course in the *Right Channel*, and to avoid *both the Extremes*. I have given unto the *Sacraments*, *the Things which are the Sacraments, and no more*. And, by what I have said, you may see what *great Things* are contain'd in the *Evangelical Sacraments*. They are Divine Ordinances, wherein, by outward *Tokens* and sensible *Signs* and *Seals*, the Inward and Spiritual Graces of the Gospel are set *before* us, *Represented* to us, Conferr'd on us, and (that we may not be doubtful) *Confirm'd*, *Ratify'd*, and *Establish'd* to us. Such are the *wonderful Things* comprehended in these Divine Institutions. Indeed their bare *Names* (μυστήριον and *Sacramentum*) let us know, that no *vile* and *vulgar* Thing is couch'd in them; an *Evangelical Sacrament* is pregnant with *Mystery* and *Holiness*. It is a Divine Secret, an *Arcanum* of the Christian Religion, and will at last lead us to that Holy of Holies in the *New Jerusalem* above. Thus hitherto I have (according to what I propounded at first) endeavour'd to explain the *General Nature* of the Sacraments of the Gospel.

Now I come in the next Place to speak of the Sacraments singly and apart, that is, first to treat of *Baptism*, and then of the *Lord's-Supper*.

Of the SACRAMENT of BAPTISM.

HERE I am to undertake these following Things:

1. To shew that Baptism is a *Divine Ordinance.*
2. To answer the *Objections* that are brought against this.
3. To shew more particularly, that *Infant-Baptism* is a Divine Ordinance.
4. To discover what is the *particular* and *distinct Nature* of this Sacrament of Baptism.
5. To make proper *Inferences* from the Premises.

The First Thing I am to do, is to prove, that Baptism is a Divine Ordinance. Which is easily effected by shewing, that there is both Divine *Command* and *Example* for it. There can be no doubt of the former, if we read *Mat.* 28. 19. *Go teach all Nations, baptizing them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.* Here our Blessed Saviour instituted this Sacrament, and authorized his Disciples to administer it, and consequently obliged all Persons to make use of it, for it can't be administred by the Pastors of the Church, unless there be Persons to whom it must be administred, and those are *all Nations* and People. So that here is a Catholick Command and Injunction for the Sacrament of Baptism. The like we find in *Mark* 16. 15, 16. *Go ye into all the World, and preach the Gospel to every Creature. He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved.* where Christ enjoyns this Sacrament as a Condition of Salvation, and lets all Men know, that, unless they make open Profession of the Christian Faith, and join themselves to the Church by this Ordinance, they exclude themselves from Life and Happiness. And no less than a Command is implied in *John* 4. 1. Where Jesus is said *to make and baptize Disciples,* because he did this by his Apostles and Disciples, (as we read in the next Verse) who receiv'd Order from him to do it, and would not have done it without express Order from him.

And those Words of our Saviour in *John* 3. 5. seem to be of the Nature of a Command, *Except a Man be born of Water, and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God.* As much as to say, I require it of all Men, in order to their being admitted into the Church (for that is the meaning of *the Kingdom of God* here, as in several other Places of the *New Testament*) that they make use of the Sacrament of Regeneration, which consists of *Water*, by which their Bodies are wash'd, and *the Spirit*, by which the Grace of God is conferr'd upon them in the due use of that Element in this Sacrament. This Text then lets us know, that *Baptism* is the *Ordinary* Way of Admission into the Church of Christ, *i. e.* the visible State of the Church. I say the *Ordinary* way, for we have nothing to do at present with God's extraordinary Methods, by which he can, if he please, save Men without the use of Means. But the ordinary and fixed Way of *entring* into the Gospel-State (call'd the Kingdom of God) is this Institution *of Water and the Spirit*, i. e. Baptism made effectual by the Spirit of Regeneration. But because these Words may be otherwise understood, namely, concerning the Holy Spirit, whereby we are wash'd and cleans'd as it were with Water (for which Interpretation there seems to be very good Ground) I shall not urge this Text any farther. From those Passages of Scripture which I offer'd before, it is sufficiently evident that we are to look upon it as the Will and Command of our Lord, that this Sacrament of Baptism be duly and constantly administred, for the Admission of Persons into the Church of Christ.

Secondly, It appears from *Example*, as well as *Command*, that this is a Divine Ordinance. It was signally authorized by St. *John*'s administring of Baptism (from whence he had the Title of *Baptist*) of which we frequently read in the Evangelists; and it is eminently call'd the *Baptism of Repentance*, *Mark* 1. 4. *Acts* 13. 24. —— 19. 24. to let us know that it becomes all true Penitents, and so is fitted for the Times of the Gospel, which more-especially requires *Repentance towards*

towards God. But a greater than *John Baptist* is here our Example; our Lord *Christ himself* was baptized with Water, as a Pattern to all his Followers; for tho' it is true, that as to *some* Things, his Baptism greatly differs from this which I am speaking of, yet as to the *main* they agree; that is, as Baptism is an Entrance into the Church, and as 'tis attended with a Spiritual Blessing. Our Saviour's Words are remarkable in *Mat.* 3. 15. and give us a brief Account of his submitting to this outward Rite and Observance, *Thus it becometh us to fulfil all Righteousness, i. e.* Christ would do what was just and fitting in all Circumstances, what was proper to the different Dispensations of the Law and of the Gospel. He was before receiv'd into the *Jewish* Church by Circumcision, and now he is pleas'd to be made a Member of the Gospel Church by Baptism; which by the bye proves also, that St. *John's* Baptism was the true Gospel-Baptism, and the same (in Substance) with Christ's Baptism; for therefore Christ submits to that Baptism, because he was *to fulfil all Righteousness.* This then was a Righteous Dispensation, and declared to be such by our Saviour, and now made a perpetual Rite and Practice in the Church by his Example. To which purpose 'tis observable that he speaks thus; *It becomes Us,* i. e. Me and all my Disciples and Followers. They are to make me their Pattern and their Guide as to this. They are oblig'd to fulfil this part of Righteousness, and to take care to be initiated into the Church by this Evangelical Sacrament, which is to last for ever under the Christian Oeconomy. Thus our Saviour's Practice, as well as his Command and Institution, is a strong Argument for the administring of Baptism now under the Gospel.

Here, before I proceed to the next Head of Arguments, it may not be improper to give some Satisfaction to that noted Query, Whether *John's* and *Christ's Baptism* were of the *same Species,* and had the *same Efficacy?* Some of the Fathers and School-men are for the Negative. The Baptism of *John* was Terrene, and not Heavenly; it was not accompanied with the Holy Ghost, nor with Remission of Sins, but was only preparatory to both, saith *Tertullian of Baptism. Aquinas* declares it to be his Judgment, that the Baptism of *John* conferr'd not Grace, but only dispos'd and prepar'd for it; and argues from *Acts* 19. 5. where those that were baptiz'd by *John,* are (as he thinks) said to be afterward *baptized in the Name of the Lord Jesus.* The Popish Writers generally take to this Side, and hold, that Remission of Sins was not conferr'd by *John's* Baptism, but only by the Baptism which Christ instituted; and they undertake to prove, that the Spirit was not conferr'd by the former Baptism, because 'tis said that some who were admitted to *John's* Baptism *had not so much as heard whether there was any Holy Ghost,* Acts 19. 2.

But notwithstanding these Suggestions, it is more reasonable, with Mr. *Calvin* and other Protestants, to embrace the other Opinion, namely; that the Baptism of *John,* and of our Saviour, were of the same Nature, and of the same Efficacy. For we are expresly told, that *John's* Baptism was *the Baptism of Repentance, for the Remission of Sins,* Mark 1. 4. which makes it the same with that of Christ's, for thereby is signified, yea and sealed to us the Doctrine of Evangelical Repentance, which is founded in true Faith in Christ, and of the Pardon of Sins, which is grounded on the Undertakings of Christ for us. This is the Sum of the whole Gospel, and therefore we must needs inferr, that Christ's Baptism, and that of *John,* containing in them these Grand Points of Christianity, are the same in Substance. And as to what is objected from *Acts* 19. 5. as if those that had been admitted to *John's* Baptism were afterwards baptized according to the Baptism of Christ, there is no such thing contain'd in the Text. But the true View and Meaning of the Place is this, That when certain Disciples at *Ephesus heard that* John *said to the People, that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, Christ Jesus, they were baptiz'd in the Name of the Lord Jesus,* Acts 9. 4, 5. There is not a Word of Re-baptizing. And as to what was further suggested, that the Spirit did not accompany the Baptism of *John,* because 'tis said, that some that were baptized with his Baptism, *had not so much as heard whether there was any Holy Ghost,* the Answer is as satisfactory as it is obvious, that that Place speaks only of the extraordinary Gifts of the Holy Ghost, for the publick Work of the Ministry, as working of Miracles, not of Graces and Gifts that are in order to Salvation.

To conclude, It is granted, that St. *John*'s Baptism differ'd from Christ's, as to the Form of Words, which was, *In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost*, whereas, when *John* baptized, he bid them *believe in him who should come after him*. But this doth not alter the *Nature* of the Baptisms, this makes no *essential* Difference between them, and therefore I assert that Christ's, and *John*'s Baptism were of the same Species and Efficacy.

Now I proceed to produce other Evidences for Baptism.

We have likewise the Practice of our Saviour's Inspir'd *Apostles*, and *other Pious Christians*, expressly recorded in *Acts* 2. 41. 8. 12, 13, 16, 36, 38.—9. 18—10. 47, 48.—16. 15, 33.—18. 8.—19. 5.—22. 16. And in 1 *Cor.* 1. 13, 14, 15, 16. *Baptizing* is mention'd as a common and receiv'd Usage in the Christian Church. Yea, in some of those Places in the *Acts*, there are Apostolical *Injunctions* concerning Baptizing join'd with those *Examples*. And who indeed, that is sober and impartial, doth not believe that Injunctions and Commands are included in these Examples, and that *these* proceed from *them*? Will any Man of common Sense think, that, when he reads in that Book of *Acts*, no less than Fourteen or Fifteen Times, of the administring of *Baptism*, and finds it particularly and distinctly set down in those places, who they were that were so baptiz'd, and in what manner; will he, I say, be able to think otherwise, than that Baptism was enjoin'd and commanded by Christ to the Apostles? So then it is manifest, that this Evangelical Rite is founded on *Precept* and *Example*. There needs no more to render any Thing a Divine Ordinance.

But we are call'd in the next Place to answer the *Objections* rais'd against all this. For tho' one would think that there could be no Exception against so positive a Command, yet there have been, and still are those Men that quarrel with this Institution, and will by no Means allow it to be an Evangelical Rite. The Objectors are of two Ranks: Some of them strike at *Baptism in general*; others set themselves particularly against the *Baptizing of Infants*. I will distinctly consider what both of them alledge for what they assert; and I will begin with the first sort of Objectors, those who deny Baptism in general, that is, all Baptism by Water. And first, Some of *Socinus*'s Followers, yea and the chief of them, have the Confidence to say, that neither of those Places, *Mat.* 28. 19. *Baptizing them in the Name of the Father, &c.* and *Mark* 16. 16. *He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved*, are meant of Water-Baptism. And their great Reason is, because tho' here is mention of *Baptizing*, yet there is no mention of *Water*. This shews what Trifling these Men use when their Cause is bad. They labour to support their Opinion by little and mean Arts, and are resolv'd to say something, tho' it be nothing to the Purpose. For nothing can be plainer than that *Baptizing with Water* is here meant, because we are to interpret Christ's Commission to his Apostles by their executing of it. Now, if Christ's Commission did not intend *Baptizing with Water*, then the Apostles mistook their Commission; for they baptized with Water, as is abundantly clear from sundry Passages in the *Acts*, where this Practice is recorded. We are then to understand the foresaid Commission concerning the Baptism by Water, tho' it doth not exclude, but suppose an Inward and Spiritual Washing.

Again, The same sort of Men make great use of these Words of *John the Baptist*, *Mat.* 3. 11. *I indeed baptize you with Water unto Repentance, but he that cometh after me shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with Fire.* Therefore, say they, the Baptism now under the Gospel, and which Christ hath Instituted, is not Water-Baptism, for the *Baptizing with the Holy Ghost and with Fire*, is distinguished from the *Baptizing with Water*, and this latter, belongs to *John*'s Ministry, but the former to Christ's; therefore, upon Christ's coming, the one was to cease, and the other only was to prevail and take Place. The Answer is, That the distinguishing of Baptism *by the Holy Ghost*, from that *by Water*, doth not supersede and null the baptizing by Water; for though they are distinct Things, yet they are not to be separated from one another; yea, we may gather from this Distinction, that after Christ's coming there should not only be the Baptism of Water, but likewise of the *Holy Ghost* and *of Fire*, which was literally fulfill'd, when the Holy Ghost descended upon the Apostles on the Day of Pentecost, in the Shape of fiery Tongues: As we see the *Baptist's* Words are expressly apply'd on this Occasion, *Acts* 1. 5. John *truly baptiz'd with Water*,

Water, but ye shall be baptiz'd with the Holy Ghost; which was actually accomplish'd soon after, as we read *Acts* 2. 3, 4. *There appear'd to them cloven Tongues, like as of Fire, and it sat upon each of them, and they were all fill'd with the Holy Ghost.* And the fulfilling of the *Baptist*'s Prophecy concerning *the Baptism of the Holy Ghost*, is again particularly mention'd in *Acts* 11. 16. when the *Holy Ghost* fell upon certain Persons that *Peter* preached to. Now, that the Baptism of Water is not excluded by the Baptism of the Holy Ghost, I will prove from *Acts*, 10. 47. *Can any Man forbid Water, that these should not be baptiz'd, who have receiv'd the Holy Ghost as well as we?* Tho' they were baptiz'd with the Spirit, yet the other Baptism is to be superadded. And this shews that this latter Baptism is an Evangelical Ordinance, and obtain'd in the Christian Church; why else was it added to the Spiritual Baptism? And again, on the other Side, we read, that the Baptism of the Holy Spirit was added to that of Water, *Acts* 19. 6. *St.* Paul *laid his Hands on those that were baptiz'd in the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the Holy Ghost came on them.* Which further proves, that Spiritual Baptism, and Water-Baptism met together in the Times of the Apostles; yea, and by the Apostles Direction, and according to their Practice; and consequently *John*'s Baptism, and that of Christ and his Apostles, tho' they are distinguish'd, do not oppose one another, but are very consistent.

Another *Objection* runs thus, Tho' we should grant that Baptizing with Water was used in Christ's Time, and in the Apostles, yet it doth not follow thence, that it was to be practis'd afterwards; for this Institution was Temporary only, and therefore is now ceas'd in the Church. So * *Socinus*, and some others of a later Date. But they are easily confuted from *Matth.* 28. 19, 20. *Go teach all Nations, baptizing them, &c. and lo! I am with you always, even to the end of the World.* This Promise adjoin'd to the Commission, shews that Baptism is no Temporary Rite, but must last till the Consummation of all Things. Besides, the Reasons of it are lasting, and therefore it is vainly pretended that it is antiquated. There is still Occasion and Necessity of Initiating Persons into the Church, and conferring at the same Time Spiritual Benefits upon them; and thus this Sacrament being of constant use, it is manifest that it is a perpetual standing Ordinance in the Christian Church, and is obligatory now under the Gospel, and that it was not to be administred only to Converts from *Paganism* and *Judaism*, as the *Socinians* imagine and assert.

* *Disput. de Baptismo.* cap. 16.

Some of these, as well as others, are so silly as to alledge, 1 *Cor.* 1. 17. *Christ sent me not to Baptize, but to Preach*; Therefore, say they, Baptism is no Gospel-Ordinance; for then the Apostle would have been sent to administer it. The direct Answer is, That St. *Paul* doth not *absolutely* deny that he was sent to baptize, for he *baptized Crispus and Gaius*, ver. 14. and the *Household of Stephanas*, v. 16. but in a *Comparative Way* he means it, because his *main* and *chief* Work was to *Preach*. And if God was pleased to commission him more *especially* to preach and convert the Gentiles, and to set others about the Office of Baptism, how doth it follow that Baptism was no Gospel-Institution? There is indeed no such Consequence; for though the Apostle imploy'd himself in Preaching chiefly, we can't gather thence, that Baptizing was not injoyn'd the Gospel-Ministers; yea, we know the contrary; namely, That the Apostles were commanded to baptize, and we know that they actually did it; and St. *Paul* himself administer'd this Sacrament to some; which we are sure he would not have done, if he had not had a Commission to Baptize as well as to Preach. And we must be forced to say this, That the Apostle acted against his Commission, if his Commission authorized him only to Preach. And so indeed saith a * great Defender and Advocate of the Quakers, *He acted not by virtue of his Commission*: And again, † *It was no Part of his Commission.* These Absurdities those Men run into who oppose the Sacrament of Baptism.

* *Barclay's Apology*, pag. 305.
† Pag. 306.

Some of more Sophistry than Solidity, make Use of *Eph.* 4. 5. where we are told that there is but *One Baptism*: therefore Water-Baptism is not *That*; for there would be *Two* Baptisms, if *Water-Baptism* and *That of the Spirit* were both Baptisms. The plain and short Answer is, That the Baptism of Water and of the Spirit make up but *One intire Baptism*, and that is the *One Baptism* here mention'd by the Apostle. It is fallacious therefore to separate the Spiritual from the Elementary Baptism, and so to make two of them; for the

Outward

Outward Washing is a Sign and Representation of the Inward Washing and Cleansing, therefore they ought to go together. So much in Answer to the Objectors against Baptism.

The Third Thing I undertook was, To shew particularly that *Infant-Baptism* is a Divine Ordinance. And under this Head I shall answer the *Objections* against it, which I promis'd before. There is a great Number of Men, who though they willingly grant that Baptism is an Ordinance of the Gospel, yet they hold that it is to be administred to *Adult* Persons only, and not unto *Infants*. They contend, that these latter have no Right to this Sacrament; but that they are debarr'd from it by Scripture and Reason, and the Suffrage and Practice of the Ancient Christian Churches. Now I will prove that they are excluded and debarr'd by none of these; but that, on the contrary, the Baptism of Infants is grounded on the *Sacred Writ*, on *Reason*, and on the *Testimony* and *Usage* of the *Ancient Christians*.

The first Ground of this Practice is the Holy Scripture; namely, that Command or Commission before-mentioned, *Go teach all Nations, baptizing them in the Name*, &c. For these Words are not only the Ground of Baptism *in general*, but particularly of the Baptism of *Infants*. For we can't but take Notice, that this Command is Universal, and therefore comprehends Infants as well as others. Πάντα τὰ ἔθνη is the same with πᾶσα κτίσις in that other Place, *Mark* 16. which lets us know, that *every rational Creature*, Adult or Infant, is to be baptized. But to take off this Universality, the Anabaptists suggest, that βαπτίζοντες αὐτοὺς carries a Restriction with it; for, say they, αὐτοὺς must refer to μαθητάς understood in μαθητεύσατε, and not to ἔθνη, because 'tis of the Neuter Gender. But this Critical Objection is of no Force, because 'tis usual for a Relative or Adjective to be of a different Gender from the Antecedent or Substantive; and therefore αὐτοὺς may well referr to ἔθνη. Of this Mode of Speaking we have several Instances, both in the Version of the *Septuagint* and in the *New Testament*. Τοῦτο refers to γυνὴ in *Gen.* 2. 23. Αὐτὸς and σπέρμα are join'd together in *Gen.* 3. 15. and in other Places. And Τοῦτο referrs to πάθος in *Gen.* 28. 17. So in *John* 15. 26. and in Chap. 16. Ver. 13, 14. ἐκεῖνος answers to πνεῦμα (which, by the way, shews the *Holy Spirit* to be a *Person*). And in *Rom.* 9. 23. σκεύη is followed with ἃς, *ver.* 24. And σπέρμα with ὃς in *Gal.* 3. 16. And τεκνία with ἃς, *Gal.* 4. 19. So in *Col.* 2. 19. κεφαλὴ is followed with ἀφ' ἧς. And the like I might shew out of * *Gentile Authors*; namely, That the Adjective or Relative is of another Gender than the Substantive, when there is to be an Attention rather to the *Thing signified*, than the *Word it self*. Which I hope will satisfie any sober Person, that the Pronoun αὐτοὺς in the forenamed Text, referrs to ἔθνη, though one be Masculine and the other Neuter.

* So τέκνον φίλε, *and* φίλε τέκνον *are used by* Homer *and* Dionys. Halicarnass. *the Word* φίλε *referring to the* Person *he speaks to, not attending to the Word* τέκνον. *Several Instances of the like Nature are in* Homer, *and they are particularly rehears'd by* Plutarch *concerning Homer's* Poetry. Κόρειον καλλίστη, Puella pulcherrima, *is of this sort; and* μειράκια εὐμορφῆς, adolescentes beati, *in* Synesius.

And, if there be yet any Doubt of it, I will produce a Place in the New Testament, which will wholly remove all doubting; it is that of the Apostle in *Rom.* 2. 14. Ὅταν γὰρ ἔθνη, &c. ἅτινα νόμον, &c. where we find that the very Word ἔθνη is the Antecedent to ἅτινα, as it is to αὐτοὶ in the Text, which is now under our Consideration. And to shew that ἔθνη, *Nations*, is applicable to *Infants* (as in that Commission given by Christ to his Apostles about *baptizing*) I might offer that Text in *Gen.* 25. 23. where the *two Infants* struggling in the Womb are called *two Nations*, δύο ἔθνη, as the *Seventy* render it. And to bring this yet closer to our present Purpose, we are to observe, that in all those Places beforementioned, where the Relative is put in the Masculine Gender, though the Antecedent be Neuter, there is reference always to a *Person* or *Persons*; which directs us how to understand Christ's Command to his Apostles to baptize *all Nations, i. e. all Persons*; which Term comprehends all Ranks of People, both Sexes, and all Ages, and consequently *Infants*. We have Reason then to look upon the Commission as General and Catholick; and Evangelical Ministers are authorized by it to admit even little Children and Babes to the Sacrament of Baptism.

But

But here it will presently be objected, and that very naturally, If *Infants* be included in *all Nations*, then they must be *taught*; for so the Words run, *Teach all Nations*; but how can Infants, whilst they are in that State, be taught, and that in the Principles of Religion? This certainly is impossible, and therefore the Words of Christ have no relation to the baptizing of Infants. To which the most general and received Answer of late is this, That the Greek Word μαθητεύσατε, which is here used, and is translated *teach*, ought more properly to be rendered *make Disciples*. *Teach, i. e. Disciple* all Nations, saith a * Learned Writer; for, as he adds, Discipling was not of Persons already taught, but to that End, that they should be taught. And others of Great Note interpret the Greek Word after the same manner, that is, *make Disciples by baptizing all Nations*, enter them into the Church of Christ, and make them Members of it by that Ordinance. This is the common Interpretation of the Word in the Writings of very Learned Men. But if we consider it aright, it is only a handsome Evasion of the Anabaptists Cavils against this Text, but it is no real obviating of them, which I will thus evince.

* Dr Lightfoot's Harmony.

First, The Greek Word μαθητεύειν will not bear this Interpretation; for it hath but two Significations in all; the first is *to teach* or *instruct*, and in the *Passive*, *to be taught* or *instructed*, as in *Mat.* 13. 51. *Acts* 14. 21. and in the *Active* it hath always an *Accusative* Case after it. The second Signification is *to be* or *become a Disciple*, and then it hath a *Dative* Case after it, as in *Mat.* 27. 57. Ἐμαθητευσε τῷ Ἰησοῦ, *He was the Disciple of Jesus*. But it no where signifies *to make Disciples*; and therefore upon the very Account of the Denotation of the Word it self, I can't subscribe to the Opinion of those Writers who make *the teaching of all Nations* to be *discipling* of them.

Secondly, It is not reconcileable to good Sense and proper Speaking, to say that Infants are *made Disciples*, seeing they are not capable of being μαθηταὶ, *Disciples*; which Word, whenever it occurrs in the New Testament, signifies such as are capable of being taught. It is true, Infants are by Baptism admitted into the Church, and so are rightly said to be of the Church, *i. e.* to be Members of it; but to be *made Disciples* by being baptized, is a way of speaking not to be born with. *Disciples* are such as come to receive Instructions of one whom they chuse for their Master and Instructor, and they give themselves up to him, and entertain his Doctrine. But 'tis ridiculous to say that Infants are of this Rank.

Thirdly, It is not to be asserted, That Infants are *made Disciples* by being *baptiz'd*, for these two are plainly distinguish'd in *John* 4. 1. Jesus *made and baptized more Disciples than* John, *i. e.* By his Preaching He prevailed on a greater Number of Persons to receive His Instructions, and imbrace his Doctrine and follow Him, and He prevail'd with more Persons to enter into the Church by Baptism, than ever *John the Baptist* was able to do. These then are two *different* Things, ποιεῖν μαθητὰς, & βαπτίζειν, and the one was but an Introduction to the other. Christ made Disciples, and then order'd them to be baptized. Therefore those who expound *discipling* by *baptizing*, and apply it to *Infants*, misunderstand the Words.

Fourthly and Lastly, That parallel Place in *Mark*, *Go ye into all the World, and preach the Gospel to every Creature*, shews what is the Meaning of μαθητεύειν, and what is meant by *teaching all Nations*, namely, preaching the Gospel to them. Μαθητεύειν & κηρύσσειν are the same; and consequently the Apostles are bid here to preach the Gospel to Infants. But no Man of correct Thoughts can persuade himself, that this is the Meaning of the Word: Wherefore I conclude, That the foresaid Notion of *making Disciples* hath no Foundation at all, though it hath had the Hap to be entertained by Men of considerable Worth and Judgment.

But the true *Answer* to the Anabaptists Objection is this: That the Words of our Saviour, *Go teach all Nations, baptizing them*, &c. must be understood as to the *Subject Matter*; that is, the Apostles were to teach those that were Teachable, and to baptize those that were Baptizable. But most surely our Saviour doth not command them any thing impossible: He doth not bid them teach and instruct Infants before they could be taught. Wherefore we must observe the Tenour and Frame of Christ's Precept: It referrs to the *Adult*, and it referrs also

also to *Children*. The former part [*teach all Nations*] hath Respect unto the former; and the latter part [*baptizing them*] is spoken concerning the latter in all Nations. As if our Lord had said, When you come into a Nation, and meet with Persons of some Age and Discretion, let it be your Care to instruct them in the necessary Articles of the Christian Faith, and then admit them into the Church by Baptism; and as for Children or Infants, I require of you to administer the Sacrament of Baptism to them, tho' they are not capable of being instructed, and having the Principles of Christianity instill'd into them. This, I conceive, is the genuine and unconstrain'd Force of the Words; and we see, that according to this Interpretation, *Infants* are here intended, as well as *grown* Persons; and that *Teaching* hath Reference only to these latter.

If it be objected, that the *Order* of the Words confutes this, because *Teaching* is set before *Baptizing*, and therefore the Persons meant in this Commission, must first be taught, and then baptized; I answer, that from the mere placing of Words in Scripture, a solid Consequence is not always to be made. The Order of Words is not rigidly to be observ'd in all Texts, as might be demonstrated in abundant Instances. Things are not necessarily to be done in that Order that the Words represent them in. As here, from Christ's Command to *teach* and *baptize*, we can't inferr that Teaching is always to be first, and that Baptizing is to be after that. This I prove from *Mark* 1. 4. where 'tis said, that *John did baptize and preach*: Baptism is put here before Preaching, but those that we dispute against, will not allow of this Arguing, therefore the Ministers of the Gospel must baptize before they preach. We take our Saviour's Words then in that way before-mention'd, that is, according *to the subject Matter*. Those that are capable of being taught, are to be taught before they are baptized; and those that are not capable, are to be baptiz'd before they are taught, if they be the Children of baptiz'd Parents. And so the *double teaching* in the Commission is fairly solv'd; *Go teach all Nations, baptizing them, &c. teaching them to observe all Things whatsoever I have commanded.* One of these *Teachings* is before, and the other after Baptism. The one *is* to prepare the Adult for Baptism; the other is to furnish those with Knowledge of their Duty, who had been baptized in their Infancy. Now, if we thus understand the Words μαθητεύειν and διδάσκειν, we may plainly see that in this Commission is included a Command to *baptize Infants*.

But you will say, Here is no *express Command* for this, nor is there any where else. I answer, Nor is there any Express Command for Baptizing of those that are arrived to Years of Discretion. You cannot shew me one Place where 'tis said, Go and baptize those that are adult, and no other. Why then do you ask, Where is it said, Go and baptize Infants? But we find it expressly said, That all Nations are to be baptiz'd, all Nations, without any Difference of *Age*: So, that if *Children* be not included in *all Nations*, neither are the *adult*; for neither of them are express'd. Wherefore the *Objectors* gain little by what they have started, for an *express Præcept* in the Case before us, is not requisite, nor in many other Things do we look for it. There is no particular Precept in Scripture for baptizing of Women, nor for their receiving the other Sacrament; and who is there that demands any such Precept? What Reason is there then to demand it for the *baptizing of Children*? None at all, according to the very Acknowledgment and Practice of those Persons who oppose Pædo-Baptism: For they hold it lawful to baptize the other Sex, and they actually do it, and administer the Lord's Supper to them, notwithstanding these are no where *expressly* commanded to be done. But tho' there be not a particular Express Command for them, yet the general and universal Command concerning both, is thought to be sufficient.

So it is here, There needs be no express Command for baptizing of Children, because it is implied (which is sufficient) in the general Command, *Baptize all Nations*. This general Commission takes in all Particulars. *Go baptize all Nations*, is as much and as full, as if Christ had said, Go baptize all Men, Women, and Children. As to the two Former of these, you are to *Teach* and instruct them in the Principles of Christianity: As to the last, that is, the Children of those whom you have admitted into the Church by Baptism, you are to *teach* them afterwards, when they are capable of Instruction.

ſtruction. We ſee then, that the Commiſſion given to the Apoſtles, reſpects both adult Perſons and others; the former were to be taught and diſcipled, and then baptiz'd; but the latter, being not capable of any ſuch Thing, were to be baptiz'd without it. This is the plain Tenour of the Words, and from thence it appears, that *Children* are not excluded from Baptiſm; yea, that they are comprehended in that Univerſal Injunction, *Baptize all Nations*, for Children are a great part of the Nations. But I underſtand the Injunction thus, That the Apoſtles were to baptize only adult Perſons at firſt, and afterwards, when thoſe adult Perſons, who imbraced the Chriſtian Faith, had Children, thoſe Children were to be baptized, even whileſt they were Children, for their Parents ſake. This I apprehend, according to what is ſuggeſted to us in the *New Teſtament*, is the Truth of the Matter.

Again, Scripture is the Foundation of *Infant-Baptiſm*, as it records the baptizing of whole Families, wherein it is very credible there were ſome *Infants*. Thus, not only that pious Proſelyte, *Lydia*, but her *Houſehold* was baptized, *Acts* 16. 15. In the ſame *Chap.* 'tis recorded of the Jaylor, that *he was baptized*, and *all his*, ver. 33. which is explain'd by *all his Houſe*, ver. 34. And *the Houſehold of* Stephanus was baptized by the ſaid Apoſtle, 1 *Cor.* 1. 16. Now 'tis hard to think, that in all theſe Families there were no Children, but only ſuch Perſons as were Adult. The Word οἶκος without doubt is very large, and takes in every individual Perſon of the Family, Women as well as Men, Children as well as grown Perſons; and therefore we have Reaſon to believe, that when this Word is uſed, Perſons not only of both Sexes, but of different Ages, are contain'd in it, and are to be underſtood by it. When therefore we read of whole Families baptiz'd, as we are to conclude thence without any Heſitation, that Women were baptiz'd as well as Men, ſo we may as reaſonably inferr that Children were baptiz'd, ſeeing it is not probable that theſe Families were altogether deſtitute of Children. If you ſay, There is no *particular Example* in Scripture of Infant-Baptiſm, the Anſwer is, No more is there any *particular and expreſs Precept* (as I have ſhew'd) for it, and yet I have proved it to be valid notwithſtanding that. To ſay no more under this Head, the General Example and Practice of Baptizing, and that of whole Houſeholds, implies in it a particular Example, becauſe, as I ſhall ſhew afterwards, there is the ſame Reaſon for baptizing of *Children*, that there is for adminiſtring that Sacrament to *grown Perſons*.

Next, I add this, that Scripture is the Ground of Infant Baptiſm, as it plainly declares to us, That Infants are Sharers in the New Covenant. To this Purpoſe, obſerve, that in the *Covenants* which God hath made with his Servants, the *Children* and *Offſpring* are contain'd. Thus it was under the *Old Teſtament*, even before the Law, as thoſe Words of God to *Abraham* teſtifie, *I will eſtabliſh my Covenant between me and thee, and thy Seed after thee*; —— *to be a God unto thee and to thy Seed after thee*, Gen. 17. 7. And twice or thrice afterwards *thee and thy Seed* is particularly mention'd: Which latter Word *Seed* doth not only ſignifie in the general *Abraham*'s Offſpring and Poſterity, but the *Infants and little Children* that proceeded either directly or remotely from his Loins. Yea, theſe more ſignally are meant, and particularly expreſs'd, as the following Words will convince us. *This is my Covenant which ye ſhall keep between me and you, and thy Seed after thee; Every Man-child among you ſhall be circumciſed*, ver. 10. and again *ver.* 12. *Every Man-child in your Generation.* Which ſhews plainly that the *Children* were here meant, and that they were within the *Covenant*, and conſequently receiv'd the Seal of the Covenant, Circumciſion. And there is a very remarkable Tranſaction in *Deut.* 29. to prove that even *Children* are capable of being in Covenant with God; for there we find, that not only adult Perſons, and their Wives, but their *little ones enter'd into Covenant with the Lord their God*, ver. 11, 12. It is no wonder then, that we read in the foregoing Paſſages in *Geneſis*, that there was a Covenant made between God, and the Father of the Faithful and his *Seed*, and that God was ſaid to be *the God of his Seed*, which neceſſarily implies and includes in it the *Children* and *Infants* of the Faithful.

And ſo it is now under the Goſpel; not only the Faithful, but their Children, are in the Covenant of Grace; and on that Account they are *Baptiz'd*, becauſe Baptiſm is now the Sign of the Covenant, as Circumciſion was of old. St. *Peter* exhorts

horts those that were converted to receive Baptism, and thereby also to render their *Children* capable of it, because *the Promise was made to them and their Children*, Acts 2. 39. that is, the Promise *of Remission of Sins, and receiving the Holy Ghost* (mention'd immediately before) which appertain'd to the Covenant, belong'd both to them and their Children; and if the Promise and Covenant belong'd to these latter, then 'tis not to be question'd that *Baptism*, which is the Seal of the Covenant, and the visible Confirmation of the Promise appertains to them likewise. But Doctor *Hammond*, and some others tell us that when St. *Peter* lets the New Converts know, that the Promise was to them and to their *Children*, he meant by [τέκνα, *Children*] the Posterity of the *Jews*, not peculiarly *Infant-Children*. But this I have confuted already in what I said before concerning the Word *Seed*: for as that Term doth include Infants, because they can't be a grown Posterity, unless they had first been little Ones, so none can be *Children*, *i. e.* the Posterity of any Parents, unless they had been first *Children*, as that Word is oppos'd to *adult* Persons. It is therefore implied at least in those Words, *The Promise is unto you and to your Children*, that the Promise annext to the Covenant did belong not only to faithful Parents, but to their Infants and Children, and therefore these had a Right to Baptism, which went along with the Covenant.

I will further prove from 1 *Cor.* 7. 14. that the *Covenant* is the Foundation of *Baptism*, and that therefore the *Children* of the Faithful being in the Covenant, they have a just Claim to that Sacrament. The Apostle's Words are these, *The unbelieving Husband is sanctified by the Wife, and the unbelieving Wife is sanctified by the Husband; else were your Children unclean, but now they are Holy.* Here we find that the Covenant-Holiness descends thro' the Believer, tho' join'd with an Unbeliever, to the issue of them both; much more then is this Federal Holiness derived to the Children, when both Parents are Believers. If there were not this Federal Sanctity, saith the Apostle, the Children would be *unclean*, *i. e.* in the same Condition with the Children of Heathens, and consequently incapable of being admitted to the Fruition of any Gospel-Privileges: *But now*, saith he, *they are holy*, that is, they are capable of being admitted to the Holy Ordinances and Privileges of the Gospel, by Reason of that Covenant-Holiness, which is transmitted to them by their Parents. There is then a Federal and External Holiness under the Gospel, whereby the Children of the Faithful are Holy, and born so, and therefore are fit to be Partakers of the Privileges of the Church, *i. e.* of being admitted to Baptism, which the *Children of Heathens* are not.

This is the Doctrine of the Inspired Apostle, and hereupon I ground the baptizing of the *Children* of Christian Parents, who are reckon'd in the Number of the Faithful, because they profess the Christian Faith. Their Children, as they are Parts of them, are comprehended in the same Covenant with themselves, and so are to enjoy the same Privileges with them. Wherefore the Argument runs thus, If the Children of the Faithful are in the Covenant, then they may be baptized; but these Children are in the Covenant: Therefore they may be baptiz'd. And they have as great a right to Baptism, as *Adult* Persons; for these have a Right to it as they are in the Covenant, and so have they. Their Federal Holiness gives them a Title to this Church-Privilege. Thus I have shew'd, that the Grounds of Baptizing of Children are to be found in the *Holy Scripture*, and more particularly, that the Covenant of God with Christian Parents and their Children (which the *New Testament* discovers to us) is the Foundation of this Practice in the Church. The Infants of profess'd Believers ought to be baptiz'd, as well as the Parents have been, because they are included in the Covenant, as well as their Parents.

Secondly, I argue from the *Reasonableness* of the Thing, in these two Particulars. I. Infants are capable of receiving Baptism, therefore it is fit they should not be denied it. II. It is reasonable, that under the Gospel Infants should be instated in as great Privileges as Infants under the Law were; but we read, that these latter had the Privileges of being made Members of the *Jewish* Church by Circumcision; therefore why should the former be debarr'd the Privilege of being admitted into the Christian Church by Baptism?

First, I say, these are *capable* of receiving the Sacrament of Baptism, therefore it is reasonable they should not be denied it. I do not say that Children understand

understand the Nature and End of that Institution; neither did they, when they were Eight Days old, know what Circumcision meant. But from this Sacred Rite, in use among God's People, we may gather that those may be Sacramentally entred into a Covenant, who do not actually know the Condition of the Covenant. And we know, that in our Law Infants and Children are capable of Ingaging and Contracting by their Parents and Guardians; and what these do in their Names, and for their Good, is reckon'd to be their Act. It is true, Infants can do nothing in their own Persons, because they are uncapable of understanding; but what they do is by Proxy, that is, by others undertaking for them. So *our Church* holds, that the Faith of Parents, or those that present the Child in the Congregation, is interpreted to be the Faith of the Infants, and that this suffices in order to Baptism. This seems to be a more eligible Doctrine than that of the *Lutherans*, who hold, that Infants have the *Act of Faith*; or of the *Papists*, who assert that they have the *Habit*, tho' not the Act of Faith. But it is most probable, that Infants have neither Actual nor Habitual Faith, because both these are founded in the Understanding, which Children are not yet come to the Exercise of. So that, properly speaking, they have not a Faith of their own, that is, a Personal Faith; but they have an Imputative one, as *Calvin* calls it, that is, the Parent's Faith, which is sufficient for them in their present Condition, and before they arrive to an Adult State. Thus the Children of those that profess Christianity may be said to have *Faith*, and are reckon'd among Believers, and so are capable of the Sacrament of Baptism, and thereby are *Partakers of Spiritual Benefits*.

If you ask, How this can be? How they can receive Spiritual Advantage by Baptism, and yet be destitute of Faith, both as 'tis an Act and a Habit; the Reply to your Question is, That the Work and Influence of *God's Spirit* on Infants, is not to be denied, tho' we cannot describe it or comprehend it. *John Baptist* was fill'd with the Holy Ghost, *even from his Mother's Womb*, *Luke* 1. 15. It is not to be doubted then, that God can communicate his Spirit to Infants, and conferr Divine Blessings upon those that are not come to Years of Understanding. Yea, we are sure of the *Actual Performance* of this, and why then do we question the Possibility of it? That Passage in the Evangelical History, *Mark* 10. 13, *&c.* will put this matter beyond all doubt. When they *brought young Children*, (or *Infants*, as 'tis in *Luke* 18. 15.) *unto Christ, he took them up in his Arms* (for they were *brought* or carried in Arms) *and laid his Hands on them* (which was a Ceremony used in Benediction, and therefore 'tis next said) *and bless'd them*; namely, by praying for a Blessing, by pronouncing a Blessing, and by actually conferring a Blessing on them. This remarkable Narrative assures us, that Infants and young Children, tho' insensible of what is done to them, yet can receive Kindnesses, and can have Favours convey'd to them, and are capable of receiving Spiritual Advantage to their Souls, for that is contain'd in Christ's *Blessing* of them. Now, if they be capable of *Benediction*, they are as capable of *Baptism*; for Baptism is a solemn Benediction. In brief, there is a Capacity in Infants, as to the main Ends of Baptism, which are to represent and exhibit to us the Nature of the Grace of the Gospel, as it cleanseth and purifieth, and to confirm the Truth of the Covenant on God's part; and to enstate the Partakers of it in the Privileges of the Church of God. Accordingly Infants are by the Holy Spirit cleans'd and purified in the right Use of Baptism; and the New Covenant of Grace is confirm'd and ratified to them by it; and they are enstated in the Privileges and Benefits of the Gospel; namely, an Entrance into God's Family, the Pardon of their Sins, and the Acceptance of their Persons. All these they are as capable of as grown Men, and thence I conclude, that the Baptizing of Infants is Reasonable and Justifiable.

Secondly, Seeing the Infants of *Jewish* Believers were dignified with the Privilege of *Circumcision*, it can't but be thought *reasonable*, that the Children of those who profess the Christian Faith, should share in the Privilege of *Baptism*; especially, seeing Baptism was design'd to succeed Circumcision, as appears from 2 *Col.* 11. 12. Now, Circumcision was a *Seal of the Righteousness of Faith*, *Rom.* 4. 11. by which they were entred into Covenant with God; and therefore, by Parity of Reason, Infants have the same Right to the Seal of the Covenant under the Gospel, and this Seal is Baptism. This

Sacred Rite then is requisite now, because the Privilege of Children under the *Gospel* is as great (to say no more) as that under the *Law*. If the *Jewish* Infants were admitted into the Church of God, it would be absurd and unreasonable to deny Christian Infants the like Benefit. When therefore we are call'd upon by the *Anabaptists* to produce a *Positive Precept* for baptizing Infants, let us urge them to produce an *Express Prohibition*, that excludes Infants from Baptism; otherwise we are sure the *Gospel* doth not debar them of the Privilege which they were admitted to under the *Law*. It is enough (tho' we have much more) for establishing the Doctrine of *Pædo-Baptism*, that it is no where *forbid*; for nothing can make that unlawful, which was once lawful by Virtue of God's Command, but the direct and express *Prohibition* of the same Divine Lawgiver, in whose Power it is to make and to repeal Laws.

Thirdly, From the *Jewish* Custom of *Baptizing of Proselytes*, which was mention'd before, we may inferr the Reasonableness of Infant-Baptism. For when *Gentiles* were admitted into the *Jewish* Church by Baptism, (as was the use) the whole Family was baptized, Men, Women, and Children, as appears from the *Jewish* Writings, and then they were all taken for true *Israelites*. May we not then think it as accountable and justifiable now to administer Christian Baptism to Children and Infants? And here, by the Way, we may take Notice that there was no need of a positive and express Precept or Example in the *New Testament* for the admitting the Children of Christians into the Church: for this Rite of baptizing of Children was a common and receiv'd Practice in the *Jewish* Church. Therefore when Christ said in general, *Go Baptize all Nations*, he did as good as say, Go baptize all the Children of those that shall be Proselytes to the Christian Faith. Tho' these were not his express Words, yet he could not be understood otherwise, considering the General Practice of the *Jews* at that *Time*. Yea, if our Saviour would not have had Infants to be baptized, he must have given a plain Prohibition to the contrary, as was suggested before, (or else the old Privilege of Infants would hold good. But there is no Prohibition to the contrary, either Direct or Consequential. Therefore we must understand those Words of our Saviour concerning *Pædo-baptism*, as well as the Baptizing of those that are Adult. And if *Pædo-Baptism* was reasonable *then*, it is so *still*.

Thirdly, We have not only *Scripture* and *Reason* on our Side, but the *Testimony* and *Practice of the Ancient Christians*. We have for this the constant Tradition of the Catholick Church, and the matter of Fact attested by the most Credible Writers of those first Ages. Not to mention the controverted Writings of St. *Clement*, who in his *Constitutions* expressly saith, * *Baptize your Infants*; I will produce in the first Place *Irenæus*, who tells us, that † *The Church learnt from the Apostles to baptize Children*. And in || other Places Infant-Baptism is mention'd by him, as a Thing in use in the Church. The Baptizing of Children is also mention'd and approv'd of by * *Justin Martyr*. *Tertullian* in his Treatise of Baptism, *chap.* 18. lets us know, that there was such a Practice, tho' he on some Considerations, which shall be afterwards mention'd, disallows of it.

* Lib. 6. c. 15.
† in Epist. ad Rom. l. 5.
|| Homil. lib. 8.
Adv. Hæres. lib. 2. cap. 39.
* Qu. 56. ad Orthodox.

And *Cyprian* bears Testimony to it very amply, in sundry Parts of his Writings, but no where more clearly than in his *Epistle* to *Fidus*, who would not have Children baptiz'd till the Eighth Day after they were born: But the Pious Father tells him, that he was in the wrong, and that Infants may be admitted to Baptism before that Time, and that this was the † General Conclusion of those that he consulted about that Matter. This is a very Signal Testimony of the Sentiment and Usage of the Christian Church in those early Times; for it appears, that tho' some disputed whether *Children were to be baptized before the Eighth Day or no*, yet whether they were to be baptized at all, whilst they were Infants, was not question'd in the least.

† *Longè aliud inconsilio nostro omnibus visum est: in hoc non quod tu putabas esse faciendum nemo consensit, sed universi potius judicavimus nulli hominum nato misericordiam Dei & gratiam (i. e. Baptismum) denegandum.*

I alledge

I alledge *Origen* in the next Place, who affirms that † the Custom of baptizing Infants was received from Christ and his Apostles. And he acknowledges that * *Children are baptiz'd for the Remission of Sins.* That these were baptiz'd in those Days is manifest from that Query, || *At what Time do the Angels begin their Guardianship over little Children, at their Birth, or at their Baptism?* And the Practice of Baptizing of Children is mention'd by this Writer in his eighth Homily on *Levitic.* cap. 12. v. 13.

† *In* Epist. *ad* Rom. cap. 6. v. 6.
* *In* Luc. Hom. 14.
|| *In* Matth.

So it is by *Athanasius* in his *Second Question* to *Antiochus:* and by *Gregory Nazianzen* in his 40th *Oration.* St. *Augustine* in his Writings against the *Pelagians* frequently makes Mention of this Custom in the Church, and positively asserts it to be of Apostolical Institution, and he brings his * Old Rule for it. However, this is plain from what he saith, that the Baptism of Children was received in those Days in the Church, and that universally.

* *Quod universa tenet Ecclesia, nec conciliis institutum, sed semper retentum est, non nisi* Auctoritate Apostolicâ *traditum rectissimè creditur. De* Baptismo *contra* Donatist. Lib. 4. cap. 24.

The same is attested by St. *Chrysostom,* † *The Catholick Church,* saith he, *every where diffus'd, declares, That Infants ought to be baptiz'd, because of Original Sin.* And in * another Place he tells us that Infants born in the Church are to be baptiz'd, and were baptiz'd.

† Homil. *de* Adamo *&* Evâ.
* Homil. 21. *in* Act.

The Learned Father St. *Jerom* defends Children's Baptism in his Writings against the *Pelagian* Sect, and particularly takes Notice of and || cites St. *Cyprian's Epistle* before-mention'd, wherein he plainly asserts the Necessity of baptizing of Infants.

|| Lib. 3. *adv.* Pelagian.

To single Fathers we may add *Councils;* and we may look upon the fore-going *Epistle* to *Fidus* to be of that Nature: for it was written in the Name of the whole *Council of Carthage,* whereof St. *Cyprian* was President. There upon occasion of that Question, Whether Infants were to be baptiz'd before the eighth Day? it was determin'd that the eighth Day, which was the Day of Circumcision under the Law, was not to be observ'd, but that on the Second or Third Day, or any other soon after the Birth, the Child might be baptiz'd. This famous Decree of that *African* Synod, which was conven'd *A. D.* 254. is a choice Piece of Antiquity, and ascertains us of the common Practice of the Christian Churches in those Days, that is, that Infants were baptized: otherwise the Synod would not have determin'd concerning the Time of their Baptism. Afterwards, when Disputes arose in the *African* Churches, the Doctrine of *Infant-Baptism* was confirm'd and settled in the *Council of Carthage, A. D.* 407: and not long after, the Necessity of Children's Baptism was asserted by a Council at *Milevi, A. D.* 418.

There are other ways of proving the *Antiquity* of this Practice in the Christian Church; as from the Use of *Confirmation* of Old; whence we may gather, that *Children* were baptized: For else, why was that solemn Confession of Faith, and ingaging for themselves in their own Persons? Again, from Infants receiving the other Sacrament, it is clear that they were baptized. St. *Cyprian* and other ancient Writers testifie, That even Children were admitted to the Lord's Supper in those Times. It seems, the Ancients thought that if the Eucharist was good for Men, it must be likewise for Children. Accordingly they administred it to them presently after they were baptized, and also at other Times, when the Adult used to receive the Sacrament. (This Custom is still among the *Greek* Churches at this Day.) This was a *Fault* among the Christians in those Times, and was afterwards seen and amended; but the Matter of Fact is indisputable; and so is our Inference which we make from it, namely, that Pædo-baptism is authoriz'd by the Practice of the Ancient Christians. For * *Justin Martyr* acquaints us, that *'twas not lawful for any one to be a Partaker of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, unless he were first baptiz'd.* And 'tis abundantly testified by others, that Baptism always preceeded the Lord's Supper. Therefore we infallibly conclude, that Baptism was administred to Children in the Primitive Times. This I think is unanswerable.

* *Apol.* 2.

Moreover,

Moreover, from the *deferring of Baptism* among some of the Ancients, I prove that Children were baptiz'd. It is clear from Ecclesiastical History and the Fathers that some deferr'd their Baptism till Old Age, yea till they came to be on their Death-beds. Some did this, that they might indulge their Vices more freely the greatest part of their Days. And others did it from a fear of offending after Baptism, because being to be Baptized but *once*, and attributing so extremely much to that Ceremony, they durst not be baptized too early, lest they should sin again, and have no Instrument of Pardon. Hence or for some other Cause *Constantine the Great* and *Theodosius* deferr'd their Baptism, and so did some of the Fathers and Great Men in the Church, especially in the Third and Fourth Centuries. And St. **Augustin* saith of himself, that his Baptism was delay'd, because he would not defile himself after he was washed in that Sacred Laver. This was the Superstitious Practice of some of old, but it plainly informs us what was the General Usage in those Times, from which these Persons varied, to wit, that Baptism was administer'd to those who were not advanced in Years, but were in their Childhood.

* *Confess.* lib. 2.

And this appears from the Disputes and Arguments used by some of old against the baptizing of Children, for they would not dispute and argue against that which was not. It is well known that *Tertullian* at the beginning of the third Century, and *Gregory Nazianzen* towards the latter end of the fourth Century would have Baptism deferr'd till the Children have attain'd to some measure of Knowledge. The former of these Writers did more especially argue for the putting off of Baptism, 'till Persons were grown up to some Ripeness of Years; and, as for Children, he particularly declared it to be his Judgment that they should not be brought to the Font so soon. Not that he held Infant-Baptism to be absolutely unlawful, for he Acknowledges that Infants are capable of receiving Baptism, but he only adviseth that it be deferr'd 'till the Parties be come to some Years of Understanding, that they may know what that Holy Sacrament is, and that they may prepare themselves for it. And he thinks he Argues well (but certainly very ill) when he offers this as a Reason why the Baptism of Infants should be deferr'd, *viz.* Because of their Innocency and their not being defiled with Sin, and not standing in need of Remission of Sin.

See further in his *Book of Baptism*, where he defends the **Cunctation of Baptism* (as he calls it) accordingly as the *different State*, or *Disposition*, or *Age* of Persons require it; especially with Respect to the last of these, he determines that it is best for Little Ones that their Baptism be delay'd. (Wherein he is follow'd by a † considerable Man of our Church, who tells us that, *'Twere better that Baptism were administred at riper Age when the Parties know what it imports, but that it can't be provided, that they shall not go out of the World before they are baptiz'd. Wherefore*, saith he, *Infants are baptiz'd, not because they are Infants, but lest they should die unbaptiz'd*). Now, all this that I have alledged from the Antients supposeth that the *Baptizing of Infants* was in Use then: For else, how could they dissent from the Common Practice, or why did they argue against it, and pretend to give Reasons why none should be baptiz'd in their Infancy? It is evident then from the Writings of the Primitive Fathers and Historians, that Pædo-baptism was the receiv'd Practice of the Church.

* *Itaque pro cujusque personæ conditione ac dispositione etiam ætate Cunctatio Baptismi utilior est; præcipuè tamen circa parvulos.*

† *Mr.* Thorndyke.

Nay, here I will take Occasion to shew that the Sprinkling of Infants with Water (instead of Dipping them) was no uncommon Usage in the Primitive Churches, whatever some have objected against it of late, and have press'd with great Earnestness, that *Dipping* should be reviv'd. It is true, *this* was the general Practice in the Apostles Times, and in the Primitive Ages of the Church, when they baptiz'd Persons in Rivers, or built *Baptisteries*, that is, great, vast, and wide Vessels, which held abundance of Water for that Purpose. They used to plunge them over Head and Ears in the Water; yea, they did this Three Times, *viz.* at Naming of the Three Persons of the Trinity, as **Tertullian* testifies. And *Gregory Nyssen* in his *Catechetical Orations* hath this Query, why the Party Baptized is Thrice plung'd in the Water? No Man can deny that there was this Trine Immersion used in some Churches, and in Imitation

* *De Coron. Milit.*

tation of them the Church of *Rome* uses is still, and so doth the Greek Church and some others. But most of the Reformed Churches have laid it aside, as a Thing not essential to Baptism, and they have generally chang'd *Immersion* for *Sprinkling* or *pouring of Water on the* Child, because the Verb βαπτίζω and the Noun βαπτισμὸς signifie *washing*, which may be either by *Plunging into the Water* or by *Effusion* and *Sprinkling*. And accordingly we find, not only in Prophane Authors, but in the Writings of the New Testament, that the aforesaid Words are restrain'd sometimes to the latter Sense, as in *Mark* 7. 4. ἐὰν μὴ βαπτίσωνται *except they wash, i. e.* their Hands, which is generally done by *pouring on of Water*. And so βαπτισμὸς is taken in the same Verse; *washing of Cups* and even of *Tables* or *Beds* must be understood of a ceremonious and superstitious Sprinkling of them with Water. And so βαπτισμὸς in *Heb.* 9. 10. is taken for *Purgations*, for what is call'd their *washing*, is call'd *Sprinkling* in *v.* 19, 21.

Again, Effusion or Sprinkling is made Use of in Baptism, because that Sacrament is administred as well by this as by Immersion; for Ablution or Washing is perform'd (as was said before) not only by *Immersion* but by *Aspersion*. And therefore these are but different *Modes* of Administring Baptism, and do not alter the Essence of that Ordinance. It is groundlessly therefore said by some, that bare Effusion of Water is a debasing of this Ordinance, and that it makes it but a half Sacrament. They shew by this that they have not considered the Extent of the Words whereby this Sacrament is express'd, and that they misunderstand the Nature of it, which is not confin'd to Immersion, or to Sprinkling, but may be celebrated in the Use of either of these. And this latter is made choice of by Us, and other Protestant Churches, because *Dipping* is not so safe in these cold Climates, as it was in those Eastern Ones, where Baptism was first Instituted and Practised. This is a very good and substantial Ground of making some Alteration in the Mode of Baptizing, that is, of using Sprinkling or Pouring Water on Children, instead of Plunging them under Water.

And which is the thing that I'm now to make good, this was practis'd of Old in the Christian Churches. *Tertullian* seems to referr to this Custom of Sprinkling, when he saith * *Quis non tibi adsperginem unam cujuslibet aquæ commodabit?* But to wave Conjectures, we are certain that in St. *Cyprian*'s Days the Baptism of Children was perform'd not only by Dipping, but *Aspersion*, as may be seen in his 59th. Epistle, that famous Epistle to *Fidus*, before alledg'd. In another Place, (his 76th. Epistle) *Aquâ salutari non loti, sed perfusi*, are mention'd by him. And when *Magnus* consulted *Cyprian* about it, and the Lawfulness of it, that pious Father's Answer was this, *Nec quenquam movere debet quod adspergi vel perfundi videantur ægri, cum gratiam Dominicam consequuntur*, and thereupon applies those Words in *Ezekiel* 36. 25. *I will sprinkle clean Water upon you, and ye shall be clean.* Thus he argues for the Sufficiency and Validity of Baptism by Aspersion. And if he holds this to be lawful even in those hot Countries of *Africk*, surely then the *baptizing of Infants* in these Northern cold Countries by *Aspersion*, where it is dangerous to expose them naked, whilst they are so tender and weak, cannot but be concluded to be lawful. *Eusebius* mentions * *One that had this Perfusion in his Bed because of his Sickness.* And he quotes *Cornelius* for it, who was Bishop of *Rome*, in his *Epistle* to *Fabius* Bishop of *Antioch*. † *Nicephorus* relates the same Passage concerning *Novatian*; for he was the Person *Cornelius* spoke of. In the Relation of the *Martyrdom of St.* Lawrence, we find, that *Aspersion* was in Use at that Time, at least on some Occasions; for the History tells us, That *one of the Soldiers whose Name was* Romanus, *fetch'd a Pitcher of Water, and took the Opportunity to offer it to St.* Lawrence, *that he might be baptiz'd with that Water.* And accordingly he was baptiz'd so. In the said Acts 'tis recorded, That this *Lawrence* baptiz'd *Lucillus*, and 'tis expressly said, *He poured out the Water upon his Head.* See the *History of St.* Lawrence's *Martyrdom*, *and* Walafridus Strabo *de Rebus Ecclesiast.* cap. 26. Thus it is manifest, That even in those First Ages, Perfusion and Aspersion were used in Baptism; especially in case of Weakness and Indisposition of Body. Now the *Climate* hath the same Consideration with us, that *Sickness* and *Infirmity* had with them. And therefore if those that were sickly and weak were not dipt but sprinkled, there is the same Reason that Sprinkling should suffice in this cold

* Lib. *de Pœnitent.* cap. 6.

* Τὸν ἐν κλίνῃ διὰ νόσον πεχυσάντα. *Eccl.* Hist. lib. 6. cap. 43.

† *Ecclesi.* Hist. l. 6. cap. 3.

cold Climate. The Practice of the Ancients, as well as the Reason and Necessity of the Matter, doth authorize this.

In the Fourth place I am to shew what is the *particular and distinct Nature* of this Sacrament of *Baptism*. I have already given a general Account of it, when I treated of the Sacraments in general; but that which I undertake at present is to shew the peculiar and distinct Nature of Baptism; which comprehends the particular Effects, Fruits, and Benefits of it. But I shall comprize all under the *Design* of Baptism: For, in giving an Account of that, I shall fully discover what are the proper Effects and Benefits of this Sacrament, and consequently what is the *peculiar Nature* of it.

First then, it is the Design of it to be a Badge of Distinction; for by this solemn Rite we declare our Selves to be *Christians* in Contra-distinction to *Jews*, *Pagans*, and *Mahometans*. Which is thus express'd by our Church, * *Baptism is a Sign of Profession, and Mark of Difference, whereby Christian Men are discern'd from others, that be not Christen'd.* For by this it is that they are admitted into the Society of the Church, they are presented to God, and enter into Religion. *Baptism* is dedicating of Children to God, and offering them to him, and making them his by Covenant. God takes them then into his Family, and makes them Members of his Houshold; yea, he doth by this Rite espouse them unto him. Which reminds me of what some Learned Men have said on these Words, *Thou art a bloody Husband*, *Exod.* 4. 25. They are *Zipporah's* Words, not to *Moses*, they say, but to her Son; for by being circumcis'd he was married as 'twere to God: Therefore the Child on the Day of Circumcision was call'd a *Spouse*, because he was by that Ceremony *espoused* and joined to God and the Church. Whether this Interpretation be received or no, the Thing it self is real and solid, that *Baptism* (which succeeds in the Place of Circumcision)* is a kind of *Espousals*: it was intended that hereby we should be join'd to Christ, and by this external Symbol become his. In brief, *Baptism* makes Children visible Christians. This is the *true* Design of Baptizing, it is to make them Christians outwardly, and *to* be a peculiar Mark, Badge, and Character, by which they are distinguish'd from Persons of all other Religions whatsoever.

*Artic. 27.

Secondly, The Design of this Sacrament is not only to unite unto Christ in an External and Ritual Manner, but to be the Means of Conveying inward Grace and Holiness to us. For the outward Action of Ablution or Sprinkling is a *Sign* of an internal Baptism; and if it be a *Sign* of it, then there is really such a Thing effected. Otherwise it would be a faithless Ceremony, and unworthy of the Author and Institutor of it. We are assur'd then that this Outward Washing with Water was intended by Christ not only to signify, but in a Sacramental way to conferr the Inward Washing and Purifying of the Soul from the Filth of Sin upon all those for whom it was designed. The Apostle tells us Eph. 5. 25, 26. That *Christ gave himself for his Church, that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the Washing of Water, by the Word*, i. e. by Baptism and Preaching of the Gospel, which are the outward Means of Sanctifying and Cleansing. Hence Baptism is call'd *the Washing of Regeneration*, Tit. 3. 5. that Washing whereby we are born again, and begot to Newness of Life. And that Sanctification is the Fruit of Baptism, is clear from this, that the Collation of the *Holy Spirit* accompanies the right Administration of this Sacrament. Whence those two are coupled together, *to be born again of Water*, and also *of the Holy Ghost*, John 3. 5. And we are acquainted that the true Gospel-Baptism is *Baptizing with the Holy Ghost*, *Matt.* 3. 11. *Acts* 1. 5. the powerful Influence of which is seen in the Cleansing and Purifying of the Soul. And, without this Spiritual Baptism, the Outward Washing is of no Value, Which indeed was a Notion that the Pagans had attain'd to; the understanding Men among them did not think their external Rites and Washings could purge their Souls.

* *Ovid.*

* *Ah nimium faciles! qui tristia crimina cædis*
Flumineâ tolli posse putatis aquâ.

It is not a Ceremonial and Outward Purgation, but an Inward and Spiritual one that is able to make a Change in the Minds and Faculties of Men. And this

this is the Baptism of the Holy Ghost, which cannot but prove Effectual, as proceeding from Him who is the Author of all Grace and Holiness, as instituted by him who design'd it for the conveying of Grace.

Thirdly, Baptism was design'd not only to confer Grace, but to be a perpetual Obligation upon us to relinquish all our Sins. This it doth as it is a *Federal* Act between God and us, and as 'tis a solemn Vow made to him. Therefore 'tis call'd *the Baptism of Repentance*, or forsaking of Sin, *Matt.* 3. 6. And this is meant by the Apostle, when he saith in *Rom.* 6. 3. *Know ye not that so many of us as were baptiz'd into Christ Jesus, were baptiz'd into His Death?* which teaches us, in the Spiritual Sense of it, to die unto Sin, and to mortify our Lusts. Nay, he tells the *Colossians, chap.* 2. *ver.* 12. that *they are buried with Christ in Baptism*; not only *dead*, but *buried*, which expresses yet a farther Degree of Mortification, and forsaking of Sin. Hence it was that *Exorcising* or Expelling the Devil was in the primitive Ages used in Baptizing, to signify that the Devil and his Dominion were to be expell'd, and that this was one great Intention of Baptism. There was also antiently used at Baptism a *Renouncing of the Devil*, which is mention'd by * *Tertullian*. by ‖ *Cyprian*, by † *Chrysostom*. And these and other Ancient Writers acquaint us that they not only renounc'd the Devil, but the World and the Flesh. And Our Church retains in the *Office of Baptism* the like Solemn Form of *Abrenunciation*. This then I justly assign as one End of Baptism; namely, to engage us in a most Solemn Manner, to profess our Enmity against all that is Sinful and Vitious, and to vow a *perpetual* War against the World, the Flesh, and the Devil. He that is at *Peace* with these, is false not only to his Soul, but his Vow and Engagement.

* *De Corona Milit.*
‖ Epist. 7.
† *Ad Antiochen. Hom.* 21.

Fourthly, the Design of this Sacrament, as it is a Covenant, is to oblige us not only to renounce all that is Vitious and Evil and Contrary to the intent of the Gospel, but firmly to engage us to submit to Christ's Laws, and to walk according to the Rules of the Gospel. We are not only by Baptism buried with Christ, (as we said before) but we thereby profess *to rise with Him*, as the Apostle adds in that forenam'd Place in the Epistle to the *Colossians*, and as the Ancient Custom of *Emersion*, or coming out of the Water, after being plung'd in it, signified, and is plainly alluded to by the Apostle. *As many as have been baptiz'd into Christ, have put on Christ*, saith the same Inspired Writer, *Gal.* 3. 27. they profess and promise a holy Life suitable to the Laws of Christ Jesus. In the Sight of the Congregation they oblige themselves to a continual Course of Obedience, they give themselves up to God, and by Covenant tie themselves to remain His for ever. Thus Baptism is a Solemn Engagement to Holiness.

Fifthly, the End and Design of the Evangelical Sacrament of Baptism is to discover to us our Sins, and to assure us of the Pardon of them. I join these both together, because they are so nearly related, and because one is in order to the other. It is plain that Baptism was intended to discover our Filthiness: for why do we *wash*, if we be not *defil'd?* Cleansing supposes Pollution. Infants were stain'd and defiled, therefore they have need of purifying. Therefore it is no wonder that the *Pelagians* of old and some of the *Anabaptists* of late, who are against Baptizing of Children are also of Opinion that there is no such thing as Original Sin and Pollution. One would think that * he is of the same Mind who tells us that *Infants are qualified to be received as Members of Christ's Church by Baptism, because they are Innocent.* And again, *Infants, who have never sinned, are fitted for Baptism by their Innocence.* But we are effectually reminded of the contrary by the Doctrine of *Pædo-baptism*, which I have establish'd. It is evident that there is an original Blemish and Blot upon our Nature, and consequently we are not *Innocent*. There is a Pollution contracted, or else to what Purpose is Washing?

* *Dr.* Clark's *Three Practical Essays.*

But we are not only led to a Sight of our Disease, but of the Remedy of it, and that is the Sanctifying of our Nature by the Holy Spirit, of which I have spoken already, and the Remitting of our Guilt through the Merits of Christ Jesus, of which I am now to speak. It is not to be doubted, that the Sins of all those that are baptized into Christ are wholly removed as to the Guilt of them, and that Baptism was design'd to be a Representation and

Assurance of this. We learn this from that Office of our Church, [We call upon thee for these Infants, that they coming to thy Holy Baptism, may receive Remission of their Sins by Spiritual Regeneration.] *Original Sin* is here meant, when Remission of *Sins* is pray'd for; for Infants are not capable of *Actual Sins*. This is acknowledg'd by those of the Communion of the Church of *Rome*; but then they add this likewise, that Original Sin is wholly abolish'd by Baptism, insomuch, that after Baptism, it ceases to be a Sin. They hold, that Concupiscence is no longer vitious in those that have been baptiz'd. But this is more than ought to be granted, for (as it is rightly determin'd by our Church in her IXth Article) *the Infection of Nature remains even in the Regenerate, and Concupiscence hath of it self the Nature of Sin.* But we are willing to grant with Saint * *Augustine*, that tho' Original Corruption and Concupiscence remain after Baptism, yet the Guilt of them are not imputed to those that are truly Regenerate. I say, to those that are Regenerate, for this Doctrine must not be taken down whole, without all Limitation and Distinction: But we must distinguish between Infants that are design'd for Happiness, and consequently partake of the real Vertue and Efficacy of the Ordinance of Baptism, and others that partake only of the outward Rite, but are not Regenerate. If we speak of these latter, it is certain that the Guilt of their Original Sin is not taken away by Baptism; but if we speak of the former, it is as certain that God in the Administration of this Sacrament, removes the Guilt of that Original Corruption, and receives them to his Grace and Favour.

* *De nuptiis & Concupisc. ad Valer.* l. 1. c. 25. & *De Baptismo parvulorum.* & *De Cons.* dist. 4. cap.

The Evangelical Writings confirm this Truth, and ascertain us, that Baptism was design'd *for the Remission of Sins*, as is expressly said in *Mark* 1. 4. And again we meet with this Passage in *Acts* 2. 38. *Be baptiz'd every one of you in the Name of Jesus Christ, for the Remission of Sins.* And to the same Purpose in *Acts* 22. 16. *Be baptiz'd, and wash away thy Sins.* Whence 'tis clear, that washing away of Sin is represented and effected by the Ordinance of Baptism, that is, as it is appointed the Condition or Means of Pardon of Sin, as well as 'tis a Sign and Representation of it. For as Water washeth away the outward Filth and Pollution, so in the Use of Baptism (effectually administer'd) it was design'd, that the Guilt or Spiritual Defilements should be taken away, and that our Sins should be blotted out for the Sake of our Redeemer. Which is included in the Apostle's Words before cited, *As many as are Baptized into Christ, are Baptized into his Death*, which signifies not only our spiritual Dying to Sin, by Virtue of Christ's Death, but also our sharing in the Fruits of Christ's Death, and more particularly the Satisfaction made by it, which is the Forgiveness of our Sins. This is the Sense of our Church in the first Words in the *publick Baptism of Infants* [For as much as all Men are conceived and born in Sin, *&c.*] Where it is intimated, that Baptism is the Redress of that common Sin which all Men are conceived and born in, and that it is a Confirmation to us of the Pardon of all our other Sins. This, I think, proves what I undertook to make good, that it is the grand Design of this Ordinance to ascertain to us the Forgiveness of Sins, and that Sinners partake of it for this End, that they may receive the Pardon of their Sins.

Sixthly, and Lastly, Baptism was design'd as a Means of *Salvation*. Thus our Saviour himself tells us, That *he that believeth, and is baptiz'd, shall be sav'd*, Mark 16. 16. And *the being born of Water and the Spirit*, is made by him a Condition of *ent'ring into the Kingdom of God*, John 3. 5. This is confirm'd by the Apostle's Words in *Tit.* 3. 5. *According to his Mercy he saved us by the washing of Regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost*, i. e. by Baptism, wherein we are regenerated and renew'd by the Holy Spirit. And another Apostle tells us, That *as in the Ark of old, eight Souls were saved by Water, so, the like Figure to that, Baptism doth also now save us*, 1 Pet. 3. 21. that is, it is a Means of our Eternal Salvation, as the Waters bearing up the Ark in *Noah*'s Days, was the happy Means of the temporal Preservation of *Noah* and his Family: The Salvation therefore of our Souls was one great End of the Instituting the Ordinance of Baptism.

Not that God cannot save Infants without it: For he is tied to no Means, and therefore not to this particular one; especially, seeing it can never be the Fault of the Infants that they are not baptiz'd, they having no Understanding and Sense

Sense of the Thing. Wherefore St. *Augustine* is justly sentenc'd to be a hard and severe Father of Infants, for dooming all of them to be lost that die before they are baptiz'd. And St. *Chrysostom*, *Cyril* of *Jerusalem*, *Nazianzen*, *Theophylact*, and some others of the Ancients seem to hold the same, that is, That unbaptiz'd Children are in a damnable Case. Whence it was, that they allow'd of *any manner of Baptism*, tho' it was but an aping of it. * A Jew was baptiz'd with Sand, by the Christians that travell'd with him, when he was like to die: tho' 'tis true, that on his Recovery, he was afterwards baptiz'd with Water by the Order of the Arch-Bishop of *Alexandria*. Their superstitious Opinion of the absolute Necessity of Baptism was such, That they would have it in any Shape; yea, if they could not have it when they were alive, they took Care to have it administred to them when they were dead. Thus when a Catechumen, or newly converted Christian died unbaptized, one was baptiz'd in his stead, as *Tertullian* and other Fathers testify.

* *Niceph.* l. 3. cap. 37.

And as Baptism might be administred in *any manner*, so by *any Persons*, in Case of Necessity, as they call'd it. St. *Austin* and many Fathers held, that Baptism might be perform'd in such a Case by a Lay-Person. Yea, Boys might baptize, of which we have a famous Instance in *Athanasius*; † *Sozomen* relates that *Athanasius*, who being a Boy, and playing with his Fellows by the Sea-shore, baptiz'd several of them not baptiz'd before (for I have shew'd that 'twas usual to defer Baptism): *Alexander*, Archbishop of *Alexandria*, who was not far off, but saw *Athanasius* act the Bishop or Presbyter, and perform this Mock baptism, order'd with his Presbyters, that those who were baptiz'd by *Athanasius* in Play among the Boys, and answer'd to the usual Questions which were put to those that were to be baptiz'd, should not be baptiz'd again, but determin'd their Baptism to be valid. Yea, if a Man should baptize himself, it was thought to be good and effectual, as *we* see in the Instance of the *Jew* mention'd in the * *Canon Law*, who baptiz'd himself when he thought he was dying: For tho' 'twas order'd, that he should be baptiz'd again, yet 'twas determin'd, that if he had died then, it would have avail'd for his Salvation. And we know, that it is the Decision of the † *Council* of *Trent*, that in Case of Necessity, not only Lay-men, but Women and Infidels and Jews may administer Baptism. All which proceeds from attributing too much to Baptism, and imagining that it is utterly impossible for any to be saved without it. This is the Notion that Papists generally have of this Sacrament, and therefore all Children that die unbaptiz'd are placed by them *in Limbo*, where they are deprivd of all Vision of God for ever. I have been told, that in some Parts of this Kingdom Women are permitted to baptize in Case of Necessity; and this Practice I have heard defended by some of our Church, out of a vain and superstitious Conceit of the absolute Necessity of Baptism. But they should remember, that to administer the Sacraments, is proper and peculiar to the Ministers of the Church; and particularly, the Commission to Baptize is given to those that *Teach*, and none else, *Mat.* 28. 29. Therefore Women can't baptize. Wherefore I have much wonder'd, that the contrary is asserted by those very Persons who are the most zealous Defenders of the peculiar Offices of the Clergy, and hold that the Laity have Nothing to do with them. This looks like Self-contradiction. One of our Church is so persuaded of the absolute Necessity of Childrens being baptized, in order to their being saved, that he holds, that they are baptiz'd by *Angels*, if their Parents take no Care of their Baptism.

† *Eccl. Hist.* l. 2. cap. 16.

* *Decret.* l. 2. Tit. 3.

† *Sess.* 7. *de Bapt. can.* 4. & *in Catechism. Rom.*

However, 'tis a more eligible Opinion than that of the Father before-mention'd, because it proceeds from abundance of Good-will and Charity. But the Truth is, the want of Baptism is damnable only there where it is despised and neglected, and therefore Infants shall not be thrust down to Hell, or any *Limbus* prepared for them by the Church of *Rome*, meerly because their Parents have omitted this Sacred Rite towards them. It is not the bare Absence of Baptism (and so I may say of the other Sacrament) but the wilful Refusal and Contempt of it, that renders it hurtful and fatal; and consequently the unbaptized Child shall not suffer for not being baptized, there being nothing here of Contempt or Refusal. It is not the Fault of Infants, that they are not brought to this Sacrament, and therefore by God's peculiar Mercy they are sav'd (if they are of that Number) without Baptism.

But still it is an impregnable Truth, that *Baptism* is the ordinary way of Salvation in the Church. We are to look upon it, in the usual and stated Course of God's Dispensation under the Gospel, as the appointed Medium of Salvation. We are to attend to the Apostle's peremptory Proposition, *Baptism now saveth us*: It saveth us by Vertue of the Holy Spirit, which accompanies this Ordinance. It saveth us, as it admits and incorporates us into the Society and Family of those who are to be saved. It saveth us as a proper Instrument appointed by our Lord for that Purpose; and it saveth us, as 'tis a Seal of the Pardon of our Sins, and as 'tis an Assurance of our Redemption and Salvation. And thus it appears, that Salvation was one of the Grand Ends of Christ's Instituting this Sacrament. And thus we see in brief, what was the *Design* of this Holy Institution; and from the whole we may know how to interpret the Words of our Church, when she saith, That * *Baptism is a Sign of Regeneration or new Birth, whereby, as by an Instrument, they that receive Baptism rightly, are grafted into the Church; The Promises of the Forgiveness of Sins, and our Adoption to be the Sons of God, by the Holy Ghost, are visibly sign'd and seal'd; Faith is confirm'd, and Grace increas'd by Vertue of Prayer unto God.* And we may easily apprehend why in the *Office of Baptism* 'tis said more than once, That by Baptism we are made *Members of Christ*; namely, Because we are by Baptism admitted into the Church of Christ, and so become Members of that Mystical Body, whereof Christ is the Head; and why we are said to be made *Children of God*; namely, because we are adopted into his Family, the Church, and so have the Privilege of Children; and why we are said to be *Inheritors of the Kingdom of Heaven*; because, by being in the Covenant, and becoming Members of Christ's Church and Family, we have a Right to the Promises, and particularly that of Heaven. All this gives us a full Account of *the particular Nature* of Baptism.

Artic. 27.

But here, for the right Understanding of what hath been deliver'd under this Head, concerning the Fruits and Benefits of Christian Baptism, 'tis requisite that I adjoin these two Things; I. That some of these Benefits are *common to all*, as the distinguishing them by this particular Mark and Badge from all others of any Religion different from the Christian, the Admitting of them into the Church, and making them visible Members of it, the conferring of a Ritual and External Sanctity. These Privileges attend the Baptizing of *all* Persons whomsoever. But II. There are other Privileges, Fruits and Effects of Baptism, as the Collation of Inward Grace, effectual Regeneration by the Holy Spirit, Renewing and Sanctifying of the corrupt Nature, Pardon of Sin, and Salvation; but these are *not common* to all that are Baptized, but are peculiar to some only; namely, the Elect. For tho' *Baptism* is to be administred to all the Infants of Christian Parents, as we are to *preach the Gospel* to all Persons without Distinction, yet it is (as Preaching) Effectual to none but those that are chosen of God, and predetermin'd to Life and Salvation. But *all* are to be admitted to it, because we can't distinguish between them: We don't know who are Elect and who are Reprobates. Baptism being a Seal of the Covenant, it must be applied to those who have no *actual and saving Part* in the Covenant; because we cannot discern who have, and who have not a Part in it. But to the Elect alone it is the successful Instrument, Means, and Assurance of Sanctification, Forgiveness of Sins, and Eternal Life and Happiness. It is thus beneficial to Infants and Children, that are of the Chosen of God, tho' they never arrive to Ripeness of Years, but die in their Infancy or Childhood.

But if we speak of those that out-live their Childhood, and come to Years of Discretion and Manhood, then I must add this, That what I have said of the Spiritual Fruits and Effects of Baptism, is to be understood in Conjunction with the Observance and Performance of the Conditions of the Covenant entred into at Baptism. This we learn from the Apostle, who, after he had said, *Baptism saves us*, immediately subjoin'd, *not putting away of the Filth of the Flesh*; i. e. 'tis not done by any Vertue that is in the bare External Rite of Washing, *but the Answer of a good Conscience towards God*; that is, It is our engaging, and promising to perform the Conditions of the Covenant which we make with God in Baptism; it is this that makes Baptism a *saving* Ordinance. For that Word

Word ἐπερώτημα (which we translate *Answer*) is as much as *Stipulation* (and that is the frequent Use of it among the *Greek Lawyers*) which was perform'd by *Answer and Promise* in a set Form of Words. So in Baptism, which is a solemn Covenant and Stipulation, they used to *make Answer* to the Minister's Questions, and by that Answer *oblig'd* themselves to do what he required of them. If there be then this *Answer of a good Conscience towards God*, if we conscientiously act according to the Engagement we make before God in our Baptism, this Sacrament will bring *Salvation* with it, otherwise it will not. For the Doctrine of the Church of *Rome*, that this Sacrament (as well as the other) confers Grace, * *upon the mere administring of it*, by a Physical Efficacy, is not to be entertain'd. Much less can those have any substantial Benefit by it, who being come to some Maturity of Age, are unmindful of their Baptismal Vow, and act contrary to it. For in those that are Adult, Salvation goes along with Baptism as with other Ordinances, not without our Concurrence. Many do not experience the Efficacy and Fruit of Baptism, but it is their own Fault, because they neglect their Covenant, that is, the keeping the Conditions of it. It is no wonder then, that the Benefits and Advantages consigned in Baptism, are not actually theirs, they being not careful to perform their Part of the Covenant. Having suggested these Things for the Right Understanding of the Premisses, I proceed now to

* *Ex opere operato. Conc. Trid. Sess. 7. Can. 1.*

The Fifth and Last Thing I undertook, that is, to set down the proper *Inferences* that are to be made from the Doctrine of Baptism, and particularly of the Baptism of Infants.

First, We are to Acknowledge, and be Thankful for the great Benefits and Advantages of this Evangelical Sacrament; and we are to despise the vain Cavils of those who disparage and vilifie it. *Julian the Apostate* (as *Cyril* of *Alexandria* informs us) laugh'd at every thing in Christianity, and particularly at the Doctrine and Practice of *Baptism*, imagining it a foolish and impossible thing, that Water should cleanse a Soul. The *Pelagians* had a very mean and low Opinion of this *Sacrament*, especially as it was administred to Children, as we learn from the Writings of S. *Augustine*, and others who writ against the Errors of those Men. The Followers of *Socinus* do vilifie it yet more, telling us, That it was Instituted for no other end but to distinguish *Christians* from *Gentiles*, as the *Romans* of old were differenc'd from the *Greeks* by a Gown. The *German Anabaptists* were furious in their Disputes against *Children's Baptism*, and oppos'd it with Effusion of Blood. *Episcopius* denies all exhibition of Grace in the Use of this Rite. And so do the *Quakers*. And both these, and the modern *Baptists*, (as they call themselves) inveigh against the *Baptizing* of *Infants*, and ridicule it with the Name of *Baby-baptism*. But let not any such Prophaneness be countenanc'd by us; let us think reverently and piously concerning this Holy Institution, as it becomes those who have convers'd with the Evangelical Writings, wherein the Excellent Effects and Benefits of this Sacred Exercise are so plainly and fully set forth. Let us perswade our selves of this great Truth, that Christ Jesus hath (as he promis'd) founded his Holy Catholick Church on a Rock; and this Rock is seated in the Waters of *Holy Baptism*, through which all must pass that will be Admitted into the Fellowship of Christ's Religion, and are desirous to be saved by him. It may seem a mean thing for the Infant to be sprinkled with a little Water; but let us look on the Authour and Institutor of it, and his Design in it, and then it will no longer appear low and contemptible. For with Christ's Appointment there goes a special Power and Vertue: His Institution and Ordinance are accompanied with a Blessing; yea, with Plenty of the greatest Blessings. There is Reason therefore, that we should highly prize and value this Excellent Office of Christianity, and be thankful to God for it.

Secondly, Let Children be brought to *Publick Baptism*. This undeniably follows from what hath been said, for if this Religious Practice be of so great Use and Benefit, as I have represented it to be, Parents are indispensibly oblig'd to take care that their Children be Partakers of this Sacred Rite. And they must be careful, that this be done reverently, solemnly, and gravely; not in a formal way, because it is fashionable, but because it is their Duty, indispensibly enjoin'd by Christ, and such as they ought not on any Account

to

to omit. To this end they are to consider how dangerous it is to neglect it, yea, to deferr it. For if, under the Legal Oeconomy, they were not to delay the *Sacrament* of *Circumcision*, how shall we escape if we shew a disrespect and neglect of the Evangelical *Sacrament*, by delaying the Administration of it? Let Parents then betake themselves to a speedy Performance of their Duty, and dedicate their Children to God betimes, tho' there is not a Day set for it, as there was for *Circumcision*.

I would here remind Parents likewise to take care that *Baptism* be *Publickly* administred, for it is an Action of the whole Church. It was at first openly, and in a publick manner celebrated, and so it should be now, without urgent Necessity, it being a solemn act of the Congregation of Christians, and all ought to be engaged in it. Whilest the Administration is performing, they are to join in it, both in way of Prayer for the Infant, and of Thanksgiving to God for adding a Member to his Church. They are concern'd at such a time to call to Mind their own *Baptismal Vow*, which they once solemnly made to God on the like Occasion. They are to examine themselves whether they have kept it. They are to lament the breach of it; and they are to renew it, and tie themselves more firmly than ever to the Observance of it. This is the proper Employment of *Christian Men* at the celebrating of this *Sacrament*, and this shews how rersonable and convenient it is, that it should be perform'd, not in private with a few, (unless there be imminent Danger) but in the solemn Assembly, where all are met together, and are seasonably put in Mind of discharging their proper Duty on this Account. Wherefore, let Parents be serviceable to this Good Work, by bringing their Children to publick Baptism, that they may be early Candidates of Christianity, and may have the Honour to be solemnly incorporated into that Body which hath ever a Blessing attending it and all it's sincere Members. Why should they be Enemies to those whom they pretend to Love so Affectionately and Dearly? Why should they *debar* their Infants from this so profitable an Ordinance; as if they envyed their *Little* Ones being *made Christians too soon*?

Thirdly and Lastly, We are all engaged to walk worthy of this great Privilege and Honour we have shared in, the being admitted to the Sacrament of Baptism. In the primitive Times the Converted, after they were baptiz'd, put on New and * White Garments; which they did, to signify that they left off their old Sins, and were become new Men, and that after the Baptismal Washing, they were to keep themselves unspotted from the World. This we are to take Care of, and to call to Mind our solemn Engagement in Holy Baptism, and to make use of it, as a proper Help and Motive to Holiness in the whole Course of our Lives. We must remember, that we are Holy Ground, and dedicated to God; and it is a heinous Crime to alienate and prophane our selves. But this we do, if we voluntarily consent to *Sin*; the Propriety is then changed in us, and thenceforward we belong unto Satan. There are many that owe all their *Christianity* to the *Font*, and because they were baptiz'd, they think they must needs fare well, and not miss of Heaven. But this is a fond and pernicious Mistake; and such Persons are to know, that the Water which was poured upon them in Baptism, is lost, if they take no Care to prevent the Defilements of their Lives. The Outward Rite is of it self of little Value, unless we look after the Purity of our Hearts, and the Sanctity of our Conversations. Being differenc'd from all others by this Badge, we must not walk as others do. We are a peculiar People, and our Behaviour must distinguish us from the rest of the World. We have been wash'd, therefore we must not pollute our selves. We must always live in a deep Sense of the solemn Obligation we lie under, to deny our selves, and to take up Christ's Cross, and to guard our selves from Temptations, and to perform the Sacred Vows made to God in our Baptism. A Covenant (and such is Baptism) supposes something to be done on both sides. Now, we are sure that God will do his Part; let us look to ours, which is endeavouring to attain to Holiness of Life; and let us put on a firm Resolution to live as baptiz'd Persons.

* *Whence* Whitsunday *had it's Name*; *because that Season and* Easter *were the Times wherein they were usually admitted to* Baptism.

Of

Of Confirmation; *or*, Episcopal Benediction *of Children after* Baptism, *by the Imposition of Hands.*

THIS Practice is reckon'd by our Church as a Sacred and Apostolical Institution. And indeed, it is not to be denied, that in the Christian Churches of old, the Children of Believing Parents, when grown up, used to be Catechized and Instructed in that Faith into which they had been baptized. And being instructed, they openly in the Congregation gave an Account of their Faith, and were admitted among Adult Persons into the Church; and this solemn Admission was accompanied with the laying on of the Hands of their Pastors, and their Blessing them. This is attested by both * *Greek* and † *Latin* Fathers, to have been the Custom of the First Ages of Christianity. And since that Time, not only the *Romanists*, but all the *Lutheran* Churches observe this ancient Usage, and some of the more *Reformed* Divines, as *Calvin*, *Beza*, *Zanchy* have approv'd of this Practice in the Church. The first of these, in the 4th Book of his *Institutions*, Chap. 19. Sect. 4. represents it as an Ecclesiastical Rite of great Benefit and Advantage in the Church of Christ, and wishes that it were revived in the Protestant Churches. And * one of our own Dissenting Brethren hath spoken largely in its Commendation:

* *Theophilus* of *Antioch*, *Clement* of *Alexandria*, *Origen*, *Cyril* of *Jerus.* *Chrysostom*, *Gregory Nazianzen.*

† *Tertullian*, *Cyprian*, *Optatus*, *Jerom*, *Ambrose.*

* *Mr.* Baxter.

But let us see what Ground we have for it in the Holy and Inspired Writ; for that is to be our great and authentick Rule in all Ecclesiastical and Religious Observances. In *Heb.* 6. 2. these two are join'd together, *the Doctrine of Baptisms*, and *the laying on of Hands*; which suggests to us, that by this Imposition of Hands, we are to understand that Practice which I'm now speaking of, *viz.* the Confirming of those that have been baptized. This is the Interpretation which some of the forementioned Fathers give us of the Text. And even Mr. *Calvin* on the Place agrees with them, and looks upon *Confirmation* as a Divine and Apostolical Institution, and grounded on these Words of the Author of the Epistle to the Hebrews.

We may be further perswaded of the Truth of this, if we consult the Practice of the Apostles, which is frequently mention'd with Relation to this Matter. I begin with *Acts* 14. 22. *They confirmed the Souls of the Disciples, and exhorted them to continue in the Faith.* These *Disciples* were the Persons that *Paul* and *Barnabas* preach'd the Gospel to, and converted to the Christian Faith, and thereupon (as the constant Custom was) admitted to Baptism; and *Confirmation*, we see, followed after Baptism. Some produce another Instance of this Apostolical Administration from *Acts* 19. 5, 6. *They were baptized in the Name of the Lord Jesus; and when* Paul *laid his Hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them.* Here is Baptism, and upon that follows Imposition of Hands, whence some inferr, that this Place speaks of Confirmation.

There is a third Text which hath the Priority of the other two, but I reserv'd it for the last Place, because I would conclude with the most Remarkable Passage that seems to confirm and establish the Matter which we are treating of. It is said of the Samaritans, who were converted to the Faith by the preaching of *Philip* the Deacon, *that they were baptized in the Name of the Lord Jesus*, Acts 8. 16. and 'tis added, *v.* 17. *Then laid they their Hands on them, and they receiv'd the Holy Ghost*, that is (as we find it there in the History) the Apostles, *Peter* and *John* were sent to them to confirm them, by Imposition of Hands, and by that Means conferring on them the Gifts of the Holy Spirit.

These are the main Passages in the *New Testament*, whereupon the Episcopal or Pastoral Imposition of Hands on Children, after Baptism, is grounded. I will now say something concerning the *Reasonableness* and *Usefullness* of the Performance.

First, The Persons who had been initiated into the Christian Church by Baptism, do now openly own and profess that Faith which they were baptized into. Before they attested their Belief by their *Sponsors* only; but now they

Personally

Personally do it. So that now they are oblig'd afresh to acknowledge the Christian Religion, and to embrace its Articles with a steady Consent. This certainly is no mean Advance towards the Confirming them in those Divine Truths through the future Course of their Lives.

Secondly, At this solemn Time the baptized explicitly declare their Voluntary Consent to what was promis'd by their Sureties. They now publickly own and ratify the Covenant which they made in Baptism. They take upon them actually to perform those Engagements and Vows which they then made. On this Account then, this Religious Institution must be of great Use and Service to us.

Thirdly, By Prayer and Benediction, there is derived to us an Ability to act according to our Baptismal Professions and Engagements. Imposition of Hands was constantly made use of by Apostolical Men, as a way of communicating the Gifts of the Holy Spirit to Christians, and strengthning them in all Grace and Vertue. And in the present Case we may conceive this to be a Means to convey Spiritual Good to the baptized, if it be done *in that manner* as it ought.

In the Last Place then, I will add these Cautions: First, We are to take heed that we do not corrupt and deprave this Primitive Institution, by adding superstitious Rites and Ceremonies to it, by making it a *Sacrament*, and using it as such, as the Church of *Rome* doth. Again, Those who partake of this Administration, must be such, as in respect of their Age and Understanding, are able to give an Account of their Faith, and know what it is to take upon them the Performance of those Promises which they made, and that Covenant which they enter'd into at Baptism. Further, Let not this Religious Act be done in a formal and superficial Manner, for this will null and defeat the whole design of it: It will be a Mockery, rather than an acceptable Service. Wherefore let us undertake it with that Seriousness and Solemnity which *this* great Business requires. And then we may expect, that it will be effectual *to establish* us in Goodness and Holiness, and to make us Eminent in all the Parts of our Religion.

Of the SACRAMENT *of the* LORD's-SUPPER.

I Am now to speak of the Evangelical Sacrament of the *Lord's-Supper*; and I will endeavour to give a full Account of it; by shewing,

1. What are the Outward *Elements* or *Materials* of this Sacrament.
2. What are the *Actions* and *Rites* used about these Elements, and the Persons that are to receive them.
3. What is *signified* by the Elements, and what is Spiritually and Mystically represented by the Actions and Rites appertaining to the Elements.
4. What is the *End* and *Design* of this Sacrament.
5. What are the *Qualifications* of those Persons that are to be admitted to this Sacrament.

And in the 6th. and last Place, I will answer those *Objections* which are raised by some, on Purpose to excuse them from coming to this Holy Ordinance.

In the first Place, We are to consider the Outward Elements or Materials of this Sacrament; namely, *Bread* and *Wine*. These are the Elements that are to be used in the Administration of the Lord's Supper, according to our Saviour's own Institution, *Mat.* 26. 26, 27. and 'tis confirm'd by St. *Paul*, 1 *Cor.* 11. 23, 24, 25. The true Occasion of the using of those *Particular Elements* in the Sacrament, was our Saviour's vouchsafing (as I have shew'd before, when I spoke of the Sacraments in general), to change the *After-Supper* among the Jews, in the close of which they used to distribute Bread and Wine, into this Sacred Supper of the Eucharist. And seeing he was pleased to make Choice of these

these Creatures for this Holy Purpose, we are bound to make use of them, and no other, in the celebrating of this Ordinance. It was an odd and unaccountable Practice of some of old to add Cheese to the Sacramental Bread, whence they were call'd * *Artopritæ, Bread and Cheese* Hereticks. The *Papists* indeed make use of Bread without any Addition, but in a foolish and ridiculous Manner, and thereby pervert the Primitive Simplicity of this Sacrament, for they make little *Wafers* in the Form of a † *Penny*, and give it to the People. And a great Man of that Communion was more ridiculous in pretending to assign the || Reason of it. *Unleavened* Bread was used heretofore in the Eucharist, by those of the *Latin* Church, but Bread *Leavenrd* by the *Greek* Churches, and is so at this Day. The former Practice seems to be most eligible, but we are not to be superstitiously sollicitous about either. This only is fitting and requisite, that the Bread used on this Occasion be good and wholesome, and (if it may be had) of the finest sort.

* Epiphan. Hæres. 49.

† *Statutum est eum (i. e. panem) in modum denarii formari & fieri.* Hon. Augustodun. *in* Gem. Animæ cap. 66.

|| *In modum Denarii formatur, tum quia panis vitæ pro denariis traditus est, tum quia idem denarius in vineâ laborantibus in præmium dandus est.* Rationale, Lib. 4. cap. 41.

Then as to the other Element, we ought inviolably to use it without any Change. We find those condemn'd by the Ancient Fathers of the Church, who used other Liquors instead of Wine; as those who made use of *Blood*, mention'd by St. *Augustine* in his *Books of Hereticks*. St. *Cyprian* hath a whole * Epistle against those that used only *Water*, and no Wine at the Communion, and were thence call'd *Aquarii*. The *Encratites* and *Hydroparastes*, spoken of by † *Epiphanius*, practised the same. It is true, it appears from || *Justin Martyr*, who sets down the particular Usages of the Church in his Time, in their publick Assemblies, and from * *Cyprian* and other Ancient Writers, that Water was mixt with Wine in the Sacrament, because they generally thought that Christ did so at the first Instituting and Administring of it. But this is not at all certain, for tho' they commonly diluted their Wine in those Countries, yet it doth not follow thence, that Christ on this peculiar Occasion did the like. And besides, tho' in those hot Climates they generally temper'd their Wine with Water, and accordingly some of the Primitive Christians did so at the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, yet we can't inferr thence that we are oblig'd to take up that Usage in these cooler Countries. Wherefore there is no Ground for that Injunction of the Council of *Trent*, (to which the *Papists* pay Obedience) to mix the Sacramental Wine with Water: there is no kind of Necessity for such a Practice.

* *The 63d.*

† Hæres. 46.

|| Ἀρ[illegible] [illegible], [illegible] [illegible], [illegible] [illegible]. Apolog.

* Lib. 2. Epist. 3.

Much less is there for that of the *Moscovites*, who administer with Wine mingled with warm Water, tho' they are pleas'd to say that it represents the Water that came forth with the Blood from Christ's Side. And here I might take notice of another foolish and unwarrantable Custom of those People, and that is, the mingling the Bread and Wine with that warm Water. These they put together in a Chalice, and so distribute them together in a Spoon. Which is directly contrary to the first Institution, which requires the Bread and the Wine in the Eucharist, to be deliver'd and taken distinctly and separately. Therefore the *dipping* of the Bread into the Wine, which was heretofore † us'd by some Christians, and had its rise at first from the practice of indulging some sick Persons, who could not swallow down the dry Bread, and therefore had leave to moisten a Portion of it; and the other Practices before-mention'd are Aberrations from the plain and simple Usage of the first Christians at their Communions, wherein Wine and Bread, without any Alterations, Additions or Mixtures, were made use of.

† Gratian. Decret, p. 3. de Consec. Dist. 2.

I have only this to add, under this first General Head, that these are *Common* Elements, and therefore the fitter for the purpose to which they were designed, for this Sacrament (as well as the other) was Instituted for *all Nations*; it was Christ's Will that all true Converts, in every Part of the World, should partake of this Communion. Wherefore it was requisite that the Materials of it should be such as all Countries afford; and such are these that our Lord hath appointed to be made use of in the Eucharist: They are *generally* to be had in most of the habitable Regions of the Earth. But where there is no *Corn*, that Fruits of the Earth is to be made use of in the Sacrament, which is used in those Parts, instead of Corn. So where there is no *Wine*, that Liquor is to

be us'd which is drunk in that Place instead of Wine. For *Wine* doth not always import the Juice or Liquor of Grapes, but there is *Wine* of other Things, as of the *Palm-Tree*, and the Fruit of *other Trees* in other Countries, as those that have writ of those Places acquaint us. And perhaps that which we call *Ale*, was many Hundred Years ago call'd * *Barly-Wine*. As for such as never drink Wine, but abhorr it, they may use that Liquor they can drink. In short, *Calvin* hath rightly determin'd, that in the want of Bread and Wine other proper Materials may be used in this Sacrament. The Reason and Analogy of Christ's Institution are observ'd by this, and his general Design in appointing the Eucharist, is kept up in this Way, because it was his Pleasure to represent hereby the Spiritual Food and Repast, by that which is Corporal. This being the main Scope of this Holy Feast, it is evident, that in the Absence of Bread and Wine, the Spiritual Eating and Drinking may be set forth in the use of other Things that supply the Place of Bread and Wine. So much for the Elements themselves.

* Οἶνος κριθίνος. Diodor. Sic.

Secondly, I'm to shew, what are the *Actions* and *Rites* us'd about them, when Christ Instituted and administer'd this Sacrament, and consequently to be used in the celebrating of it by all his Followers. These are thus recorded by St. *Matthew*, *Jesus took Bread, and blessed it, and gave it to the Disciples, and said, Take, eat. And he took the Cup, and gave Thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of this*, chap. 26. v. 26, 27. The first Act is *blessing the Elements*, for *taking the Bread*, and *taking the Cup*, were but in order to this. I reckon therefore this as the leading Act; and here we see it is doubly express'd, namely, by *Blessing* and *giving Thanks*. And to shew that these are the same, St. *Luke* (as well as St *Matthew*) applies *giving Thanks* to the *Bread*, chap. 22. ver. 19. tho' St. *Mark* expresses it by *Blessing*. Thus likewise in the Apostle's Style we shall find, that εὐλογεῖν and εὐχαριστεῖν are of the same Signification, as in 1 *Cor.* 14. 16. what is call'd *Blessing* in the beginning of the Verse, is call'd *giving of Thanks* in the end of it. And indeed the Word in the *Syriack*, (which Tongue our Saviour and the Apostles spoke) signifies both *to Bless* and to *give Thanks*; for which Reason the Evangelists and Apostles have express'd it by both. Particularly, when the Apostle calls the *Cup* in the Lord's Supper, *the Cup of Blessing*, 1 *Cor.* 10. 16. it is as much as if he had call'd it *the Cup of Thanksgiving*; it being thought probable that he alludes to the *Gratulatory Cup* used among the *Jews*, call'd in *Psal.* 116. 13. *the Cup of Salvation*, which was the Drink-Offering of Praise and Thanks in the Temple, after some great Deliverance. Or rather, I conceive it referrs to the *Benedictory Cup used in Families* on solemn Occasions, for the Master of the House took into his Hand, not only Bread, but a Cup of Wine in the close of the Dinner or Supper, and blessing them, distributed them among the Guests. The Apostle's *Cup of Blessing* was taken from this Practice, and succeeded in the room of it. When Christ instituted this Sacrament, He took Bread, and he took Wine, and by a solemn Benediction set them apart to a Holy Use.

This Action is *still* absolutely necessary in the administring of this Sacrament, for as Christ blessed the Elements, so must the Ministers of the Gospel; for by this *Blessing* the Elements are chang'd from their common Use. I do not say, from their common Nature and Substance, for the Bread and Wine after the Blessing, remain Bread and Wine; but all the Change that is made in them is *Sacramental*, that is, as to their *Use*. The meaning is, they have after the Blessing, a Holy, Spiritual and Sacramental Use. But when the *Use* of the Elements ceases, they seem to be no longer Sacred or Sacramental; wherefore that superstitious regard to the Remainder of the Bread and Wine, which some are wont to shew, is not allowable. And I question whether they take Care about the Water in the Font, after Baptism is over; and yet that Element was Sacramentally Holy, as well as the Bread and Wine. I approve of the decent disposing of both (as our Church enjoins,) but we are to know that it is the *Blessing* that makes them what they are, that is, Holy; and that Blessing extends only to the *Use* of them; and consequently those Materials of the Sacrament which are not made use of, are not Holy.

The Second Action in the Administring of this Supper, is *breaking of the Bread*. Which is not only for Distribution (for the Bread being made in Cakes, in those first Times, it was requisite to break it into several Pieces, before it was

was used) but for Signification, for this *breaking* is attributed to the Body of Christ, *This is my Body, which is broken for you.* The *Papists* omit this Action, and give the Wafer whole, and so do the *Lutherans*; but herein they swerve from our Saviour's Example, and from the constant Practice of the Church in the Apostles Times, as we see in the *Acts*, where the whole Sacrament is call'd *breaking of Bread*, *Acts* 2. 42.--20. 6. It is plain then that this is requisite; especially seeing it was design'd to signify the Body of Christ broken for us, as appears from the express Words before-mention'd. *Fraction* then is not (as some imagine) an indifferent Circumstance, but is a necessary Act, and cannot be omitted in the Administration of the Lord's-Supper.

Some reckon the *pouring out of the Wine* as a Third Act; but it is not expressly mention'd in the Institution. Yet it seems to be imply'd in *taking the Cup*, for when Christ took the Cup into his Hand, it is probable that by himself, or by some other, the Wine was poured out of another Vessel into it. Hence the *Effusion* of the Wine in the Sacrament hath been a Practice among Christians. And 'tis certain that this, and the breaking of the Bread do conduce to the strengthning and confirming of our Faith, and promoting in us this comfortable Assurance, that Christ was as certainly crucified for us, and his Body broken and pierced, and his Blood shed out of it, as we see the Bread broken, and the Wine poured out.

The Fourth Act (and which is unquestionable) is the distributing of the Elements to the Communicants, for 'tis expressly said, that Christ *gave* the Bread, and *gave* the Cup to them. And when 'tis said, *Take* and *Drink*, it is implied that Christ himself dispens'd both the Bread and Cup to the Apostles, for they were to take the Bread, and drink the Wine given to them from his Hand. Wherefore those who give it about to one another, seem to act contrary to the Primitive Practice. But some alledge, *Luke* 22. 17. to disprove this, where it is said, *Christ took the Cup, and gave Thanks, and said, Take this and divide it among your selves.* Whence they inferr, that it is according to Christ's Appointment that the Communicants should serve themselves with Bread and Wine, which are set on the Table for that end, and consequently the Minister's breaking the Bread and giving it and the Wine to the Communicants, is not according to the Primitive Pattern. But if we consult the Place, we shall find, that it speaks not of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, nor particularly of the Eucharistick Cup, but only of the first Cup of Wine that was drank at the ordinary Meal. This must be granted, unless we hold that there was a double Cup deliver'd at the Lord's Supper, and that they drank twice of the Sacramental Wine; for in the next Verse but one it is expressly recorded, That Christ *took Bread and gave it* to his Apostles, and also *the Cup*, and it is added, that he did this *after Supper*, to let us know, that this Cup belong'd to the *Sacrament*, which was after the *Paschal and Ordinary Supper*, and therefore was distinct from the Cup which was mention'd before, and which our Saviour bid *them divide among themselves.* But tho' he deliver'd the Bread and Wine into every particular Man's Hand, yet it doth not appear that he spake those Words, *Take, Eat, &c.* to every particular Communicant separately and apart, when he deliver'd the Bread and Wine into their Hands.

But it will be ask'd perhaps, Did Christ give the Bread and Wine to himself, before he gave it to the Apostles? I answer, it is probable, that he did eat of the Bread which he broke, and drank of the Cup which he gave to others. For (as I have said) this Action was in Imitation of the Master of the Household among the *Jews*, who, at the end of the Supper, used to partake himself of that Bread and Wine which he distributed to the Guests. Several of the Ancient * *Fathers* expressly assert, That Christ first drank himself of the Wine which he gave to his Disciples, and the *Schoolmen* defend it. Most of the *Protestant* Writers, as well as *Papists*, hold that Christ eat of the Bread and drank of the Wine at that Supper. I must needs say, that 'tis somewhat hard for those that affirm that the Bread and Wine in the Sacrament are turn'd into Christ's Body and Blood, to assert this, for then our Saviour took his own Body into his Hands, and gave it to himself, and he did eat his own Body, and yet his Body continu'd as it was. This is very harsh, yea absurd; but *Protestants* (who intangle not themselves in such Absurdities) may safely and on good Grounds affirm, that

* Irenæus, Jerom, Chrysostom, *&c.*

that Christ himself did eat and drink of the Bread and Wine which he gave to his Disciples; for from the History it self we may gather, that he drank of the Wine, for when he saith, *I will not drink henceforth of this Fruit of the Vine*, *Mat.* 26. 29. it is to be concluded thence that he did *before* partake with them of that Element at the Sacrament. And if he did so, 'tis not be doubted that he was Partaker with them of the other also, tho' 'tis not expressly mention'd.

* *Dr* Jackson. What is suggested to the contrary by a very * Learned Writer of our own, hath but little Force in it, for he gives this Reason why he thinks our Saviour receiv'd not the Sacrament with his Disciples; namely, because he had no Sins to be remitted by it. But this is a mistaken Notion concerning Christ's Eating and Drinking of the Bread and Wine in the Sacrament, for this Author might as well argue against our Saviour's partaking of the other Sacrament, that is, of *Baptism*, because he had no Sins to be forgiven, seeing Baptism was a Sign and Seal of the Pardon of Sins. But tho' it was so to others, yet it doth not follow that it was so to our Saviour; and we are sure it was not. So 'tis here, tho' the use of this Sacrament of the Lord's Supper doth import Remission of Sins to others, yet there is no Reason to imagine it had any such Aspect when our Lord was pleas'd to make himself a Guest at his own Table. But as he honour'd and consecrated the Sacrament of Baptism in his own Person, so he vouchsafed to Honour and Sanctify this of the Holy Communion in the same manner, that is, by partaking of it himself.

Having thus spoken of those *Actions* and *Rites* which were perform'd by Christ in the celebrating of this Sacrament, and which are likewise to be observ'd by all the *Ministers* of the Gospel on the same Occasion, I come in the next Place to consider those Actions which are to be perform'd by the Communicants, whether Ministers or People; they are *taking*, *eating*, and *drinking*. First, *taking* is according to Christ's Injunction, for 'tis expressly said, *Take*. And accordingly the Disciples took the Bread and Wine from the Hand of our Saviour; and all Communicants are to do the like from the Hands of the Ministers and Pastors. In Opposition to which the Church of *Rome* suffers not the People to take the Bread into their Hands, but the Priests put it into their Mouths; whereas Christ did not so, as is evident from what hath been said, and also from the way and manner of their lying down or leaning at their Meals. And the Ancient Church did not so, as appears from the Writings of St. *Chrysostom*, *Nazianzen*, *Basil*, *Augustine*, and other Fathers, who testify that the Eucharist was deliver'd into the Hands of the People who Communicated. But the Church of *Rome* varies from the Primitive Practice, and their Priests put the Wafer into the People's Mouths, and suffer them not to touch it with their Hands. Why? Because they think the Laity are unworthy to handle it. But our Saviour, who knew what was fittest to be done, commands us to *take it*, and thence we may justly censure the Folly and Superstition of the *Roman* Church in this Matter.

Taking is in order to *Eating* and *Drinking*, and therefore I am to pass to them next. The *Pope* hath a Way of Drinking the Sacramental Wine, different from all others; † he touches not the Chalice with his Lips, but sucks certain Gulps out of it with a Quill. But there was very early in the Church a Miscarriage more blameable than this, for some of the Ancient Christians, out of the Superstitious Reverence they bore to the Sacramental Elements, did not eat and drink them at the Time of the Communion, but reserv'd them. Especially the keeping of the consecrated *Bread* in a Box was in use among them; and thence the Papists do so, and sometimes carry it up and down in Procession. And so the carrying it to the *Sick and Infirm* was an old Practice, for in the Times of Persecution under the Heathen Emperors, a Presbyter not being to be had when they pleas'd to deliver the Sacrament, they that were present at the Eucharist, were wont to eat part of the Bread, and to carry part of it Home, and to send it to the Sick and Absent as they saw Occasion. This we learn from *Tertullian* and *Cyprian*, and it grew into a Custom, and was used afterwards in Peaceable Times; and so at last it came to be the Practice of the *Romanists*, notwithstanding its being abrogated by * Two Councils. And there was very good Reason it should be so, namely, because he who instituted the Sacrament, did not say, *Take and reserve it*, but *Take, eat*, that is, at the time, when the Bread was deliver'd.

† Sacr. Ceremon. lib. 2. cap. 14.

* Cæsaraugustan. & Toletan.

And

And then we are to take Notice, that we are bid to *eat and drink*: These two must go together, and must never be separated in this Sacrament. The Bread must be eaten, and the Wine drank. So Christ commands expresly in the Gospels, and so the Apostle *Paul*, when he repeats our Saviour's Institution; and so all the Christian Churches practis'd for twelve hundred Years, till the Roman Church deviated from this receiv'd Custom, and brought in the Communion in one kind, perfectly in Defiance of the Holy Scripture, and all Antiquity. Which occasion'd those remarkable Words of a Learned and Moderate Man of the Roman Communion, * "Why do we not agree, saith he, "in that Rite which Christ hath instituted, which the Apostles deliver'd, "which the Universal Church hath held so many Ages, and which the whole "Eastern, especially the famous Ethiopick Church retains to this very Day?

* Cassander *de Commun. sub utraq; Specie.*

Thirdly, I proceed to shew what is mystically and spiritually *signify'd* by the *Elements* in the Lord's Supper, and the *Actions* that belong to them. And this we may know, by considering the Words which our Lord adjoins to the Rites and Actions, *Mat.* 26. 26, 28. and *Mark* 22. 22, 24. *This is my Body.* — *This is my Blood of the* New Testament *which is shed for many*: Or, according to another Evangelist, *This is my Body which is given for you.* — *This Cup is the* New Testament *in my Blood, which is shed for you*, Luke 22. 19, 20. or according to the Apostle, *This is my Body which is broken for you.* — *This Cup is the* New Testament *in my Blood*, 1 Cor. 11. 24, 25. We see, that all the Evangelists that speak of the Institution of the Lord's Supper, and the Apostle St. *Paul*, who *receiv'd it of the Lord*, calls the Sacramental Bread Christ's *Body*, and the Wine *the Blood of the* New Testament or *Covenant*, (as it might more properly be render'd) or the *New Testament* or *Covenant in his Blood*, which latter it is likely is an Allusion to the *Covenants* which heretofore were made with *Blood*, Exod. 24. 28. Heb. 9. 10. So the *New Covenant*, or Gracious Discovery made by the Gospel, is ratified by *Christ's Blood*, and this Blood is here represented by *Wine*, the chearing Blood of the Grape, as his Body is by *Bread*, the solid Food of Man.

But there is no Dispute at all about those Words, my *Body* and my *Blood*, for all agree, that Christ's real Body and Blood are here meant. But the Great Controversy is about these two Words, *this* and *is*; that is, what is meant by *this*, and what is meant by *is*, when 'tis said, *This is my Body*, &c. As to the former, the Pronoun *this*, *Carolostadius*, a German Divine, who was one of the first that disputed against the Corporal Presence, held, That when Christ said, *This is my Body*, he pointed not to the *Bread*, but to Himself. But this is a singular Opinion, and hath no Foundation at all; for there is not the least Intimation, that our Saviour pointed to Himself; but it is clear in the Text, that he is speaking of the *Bread*; for we are told expresly, That he *took Bread, and blessed it*, and brake it, and gave it to the Disciples, and said, Take, eat; namely, the *Bread*: And then it immediately follows, *This is my Body*; from whence it is most evident, that *this* hath relation to the *Bread*, and can referr to Nothing else. The plain Construction of the Words carries it. Notwithstanding this, the Church of *Rome* holds, that it referrs not to *Bread*, but is to be interpreted concerning the *Substance contain'd under the Accidents of Bread*. That is their Way of speaking; and if you ask them what that *Substance* is, they answer, That it is *the Body of Christ*. So that according to them, *this is my Body*, is as much as, *This my Body is my Body*; which Language is unworthy of our Saviour, because it is so irreconcileable to good Sense and Reason. Besides, *this* could not referr to Christ's Body, for that was not at that Time chang'd, and under the Accidents of Bread, and therefore the Interpretation of the Popish Writers is groundless.

Others, not of the Roman Communion, have another Notion concerning the Pronoun *this*, and make it referr to *take*, *eat*, and interpret it thus, This taking and eating denote, my Body, or the Communication of my Body. So Doctor *Hammond* in his *Annotations* on *Mat.* 26. 26. And his Reason for this Exposition is, because the Pronoun τοῦτο being a Neuter, can't have Reference to ἄρτος, which is Masculine. But there are abundant Instances of this way of speaking in the Greek, as I have shew'd in my Discourse of *Baptism*, and therefore we have no Reason to boggle at it here. Τοῦτο is taken τεχνικῶς, as they say, or *Materially*, as others speak; it is as much as *this thing*; and this manner of Speech is usual in all Languages. *Bread* then, being the Thing which our Saviour

Saviour is here speaking of, and is holding in his Hand, and giving to his Apostles, it is not to be question'd but by *this* is meant *Bread*. We can't demur to this, if we read 1 *Cor.* 11. 26, 27. where the Apostle explains our Saviour's Words, and interprets *this* by *this Bread*, and the other *this* by *this Cup*. Wherefore every unprejudic'd Man cannot but by *this* in both Places understand what Christ held then in his Hand, and that was the *Bread* first, and then the *Wine*.

But the greatest Stir and Contention is about the Copulative Verb *is*, that is, what Christ means when he pronounces concerning the *Bread*, that it *is* his Body, and concerning the *Wine*, that it *is* his Bloud. This is the main Query, How, and in what Sense the Bread and Wine in this Sacrament are said *to be* the Body and Bloud of Christ. Here Papists and Protestants are divided: The Former understand the Word *is*, so as to make it the Ground of their Doctrine of *Transubstantiation*. According to them *is* signifies the *Change* of the Elements into the Body and Bloud of Christ; and so that which was Bread, or was Wine before the Consecration, becomes immediately after it the real and substantial Body or Bloud of Christ. *This is my Body* is equivalent, they say, with *This is chang'd into my Body*. But the Doctrine of *Transubstantiation*, which is founded on this Interpretation of the Words, is so absurd and irrational, when it comes to be examin'd and look'd into, that for the sake of this, any unprejudic'd Man must be forc'd to reject the Interpretation it self.

Next, we are to enquire how the *Reformed* Churches interpret this Word *is*, which joins *this* and Christ's *Body* and *Bloud*, and whether any Real Presence of his Body and Bloud in the Sacrament is to be founded on this Place. *Luther* and his Followers understood it so as to build their *Consubstantiation* upon it, which necessarily includes in it a Corporal Presence. But this is in some Respects as unreasonable and absurd a Doctrine as that other of *Transubstantiation*; especially the *Ubiquity* of Christ's Body is repugnant to and inconsistent with the very Nature of a Body, and therefore is not to be allow'd of. It is true, *Melanchton*, who was a Person of great Moderation and Temper, held a *Corporal* Presence, and others of great Note about that time in *Germany* acknowledg'd the same, they having but just begun to reform. And tho' they had a Desire to see *Consubstantiation* discarded, yet they thought 'twas best to proceed gradually. They held a *Substantial Presence*, that they might not be censured for going too fast, and too far. They knew, that if they were too much on the Extreme, it would be the harder to gain their Point. Or, it may be, it was their very Sentiment and hearty Perswasion, having at that time attained no further.

Calvin subscrib'd to the *Auspurg Confession*, which saith, Christ's Body is truly, really, and substantially present in the Sacrament. And in his Writings he saith as much, and declares it to be his Opinion, That the Body or Flesh of Christ is * truly taken and eaten in the Sacrament. But tho' he *seems*, in using such Terms, to hold a *Corporal Presence* in the strict Sense; yet, when we come to examine it, it is only in a *Spiritual Sense*. The Body of Christ is said to be in the Eucharist, because Christ is receiv'd by *Faith* there. It is certain, that the Body of Christ moves not from its Place, that is, Heaven; therefore it can't be in other Places, much less in ten Thousand Places at once; but it is mystically and spiritually present in all those Places at one time; and that mystical and spiritual Presence is a True and Real Presence. Thence the Renowned *Calvin* hath these Words in his *Institutions*, "Christ is really and truly offer'd to us in this Holy Ordinance, for "saving Nourishment to our Souls, that we may be made one with him, "and quickned by Vertue of his Flesh, which is wrought by the secret and "mighty Power of the Holy Ghost, which can unite Things that are distant "in Place". And *Calvin*'s Disciples were all ready to grant, that not only the Bread and Wine are really receiv'd by the Communicants, but likewise that the Body and Bloud of Christ are truly and really present, and receiv'd by Faith, the Spiritual Mouth. Thus *Beza* interpreted his Master *Calvin*, and asserted only a Spiritual Presence, that is, by Faith.

* *Dicimus Christum tam extremo symbolo quàm spiritu suo ad nos descendere, ut verè substantiâ carnis suæ & sanguinis sui animas nostras vivificet.* And again, *In sacrâ suâ Cœnâ jubet me sub symbolis panis ac vini corpus & sanguinem suum sumere, manducare & bibere: Nihil dubito quin & ipse verè porriget, & ego recipiam.* Institut. l. 4. cap. 17.

Our Church follows *Calvin*, and seems (as he) at the first View, to hold, that there is a Corporal Presence of Christ in the Sacrament; She also having receiv'd

receiv'd that Notion from the *Auspurg Confession*, in which several *German* Divines (among whom *Melanchton* was the Chief) assert in express Words the Bodily Presence. Our Church uses Words that approach to such a Sense, as when she saith in her *Catechism*, [The Body and Bloud of Christ are *verily* and *indeed* taken and receiv'd by the Faithful in the Lord's Supper.] And hence the real and substantial Presence of our Saviour's Body in the Sacrament hath been held by some Church of *England* Divines of great Note; as Bishop *Andrews*, Bishop *Bilson*, Archbishop *Laud*, Bishop *Mountague*, Bishop *Overall*, Bishop *Taylor*, Bishop *Cousins*. So Doctor *Kenn* (sometime Bishop) in his *Catechism* asserts, the Real Presence, and solves it by God's Omnipotence; and some others have trod in his Steps. But when we come to examine the real Sense of *our Church* about this Matter, we find that we are not to interpret her Words in that manner which some have done; yea, we find that she utterly rejects the *Real Presence* of Christ's Body in the Sacrament, as it signifies a *Corporal Presence*. And as for those Words before cited out of our *Church Catechism*, it is plain that they are misunderstood, because those that make use of them do not mind how they are brought in; namely, by way of Answer to that Question, *What is the inward Part or Thing signified of the Lord's Supper?* Now, 'tis certain, that the real Body and Bloud of Christ, properly taken, are not an *inward part*, but an outward one; wherefore it can't be meant of the natural Body and Bloud of Christ. The *Bread* and *Wine*, which are visible and corporeal, are the *outward Part and Sign* of the Lord's Supper, as is said in the Catechism before: Therefore the *Inward Sign* must be something that is invisible and spiritual. And consequently the *Body* and *Bloud* of Christ, as they denote his more visible and carnal Part, cannot be understood here, but only the spiritual Benefits accruing to us by his Body and Bloud.

And that this is the true Meaning of those Words in the *Catechism* is clear from this, that our Church saith, The Body and Bloud of Christ are verily and indeed taken *by the Faithful*, and by them only in her 29th *Article*, *Believers only eat the Body of Christ in the Lord's Supper*. Which makes it very evident, that when 'tis said, that the Body of Christ is *verily* and *indeed* taken in the Sacrament, it must be understood of taking and eating it by Faith. Thus Christ's Body is *really* present, and *truly* eaten in the Lord's Supper; but *really* and *truly* denote no more than *mystically* and *spiritually*. That this is the Sense of our Church, and that she holds not a Corporal Presence, is apparent from what the Reverend Bishop *Burnet* records in his *History of the Reformation*, that there was in King *Edward* the 6th's Time an Addition to the 29th Article, which expressly declared against the *Real* or *Corporal Presence*. And the expunging of those Words in the Communion-Service (which the same Author mentions, and which was done in the same King's Reign) *The Body of our Lord Jesus Christ which was given for thee, preserve thy Body and Soul unto everlasting Life*: and those, *The Bloud of our Lord Jesus Christ which was shed for thee, preserve thy Body and Soul unto everlasting Life*, sufficiently argues the Averseness of the *Church of England* at that time to the Doctrine of the *Corporal Presence*, or any thing that looks that Way.

This is yet more clear from that express Declaration, now extant in our Liturgy at the close of the Communion Office, which was inserted into our Rubrick at the Return of King *Charles* the 2d; but is as old as King *Edward* the 6th's Time; for then it was in the Rubrick, but was left out when Queen *Elizabeth* came to the Crown, that none might be driven out of the Communion of the Church on that Account, as the foresaid Author tells us in his History of the Reformation. That Declaration (which every one may peruse, and therefore I do not here transcribe it) absolutely and directly condemns the Corporal Presence. And lastly, We may learn what is the Doctrine of the Church of *England* in this Point from her 28th Article, where there are these plain and perspicuous Words, *The Body of Christ is given and taken, and eaten in the Supper only after a heavenly and spiritual Manner: and the Means whereby the Body of Christ is receiv'd and eaten is Faith.* Now, it is certain, that as the Body of Christ is *given*, *taken*, and *eaten*, so it is *present* in the Lord's Supper; but it is *given*, *taken* and *eaten* in a Spiritual Manner only, and by the Help of Faith: Therefore it is *present* in the Lord's Supper in that Manner only, and not corporally.

porally. And as for some Passages unwarily dropt in the Writings of some of our Church, who seem to favour the other Opinion, we are to know this, that they cannot bear down the Sense of the *Articles* and *Liturgy* of the Church of *England*. Nay, we are to remember, that most of the *Martyrs* of the Church of *England*, some of whom were Bishops and Clergymen, in Queen *Mary's* Days, laid down their Lives in Denial of the *Real Presence* (among other Doctrines) and attested the contrary with their Bloud.

I think therefore, that instead of such Expressions as these used by several Persons [Christ's Body is *really* and *truly* present in the Sacrament, and is *really* and *indeed* taken there] it were better to change them for more inoffensive Ones, as that [Christ's Body is *Sacramentally* and *Spiritually* present, and is *Spiritually* and *Mystically* taken]. For tho' I grant that *really*, and *truly*, and *indeed* may be applied to the Spiritual and Sacramental Presence, forasmuch as this Presence is not a Fiction, but a Truth and Reality; yet, because these Words, the *real Presence*, have been generally made use of to signify the bodily and Fleshly Presence of Christ in the Eucharist, I conceive it is inconvenient to use those Terms. According to the most obvious and common Conception that People form of Christ's Body being *really present* in the Sacrament, it must be seen and felt by them: Otherwise, all our Arguments taken from *Sense*, which we use against the Papists to confute their Transubstantiation, are in vain. And seeing our Church hath professedly declared, That Christ's Body is *taken only after a Spiritual manner in the Lord's Supper*, we are obliged as we are of her Communion, to profess no other *Presence* or *Taking* in the Lord's Supper, but that which is *Spiritual*. We must acknowledge, that the Bread and Wine in the Sacrament are in a mystical and spiritual Sense the Body and Bloud of our Saviour, because they are made so by Faith. And if we hold otherwise, we approach to the *Lutheran* or *Popish* Doctrine about the Presence, and we fall into those Absurdities which we pretend to confute, when we set our selves against *Consubstantiation* or *Transubstantiation*: Both which suppose the bodily and carnal Presence of Christ in the Sacrament. It is by Faith, that the Bread and Wine become what they are in that Ordinance. This makes the breaking of the Bread, and the pouring out of the Wine, not to be a common breaking and effusion, but the spiritual breaking of the Body, and pouring out the Bloud of Christ. This makes the Eating and Drinking not to be a common Eating and Drinking, but the spiritual Eating and Drinking of Christ's Body and Bloud. The Result of all, is, That Christ himself, even as to his Body and outward Man is exhibited and offered in the Lord's Supper in a mystical Way, and by the Help of Faith.

Lastly, Christ's Body is not only *mystically* and *spiritually* present and eaten in this Sacrament, but it is present and eaten in a *Figurative* way. And so here I shall assign the true Meaning of the Verb Substantive *is*, and shew how the Bread in the Lord's Supper *is* the Body of Christ, and how the Wine *is* his Bloud. We must know then, that *this is my Body*, is a Figurative Speech, and is as much as *This is the Sign of my Body*, for *is* in this Place is the same with *signifies*. So *This Cup is my Bloud*, is to be understood figuratively, that is, *it signifies*, or *is a Sign of my Bloud*. This is sufficiently explain'd by the Apostle in 1 *Cor.* 10 16. *The Cup, is it not the Communion of the Bloud of Christ? The Bread, is it not the Communion of the Body of Christ?* That is, are not the Wine and the Bread a Sign or Representation of our communicating or partaking of the Body and Bloud of Christ, and for that Reason have the Denomination of *Body* and *Bloud*? This is a frequent way of speaking in Scripture, and therefore ought not to seem strange to us. *Is* is taken for *signifieth* in all these Places of Scripture that follow. In *Gen.* 41. 26, 27. it is said, the *seven Ears of Corn are seven Years*, that is, they signify Seven Years. In *Ezek.* 5. 5. *This is Jerusalem* is no more than, this signifies *Jerusalem*. In *Ezek.* 37. 11. *These Bones are the House of* Israel. is the same with, they represent the House of *Israel*. In *Dan.* 2. 38. *Thou art this Head of Gold* is equivalent to, Thou art signified by this Head of Gold.

But the most remarkable Texts in the *Old Testament*, which serve to my present Purpose, are those that speak of the Sacraments; as *Gen.* 17. 10. and *Ex.* 12. 11. For here we shall see there is the same Language used that is in the Institution of the Lord's Supper. In the former Text, God calls the Sacrament of

of Circumcision, which he enjoin'd to *Abraham* and his Posterity, his *Covenant*, and it is said, *This is my Covenant*, that is, it is a Sign and Seal of my Covenant which I make with *Abraham* and his Posterity. And so indeed we find it explain'd in the following Verse, where *Circumcising the Flesh of the Foreskin* is call'd *a Token of the Covenant*. In the latter Text, the eating of the Paschal Lamb (which was another Sacrament among the *Jews*) is call'd the *Passover*, and it is expressly said, *It is the Lord's Passover*, that is, it is a Sign or Symbol of the Passover; namely, the Angel's passing over the Houses that were mark'd with Bloud, whilest the Houses of the *Egyptians*, which were not so mark'd, were not passed over, but the First-born in them were destroy'd. That this is the Meaning of those Words, *It is the Lord's Passover*, is evident from *Ex.* 13. 9. where *Moses* speaking of the Paschal Lamb, and the Eating of it, saith, *It shall be for a Sign unto thee, and for a Memorial*. Which is easily applied to the great Evangelical Feast of the *Lord's Supper*, where the Bread is call'd Christ's *Body*, because it is a *Sign* and *Memorial* of it, as the Paschal Lamb was call'd the *Passover*, because it was a Sign and Remembrance of the Deliverance of the Israelites, when the Angel passed by their Houses, and did them no Harm. Thus we see this *Figurative* Speech is usual in the Scriptures of the *Old Testament*, that is, to call the Sign by the Name of the Thing signified.

And in the *New Testament* this same Figurative Way of speaking is often used, as in 1 *Cor.* 10. 4. *That Rock was Christ*, that is, it was a Type and Sign of Christ, *Gal.* 4. 24. *These are the Two Covenants*, that is, signifie and prefigure to us the two Covenants. And *v.* 25. *This* Agar *is Mount* Sinai, that is, it signifies and denotes Mount *Sinai*. Rev. 1. 20. *The Seven Stars are the Angels of the Seven Churches*, that is, represent the Angels or Pastors of those Churches. And *the seven Candlesticks are the seven Churches*, that is, signifie those Churches. Rev. 17. 9. *The seven Heads are seven Mountains*, that is, signifie them. Ver. 12. *The ten Horns are ten Kings*, that is, represent so many Kings or Sovereign Princes. And the like manner of Expression is in *ver.* 15. and 18. All which may convince us how frequent it is in the Holy Writings to use this sort of *Metonymy*, to put the thing signified instead of the Sign. And so it is here, the same Figure is made use of by our Saviour, and therefore his Words are not to be taken according to the Letter, but to be explain'd in a fit Sense; namely, that already mention'd. *This is my Body*, is no other than *this signifies my Body*. And we shall not be backward to interpret the Words thus, if we consider (what indeed is worth our considering) that there are more *Figures* than this one in the Words which Christ uses at the Sacrament. Witness what he saith concerning the other part of this Sacrament, *This Cup is the New Testament in my Bloud*. Where there is a double Figure, for *Cup* is put for what is contain'd in the Cup; and *Testament* is put for the Sign of the *New Testament* or Covenant. This is freely acknowledg'd by the *Papists* themselves: Why then might not Christ speak *Figuratively* in the former Part of the Institution of the Sacrament, since 'tis confess'd he did so in the latter? Unquestionably he did so in both, and did not speak strictly and proper. Wherefore we are not to understand him in a strict and proper Sense, but in an improper and Figurative one; especially seeing this is the common Style of Holy Writ. *Signs* there, are usually call'd by the Name of the *Thing signified*. The Scripture abounds with this manner of Expression.

And here now (after I have established the Sense of our Saviour's Words) it is very proper to take Notice of the *Analogy* between the Signs, and that which is signify'd by them; that is, the *Analogy* between the Elements of Bread and Wine, and the Body and Blood of Christ. Briefly take it thus: The *Bread* in the Sacrament fitly represents and signifies the *Body* of our Lord, and the Fitness may easily be discern'd from the *End*; for Bread is to *strengthen Man's Heart*, *Psal.* 104. 15. It is a substantial Food, and not unjustly call'd, *The Staff of Life*. Yea, All Things both Necessary and Convenient, appertaining to Man's Life, are comprized under the Name of *Bread* in that Petition in the Lord's Prayer, *Give us this Day our daily Bread*. This gives us a short but true Account why *Bread* is made the Symbol of our Saviour's *Body*. By this being broken on the Cross, and given for us, we subsist and are sustain'd. This is our Nourishment, and this is our Strength. This is the Support of humble Penitents, and from hence it is that we derive all our Comfort and Refreshment.

Thus in a plain and obvious manner, *Bread* is a fit Sign and Representation of Christ's *Body*.

And then as to the *Wine*, which is the other Element, and represents the *Bloud* of Christ, the Resemblance between them is plain. The Psalmist tells us in the forenamed Place, *That Wine makes glad the Heart of Man*: and his Son, the Royal Preacher, to the same Purpose, *Wine maketh merry*, *Eccl.* 10. 19. which compendiously expresses to us the excellent Use and Benefit of Wine. And the *Jewish Doctors* have a Saying to this Purpose: Wine hath two Virtues; it not only strengthens but exhilarates; whereas Bread strengthens, but doth not exhilarate. The Application is easy concerning the *Bloud* of Christ: The Effusion of that for our sakes, is Matter of the greatest Joy and Gladness. This administers the highest Occasion of Rejoycing, because it is the only Means of our obtaining the Pardon of our Sins; for *without the Shedding of this Bloud there is no Remission*. Our Saviour therefore had Reason to say, That *his Bloud was Drink indeed*, *John* 6. 55. It is that Drink which satisfies the Thirst of penitent Souls, and brings perfect Ease and Quiet to disturbed Minds, and refreshes the Spirits of weary, languishing and dejected Sinners; so that the Sight of their Sins, and the Terrors of Death and Hell cannot affright and dismay them. It is no Wonder, then, that *Bread* and *Wine* (which are such Strengthners and Cherishers) are made use of to * represent *Christ's Body* and *Bloud*.

* *In* Beracoth.

* *See the* Thanksgiving after the Lord's Supper *at the End of the* Psalms *in* English Metre, *where the Parallell between* Bread *and* Wine *and* Christ's Body *and* Bloud *broken and spilt, is set forth in a plain and familiar manner.*

But further, There is a more general Account to be given of this manner of Speaking, which is made use of to express the Holy Communion. We may observe, That in the Writings of the Old Testament *Spiritual* and *Divine Things* are usually set forth by *Meat* and *Drink*, by bodily Food and Refreshment. And accordingly the *Jews* call their *Law* the Food and Repast of Souls. And † *Maimonides* observes, That Eating and Drinking are applied by the Holy Writers to Religious Matters. And he tells us, That the *Jewish Rabins* use the same Phrase and manner of Speaking in their Writings. The Learned *Grotius* takes Notice of this, and quotes an excellent Jewish Author, who expresly saith, || *The Common and Bodily Eating, is a Symbol and Representation of that which is Spiritual and Mental; the Soul is nourished by the Reception of Good, and the Practice of what is Right*. It is not strange then that Christ expresses his Evangelical Benefits by Eating and Drinking, this being suitable to the *Jewish* manner of Speaking.

† *More Nevochim.*

|| Τὸ γὰρ φαγεῖν σύμβολόν ἐστι γεφυρῆς Ψυχικῆς, &c. Philo.

And this is so Natural and Significant a Way of Speaking, that the *Gentile* Philosophers and Wise Men expressed themselves after the same Rate. The Stoicks said of their Wise Man, That he did μετὰ τῶν Θεῶν ἑστιᾶσθαι, *Feast with the Gods*. According to *Epictetus* and *Arrianus*, the Vertuous and Good Man *is* συμπότης τῶν Θεῶν, *a Guest of the Gods*; he shall drink and be regal'd with them. There is * Good Chear in Wise and Vertuous Converse, saith a Great Moralist. And from other Good Authors it might be shew'd, That Words of *Repast* and *Entertainment* are made use of to express Moral and Divine Things. It is no Wonder therefore, that those which are Evangelical, are set forth by them.

* Εὐωχία ἐν τοῖς λόγοις. Theophrast.

And the very *Properties* of *Food* shew how accountable this is; for *Food* is incorporated into us, and becomes Bloud in our Veins and Arteries, Marrow in our Bones, and Flesh upon them, and is made one with us. Accordingly, when Christ bids us *eat* his Body, and *drink* his Bloud, it is signified thereby, that we are united to Him, and are, as it were, the same with Him. Every faithful Communicant is as truly and firmly joyn'd to Christ, as Food is incorporated into his Body. Again, It is the Property of Meat and Drink to repair the Body, and to give it Strength and Ability: And on that Account also they fitly represent the Nature of that Spiritual Repast which is in the Lord's Supper, whereby our Souls are nourished, our Graces renew'd, and our Inward Man strengthned. Moreover, Food is for Growth, as well as Nourishment, and so it denotes the Virtue of this Sacred Ordinance, whereby our Spiritual Endowments and Graces are not only strengthned, but increas'd and augmented.

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In short, we eat and drink for the Preservation of Life; and such is the Quality of this Spiritual Meat and Drink. *The Bread which I give, is my Flesh, which I give for the Life of the World*, John 6. 51. *Whoso eateth my Flesh, and drinketh my Blood, hath eternal Life*, ver. 54. *He that eateth of this Bread shall live for ever*, ver. 58. So plain and manifest is the *Analogy* between the Bread and Wine in the Sacrament and the Great Things that are signified by them. And thus I have dispatched the Third Thing I undertook, which was, To shew *what is mystically represented and signified by the Bread and Wine, and the Actions belonging to them in this Sacrament.* From the whole, It appears that *Zuinglius* was in the Right, who held only a *Mystical* and *Figurative Presence* of Christ in the Lord's Supper; that is, That the Bread and Wine are Symbols and Signs of Christ's Body broken for us, and his Blood shed for us; and as such are appointed by Christ to be Means and Instruments of conveying Spiritual Blessings to us in the right Administration of this Ordinance. And it further appears, That the *Socinians* are in the wrong when they so stiffly and peremptorily maintain, That the Lord's Supper is a * *bare Act* of Thankfulness, and that no Spiritual Benefit accrues to us by it; there is not any Collation of Grace that accompanies it. And they have the Confidence to say, That this is the *most pure Truth of the Gospel.*

* *Nobis in Cœnâ nihil conferri, sed nos esse qui per eam gratias Deo agimus, ipsissima est Evangelii & purissima veritas.* Smalc. Disput. 12. de Cœnâ.

Fourthly, I am next to insist upon the *End* and *Design* of this Sacrament, which is briefly comprized in those Words, *This do in Remembrance of me*, *Luke* 22. 19. Which Words of our Saviour were used twice; that is, Not only at the Delivering of the Bread, but of the Wine, as the Apostle St. *Paul* (who more particularly records the Words of the *Institution* of the Lord's Supper than some of the Evangelists had done) expressly tells us in 1 *Cor.* 11. 24, 25. And they are not only a Commission and Direction given to the Apostles to continue this Sacrament in the Church, to perform that afterwards to other Christians, which Christ had done to them; but they contain in them the true *End* and *Intent* of administring this Sacrament; namely, That it is to be a *Memorial* of Christ. *This do in Remembrance of me.* Which exactly answers to what *Moses* saith of the Jewish Sacrament, the *Passover* (in the Room of which succeeds the *Lord's Supper*) that it must be solemniz'd *for a Memorial*, Exod. 12. 14. that is, At this Solemnity the Jews were to *call to mind* their wonderful Deliverance out of *Egypt*. So we *Christians* have our Passover too, and as the Israelites kept their Paschal Feast *Lezicaron*, *for a Memorial*, so we must our εἰς ἀνάμνησιν, in *Remembrance*: And whom are we to *remember* but the Blessed Institutor and Founder of this Sacrament, who appointed this Ordinance on purpose that we may be reminded of his bitter *Sufferings* for us, and his unspeakable and transcendent *Love* to us, and all the *Blessings* that are conferr'd upon us by his Undertakings for us? Is it not *fit* that These Great and Amazing Things should be had in perpetual *Remembrance*? Is it not most *fit* that all Christians, to the End of the World, should call to Mind and solemnly commemorate them? And therefore these are the Three Things which I will briefly insist upon, for the manifesting the *Design of our Saviour's* instituting this Sacrament; which ought also to be *our Design* in celebrating it.

1. We must do it in Remembrance of the *Passion* and *Death* of our Lord Jesus Christ. Revolve in thy Thoughts, O pious Soul! the several Steps and Degrees of his Sufferings: Walk into the Garden, and there behold him in his Agony; see how he stain'd the Flowers with his bloudy Sweat! Think what thy Saviour underwent when he was hurried from one Tribunal to another. Go into the High-Priest's Palace and Judgment-Hall, and observe what unparallelled Affronts and Indignities he suffer'd, how he was reproach'd and revil'd, abused and injured. Ascend Mount *Calvary*, and there behold him rank'd among Malefactors, and hanging between Two Thieves. Behold his Hands and his Feet pierced and torn with Nails, his glorious Head cover'd with a Crown of Thorns, and his tender Side run through with a Spear. In short, imagine the excessive Pain and exquisite Torment which he underwent both in Body and Soul, especially in the latter, to so great an Extremity, that he cry'd out, *My God! my God! why hast thou forsaken me?* Thus are we to call to mind the Sufferings of Christ, and to endeavour to be affected with the

Thoughts of them, when we are imploy'd in the sacred Solemnity of the Eucharist. Those Mysteries are, as it were, Visible Sermons (as was said before) on our Saviour's Passion. In this solemn Office of our Religion, Christ is represented unto us Crucified. Here we behold the whole Tragedy that was acted upon the Cross. Here we view all the Circumstances of the *Jews* and *Roman* Soldiers barbarous Malice. These should be our Meditations when we see the Bread broken, and the Wine poured out. This is to do it in *Remembrance* of Christ, as the Apostle explains himself, in *ver.* 26. of that forenamed Chapter, *For as often*, saith he, *as ye eat this Bread, and drink this Cup, ye do shew the Lord's Death 'till he come*: You declare to the World, that you celebrate the Memory of Christ's *Death*, his ignominious and painful Death, which he suffer'd on the Cross, and that out of infinite *Love* to lost Sinners. And this leads me to the

2d. Particular; namely, The Infinite *Love* of Christ towards us, which was the Motive of his Suffering for us. And *this* we ought to *remember*, as well as the Passion it self. It was *this* that caused Him to take upon him the heavy Burthen of our Sins, which otherwise would have sunk us down into the bottomless Pit. Wherefore we are to mind this as often as we come to the Table of the Lord; we are to do it in Remembrance of his unspeakable and incomprehensible Love to us. We must never perform this Holy Duty without Admiration and Astonishment at the Thoughts of our Saviour's undeserved Compassion towards us, in that he laid down his Life to save ours, who had rebelled against him. How amazing is that which we read in *John* 3. 16? *God so* LOVED *the World that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting Life*: And in *Rom.* 5. 8. *God commended his* LOVE *towards us, in that while we were yet Sinners, Christ died for us.* This is the Commendation and Inhancement of Christ's Love and Free Grace; this is it which sets it forth, and gives it so great a Lustre. This therefore our Saviour designed in this Sacred Institution, that by those Outward and *Visible* Elements, and the Administration of them, we might be *reminded* of his Infinite Commiseration and Goodness towards us. For such is the evil Nature and corrupt Disposition of Man, that he is apt to *forget* his best Friends, and be *unmindful* of the greatest Benefits that ever he received; and hence it is that our Lord hath consulted our eternal Good by commanding us to solemnize these Sacred Rites in *Remembrance* of that immense *Love* which he expressed towards us in suffering for us, and even in the Effusion of his precious Bloud for us.

3. It was designed in the Instituting of this Sacrament, That we should remember the *Benefits* and *Privileges* which accrue to us by Christ's voluntary *Passion* and the *Love* which caus'd it. For 'tis to no purpose to commemorate these latter, if we forget the others. For the Death of Christ barely and abstractedly considered, carries not in it the Notion of a Benefit, but only so far as it was undertaken for our Good and Advantage, and as we have a sure Hope of injoying the happy Fruits of it. Alas! it will be little Comfort to recount the bare Historical Part of Christ's Passion, and there to make a Stop, and go no further. If there were no proceeding beyond this; if there were no passing from his Death to the *Fruits* and *Advantages* of it, we were in a miserable Condition. But blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, that we can view in the Crucifixion of our Lord, the vast Dimensions of its Merits, and consequently of the happy Effects of it. He was a Sacrifice for us; He offer'd Himself to God for our Sins. His Death was our Life. By His Stripes we are healed; by his Bloud we are redeemed. And therefore our Church saith, * *The Supper of the Lord is a Sacrament of our Redemption by Christ's Death.* By the Death of Jesus, which we commemorate in the Eucharist, we are justified and pardoned, we receive Grace to discharge our Duties, and Power to conquer our Sins. By this we have a Title to the Favour of God, and to an Inheritance in the Kingdom of Heaven. These are the Benefits we derive from Christ's Passion, and which are represented to us by the Holy Symbols in the Lord's Supper; and these are always to be call'd to Mind when we come to the Lord's Table. Thus I have shew'd what it is to *do it in Remembrance of Him*, and, consequently, what is the Great *End* and *Design* of this Sacrament.

* *Artic.* 28.

Fifthly,

Fifthly, I am to set down the *Qualifications* of those that are to be admitted to it. And this we learn from St. Paul, 1 Cor. 11. 27, 28, 29. *Whosoever shall eat this Bread, and drink this Cup of the Lord unworthily, shall be guilty of the Body and Blood of the Lord. But*, to prevent this, *let a Man examine himself, and so let him eat of that Bread, and drink of that Cup. For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily*, &c. If there be a receiving of this Sacrament *unworthily*, then there is also a *worthy receiving* of it, that is, a receiving it with those due Qualifications which are required of us. And we are more particularly told here, that *Self-Examination* is one of 'em. I will begin with this first, and then proceed to the other Properties and Qualifications which render us *worthy* Communicants. And because *Self-Examination* is more particularly and expressly mention'd as the *great* and *indispensible Duty* requir'd of us before we receive the Lord's-Supper, I shall be more particular and copious in the handling of this, than of any of the rest. This is a Duty required as well of those who come frequently to the Sacrament, as of those who never came before: tho' tis true it can't be expected it should be of equal Degree in both. But without doubt, the best Men have occasion to examine themselves and their Actions before they repair to this Holy Feast. Much more ought they who never were there, prepare themselves by *Self-Examination* before they come to it.

And here, that we may the better understand the Nature of this Religious and Christian Duty, let us take notice of the *Word* whereby it is express'd. We must know then that the Original word δοκιμάζειν hath a double Signification, for it signifies first to *prove*, or *try*, or *search*, as in 2 Cor. 13. 5. *Examine yourselves whether you be in the Faith, prove your own selves.* Here *examining* and *proving* are exegetical one of another. So in Eph. 5. 10. *Walk as Children of Light, proving what is acceptable to the Lord*, i. e. searching and enquiring what is acceptable to the Lord. This is the meaning of the Word in James 1. 12. *When he is tried, he shall receive the Crown of Life.* Secondly, This Word signifies also to *approve* and *allow* of a thing after trial made of it, as in Phil. 1. 10. *That ye may approve things that are excellent.* And so the Word is taken in Rom. 1. 28. *They did not like*, or approve of. So in Rom. 14. 22.—*in that thing which he alloweth.* And so the Passive δοκιμάζεσθαι is *to be allowed*, 1 Thes. 2. 4. And thence δόκιμος is *approved*, Rom. 14. 18. 1 Cor. 11. 19. Accordingly the Apostle's words may be read either of these ways, *Let a Man examine, search*, and *try himself*; or *let a Man allow* or *approve of himself, and so let him*, &c. or rather, *both* these Senses of the word are to be united, seeing *examining* is in order to *approving*. The *Self-Examination* then which the Apostle commends is such a Proving and Trying as is follow'd with Approbation. And that this latter is to be understood here, no less than the other, is clear from the Opposition of it to *unworthy eating and drinking*, ver. 27, and 29. So that the largest and most comprehensive meaning of the Apostle is this, Every Man that designs to be a Communicant at the Table of the Lord, must in the first place search and try himself, and that narrowly; and if after Examination he finds his State to be good, he must approve himself to God and his own Conscience, and with thankfulness and reverence approach to the Holy Communion. But I shall at present chiefly insist on the former Sense of the Words, because I will not recede from our own Learned Translators: and besides, if the Duty of *Self-Trial* or *Examination* be rightly practis'd, it will assuredly end in *Self-Approbation*. Here then I will undertake these Three Things, 1. I will give a particular and ample Account of the *Nature* of this Duty of *Self-Examination*. 2. I will shew *how* it is to be manag'd. 3. I will propound some *Motives* to excite us to the Performance of it.

First, As to the Nature and Quality of this Duty, it will be discover'd in these following Particulars.

First, Examination or Searching supposes a serious Pausing, and an Arresting of ourselves. We must resolve to stop and check our selves, in order to the taking Account of our Principles and Persuasions, our Carriage and Behaviour. This is the first Step to a Religious and Holy Life. But because it is rather the Ground-work of *Self-Examination* than any part of it, I will pass to

The

The Second Particular. Religious Examination or Trying of our selves, is a *reflex* Act of the Mind; it is that whereby we turn our Eyes backward, and take a View of what is past, and survey what is now in Action. We call our Sins to Remembrance, and run over the whole Course of our Lives, and make all Things appear before us as present. That Man who examines himself, looks into his former Life, and rifles all his Actions, and puts such Questions as these to himself, What have I been doing? Wherein have I fail'd and offended? What am I now doing? And why do I thus? If I can't justifie my Actions, why do I persist in them? Doth my Conscience tell me, that I am in such a State as I am content to die in?

Thirdly, Examination or Tryal of our selves is a *considerative* Act, and contains in it Attention and Advertency. Alas! it is the Want of these that is the great Cause of Mens Ruin and Destruction. Incogitancy makes them run headlong into Vice, and take no Notice of their Condition, though it be never so dreadful and desperate. It is true, the Soul of Man is pregnant with Notions, and hath a Treasure of useful Principles lodg'd in it: But they must be call'd up, and rouzed, and fetch'd forth by Self-Examination; which awakens the Mind of Man, and opens its Eyes, and then fixes them upon Objects which are truly worthy of them.

Fourthly, This Examination or Spiritual Search, is a *deliberative* Act, that whereby we seriously consult what to do. And this naturally follows on the Three former; for if we check our selves, and reflect on our former Doings, and consider what is our Condition, we shall forthwith deliberately consult about amending our Lives; we shall with Choice and Freedom embrace the Ways of Godliness, and study to please God.

Fifthly, This Examination I am speaking of is a *calm* and *serene* Act, of the Soul, and not carried on by Passion and Heat. It is a quiet and sedate Work, and there is no Rashness and Headiness in it. This must needs be so, because Self-Examination is a repeated Act. One single Scrutiny will not suffice, but we must frequently call our selves to an Account, and be often imploy'd in inquiring into our State and Condition. In those Days when the Apostle gave this Advice concerning *Self-Examination*, the Christians received the Sacrament every Day almost, at least every Lord's Day, and therefore a constant Examination is here imply'd.

Sixthly, This Self-Examination is an *impartial* and *exact* Search. A general Survey of our selves will not suffice; but we must be very particular and curious. As,

1. We must narrowly inquire into our *Principles of Knowledge*; we must examine well our Notions, Sentiments, and Opinions. For these have a constant Influence on our Practice; yea, indeed, all our Practice is regulated by these. We must therefore set our selves to examine whether we have not imbibed ill Principles, and suck'd in pernicious Persuasions. We must inquire whether we have shook off our Prejudices, and clear'd our Consciences of Error; and whether our Judgment be rightly informed. The Time was when in some Churches Infants and Children were admitted to the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, and the *Greek* and *Armenian* Churches do the same at this Day. But we justly dissent from them in this Practice, because it is necessary in order to our being fit and worthy Communicants, that we *discern the Lord's Body*, 1 *Cor.* 11. 29. which can't be done by those that are not come to Years of Understanding and Discerning. It is absolutely requisite that we have a competent Knowledge of the Nature of the Lord's Supper; that we understand what are the Properties of it. Unless we be sufficiently acquainted with these Things, we must not dare to approach these Sacred Mysteries. Here therefore is Matter of our *Examination*: And we are further to take an Account of our selves as to all the other Matters of *Knowledge* with respect to Religion. We must examine whether we be grounded in the Faith of Jesus, and in all the great Fundamentals of Christianity.

It is required of every one that comes to the Lord's Table, That he examine his *Affections*, and the Inward *Disposition* of his Soul: Whether Pride or Envy, or carnal Lust, or Love of the World, or Anger and Passion, or any other vile Inclination reigns in him. But more-especially he is concerned to search

ſearch into his Deſigns and Intentions, and to ask himſelf, what Ends he carries on; what he aims at moſt in the general Courſe of his Life. For our *Intentions* are the great Engines which ſet us on work; theſe are the main Springs we move and act by. We muſt inquire whether we be Upright and Sincere, whether we have that Reality and Integrity to vouch us which are the conſtant Attendants of True Chriſtians. This is that we muſt chiefly examine; and we muſt remember, That if *we* do not, none elſe can. No Man hath a Window into our Hearts: no, not our Superiors and Governours, who have a Power over us in other Things; but they can't ſtretch their Juriſdiction thus far. They have to do only with our Outward Actions; they may force us to external Exerciſes of Religion; they may fright and ſcare us by their Puniſhments, into ſome viſible Compliances with Vertue, but the inward Inclinations and Tendencies of our Minds are hid from them; theſe are out of their Cognizance, and above their Laws. It concerns us therefore to take care of theſe, that they be right and ſincere. We are to be true to our own Souls, and not to mock God or Men. There are antient Canons of Councils, that forbid *Stage-Players* to come to the *Euchariſt*. But we are to know, that every *Hypocrite* is ſuch a one (and ſo indeed the *Greek* Word for a *Hypocrite* ſignifies) he doth but act a a Part, he perſonates another Man, he is not what he ſeems to be. Such a one muſt not preſume to approach thoſe Sacred Myſteries. And eſpecially we muſt examine our Intentions and Ends in coming thither, that it be not out of mere Cuſtom, or to keep up our Credit and Repute, or for any other ſiniſter Deſigns.

3. This Self-Examination hath reſpect not only to our Principles, our Affections, and our Intentions, but likewiſe to our *Actions*, and the whole Tenour of our Lives. It is neceſſary we ſhould take Notice of every Miſdemeanor and Delinquency, that we ſhould look into thoſe Failings and Miſcarryings which our particular Callings and Imployments have occaſion'd us to be expos'd to. For our different way of Converſe in the World makes us liable to different and various Temptations. Again, Every Man is to take an Account of thoſe Vices, which he is moſt frequently ſubject to, thoſe which he finds he is moſt commonly maſter'd by, and which generally are as dear to him as himſelf. This is properly for a Man to *examine himſelf*. Further, We are to ſearch into our ſecret Sins, and thoſe which the Eye of the World takes no Notice of. And becauſe they are thus remote from the Sight of Men, we are more peculiarly concern'd to make a narrow Search into them, and to call our ſelves to an Account for them, remembring this, that Darkneſs and Privacy will not ſhelter us from the All-ſeeing Eye of the Omniſcient God. Moreover, We are to call our ſelves to an Account for our Sins of daily Incurſion, our unwary Surprizes, and ſudden Fallings out into vain Thoughts and idle Words. We are oblig'd to enquire after theſe and other Failings, which in the Eſtimation of the World are look'd upon as petty Declenſions; yea, which generally are overlook'd, and thought to be no Offences. But let us take the Balance of the Sanctuary, and weigh the lighteſt Drams and Scruples, let us take notice of the leaſt Aberrations of our Lives. The great Maſters of Philoſophical Experiments have invented ſuch *Glaſſes*, that they can with them diſcover the ſubtileſt and fineſt Bodies, yea the minuteſt Atoms, and their exact Figure and Motion. Such is *Self-Examination* in reſpect of the leaſt Flaws, and the ſmalleſt Faults of our Lives, it enables us to deſcry them exactly; it gives us a proſpect (and that a moſt happy one, when 'tis accompanied with Remorſe and Amendment) of thoſe Sins which paſs for little and light, but which being amaſs'd together, are heavy enough to ſink us into the Infernal Pit.

And as our *Evil*, ſo our *Good Actions* muſt undergo Examination, I mean thoſe which we think to be ſo; but theſe may prove the contrary upon Trial. We are to ſearch therefore whether there be not ſome cunning Vice that offers it ſelf under the Diſguiſe of *Vertue*, and ſo deceives us. The Devil is a grand Impoſtor, and he can counterfeit very artificially; he can make any thing go for Virtue with ſome Men. Seeing therefore Grace may be counterfeited, it is our Intereſt to examine even our ſeeming good Actions. To find out the exact middle in a Circle is ſomething difficult, but to make a Point beſides the Center is eaſy, and every one can do it. Now, Vertue hath its Place in the middle, and

and is the true Center, but it is hard to hit it exactly, and a great Skill is required to do it, and we must often exercise our selves in *this* Duty I am speaking of, in order to it. And likewise we must enquire into our good Actions on another Account, to know whether we are intire and impartial in our Obedience, whether our Practice be Uniform and Universal, whether we have respect unto all God's Commands, and conscientiously observe his whole Will. I have only this to add, that this enquiring into our good Actions is requisite in order to the *stirring up the Gift of God in us*, and the calling forth those Graces into Act and Exercise, which lie dormant in the Habit only; as also in order to the begetting in us a greater Appetite, and a more fervent Desire after that Holy Feast which we are preparing our selves for. Thus far concerning the *Nature of Self-Examination*, which we see hath several Parts and Members, though we are told by a late Writer, that *the Examination here propos'd, is no other but an Examination of their manner of eating the Lord's Supper by Christ's Institution, and the end for which 'twas instituted.* And he as boldly tells us, that *Eating and Drinking unworthily is not Unbelief, or any of those Sins which are usually made the matter of Examination* by our Divines. No: he hath invented a new Way of *Eating and Drinking unworthily.*

* Cook's *Notes on* 1 Cor. 11.

I proceed in the next Place to shew, *how* our Examination is to be perform'd, *what Rules* we are to manage it by, *what Means* we must use for the successful searching into our State and Condition. First negatively, A Man must not examine himself by his own mistaken Principles and Prejudices. For these are false Glasses, and therefore we can't view our selves in them as we should. These are crooked Rules, and therefore we can't square our Lives by them. Nor Secondly, By the Dogmatical Perswasions of other Men, for they may, and do labour under Prejudices and strong Mistakes as well as our selves. Nor Thirdly, By the *Examples* of others; for then we shall run into all kinds of Vice, there being no ill Action without a Precedent. To this purpose observe the Apostle's Words, *Gal.* 6. 4. *Let every Man prove* (or † examine) *his own Work, and then shall he have rejoycing in himself alone, and not in another*; he shall find great Satisfaction in knowing himself absolutely, and not comparing himself with others, or walking according to their Examples, which is meant by *εἰς ἕτερον towards another.* And to this belongs the Reason which follows, *for every one shall bear his own Burden.* Nor Fourthly, By common Custom and Fashion. Which is the Apostle's meaning in *Rom.* 12. 2. *Be not conformed to this World.* All these are deceitful Rules to examine our selves by.

† Δοκιμαζέτω.

Positively therefore do it, First by the sober Light of *Rectify'd Reason.* We are to make use of this *Candle of the Lord*, to search our Actions by. Many have endeavour'd through Perversenes and Malice to blow it out, and others have smother'd it by Lust and lewd Affections; but if we would attend to it, and make good Use of it, we might direct a great part of our Actions by it. If we would manage our selves by these natural Notions and common Principles, many evil Deeds would be prevented. But this of it self is not sufficient. Therefore Secondly, our Examination must be regulated by the *Holy Scripture.* This is *a Light unto our Feet, and a Lantern unto our Paths*; but especially we are sure of a Safe-Conduct, whilst we guide our selves by the Directions which the Writings of the *New-Testament* furnish us with. The excellent Rules which our Saviour hath left us in the Gospels, and which his Apostles have left us in their Epistles, acquaint us what are the Marks whereby we are to try and know our Spiritual State. Yea, *St.* John's *first Epistle* alone is of great Use to this purpose. Consult we these Divine Oracles, and make them the Test and Standard of our Actions. Thirdly, Let us also expect Directions and Discoveries in the use of all the *Ordinances* and *Offices of Christianity*, and more particularly in our Devout and Ardent Addresses to the Father of Lights, begging of him to illuminate and irradiate our Minds, and to instruct and guide us in the Ways of Godliness. And Lastly, By all the Passages of Divine *Providence*, and the various Intimations of God's Will and Pleasure concerning us in his different Dispensations towards us, let us accomplish this great and important Work of Self-Examination.

Having

Having said this of the *manner* of performing this Task, I will add now such *Reasons* and *Motives* as are most serviceable to the exciting and incouraging us to the Practice of it.

First, We are engaged to do this, because we are sure that God doth it. *I the Lord search the Hearts, and try the Reins*, Jer. 17. 10. *All Things are naked and open to the Eyes of him with whom we have to do*, Heb. 4. 13. And therefore it will be our wisest Course to search our selves, that the Divine Searcher may not do it in Judgment. For we are not unacquainted with the dreadful Penalty of Receiving the Sacrament unworthily; namely, that we thereby *eat and drink our own Damnation*, we do it to our Everlasting Peril.

Secondly, We are concern'd to examine and search our selves, because our Ways may be evil, and we not know of it, and be sensible of it. Many Men are strangely blinded and besotted; a sleepy Conscience is both their Fault and their Punishment.

Judas, as well as the rest of the Apostles cried out, *Is it I?* A Man may have Intentions to betray Christ, and to Apostatize from his Profession, and to do the greatest Villainies imaginable, and yet he may be so stupid as to out-face those that admonish him of these Things, and not to own them in the least.

Thirdly, Self-Examination is requisite, because the omitting of it proves so dangerous. For hereby those Persons who are on the Brink of Destruction, and just falling in, are hindred from preventing their fall. They are over-run with Maladies and Diseases, and their not knowing them makes them Mortal. They are wounded, and their not searching into their Wounds is the cause of their proving incurable, and of their nourishing their Hurt and Ruine.

Fourthly, By neglecting to examine our selves, we contract a Habit of Sinning, and so bring our selves into a sad Necessity of displeasing God, and an Impossibility almost of returning to the Ways of Holiness. *A deceived Heart hath turn'd him aside; he cannot deliver his own Soul*, Isa. 44. 20.

Fifthly, We are to inure and accustom our selves to this Operation upon our selves, because it is so hard a Work, especially as the Generality of Persons have made it, by disusing it, and not acquainting themselves with the Methods of it. For they love to look abroad, and visit others, and examine and judge *their* Actions, and this they do with great Ease and Pleasure. But it is one of the most difficult Employments to search into themselves, to converse with their own Deeds, and freely to pass Censure upon them, and to use no Excuses and Extenuations about them.

Sixthly, we ought to be frequent in Self-Examinations, because this is an effectual Help to a speedy Amendment and Reformation. *I thought on my Ways, and turned my self unto thy Statutes*, Ps. 119. 59. Serious thinking and reflecting on our past Life is the proper Means of Conversion, and abandoning our Sins; for this is serviceable to shake and disturb our false Principles and Prejudices, and to shew us the true State of our Souls, and to represent our selves to our selves. This lays open our Wounds, this lances and rips up our Ulcers; nay, this applies a Sovereign Balsam to them, and happily cures them. Wherefore *let us search and try our Ways*, and so *turn unto the Lord our God*, Lam. 3. 40.

Lastly, In respect of our good Actions (which I said before were the matter of our Examination) this Practice is very necessary, because, if searching into these, we find them really good, and such as are able to undergo the Test, then we shall have the real Comfort and Satisfaction of it, not only in the Sacrament, to which it will be joyful to approach when we have arrived to the exact Knowledge of our Spiritual State, but all our Life long, wherein it will be comfortable to know what our Condition is; and especially at our leaving the World, when the Assurance of the Goodness of our State toward God will yield us the greatest Solace. These are the Reasons and Motives which may prevail with us to make a strict Scrutiny into the State of our Souls, and an exact Enquiry into our Lives, and thereby to prepare our selves for the worthy receiving of the Sacrament of the Body and Blood of Christ. But this is but one Part (tho' a very considerable one) of that Preparation which is requir'd of us in order to this solemn Performance.

Besides this first Qualification, which I have so largely insisted upon, there are others that are as requisite to the Rendring us worthy Communicants. Secondly then, Unfeigned *Repentance* is absolutely necessary to this Purpose. We are to find a deep Remorse in our Souls for our former Misdoings, or else we must not be so hardy as to come to the Holy Communion. We must work up our Hearts to an exquisite Sorrow for our Sins, or else we do but crucifie the Lord afresh, and act over again the Part of those Bloudy Jews, who murder'd the Son of God. Wherefore let us, before we solemnize the Memorial of Christ at the Sacrament, think seriously of the Quality, the Number, the Circumstances and several Aggravations of our Sins, and that with bitter Loathing and Detestation. And true Repentance is always accompany'd with hearty Resolves and Purposes to forsake our evil Ways, and to turn unto the Lord, and to live a holy and blameless Life. He is no true Penitent that doth not oblige and engage himself to do this.

A Third Qualification is a lively *Faith in Jesus Christ*, a firm Belief of all his Gracious Promises of Life and Salvation made unto us in the Gospel. That Man is not fit for the Sacred Mysteries of the Eucharist, who doth not with a Holy Boldness rely upon the meritorious Undertakings of Christ, and with a humble Confidence lay hold upon them as the only Refuge and Relief of his Soul, and the only Remedy against his Sins: And he is to exert his Faith, not only as it is a strong Perswasion, but as it is that Act and Operation of the Soul, whereby he chuses Christ for his Lord and King, and, as a faithful Subject, submits unto his holy and righteous Laws. This is that *Faith* whereby we receive Christ, whereby, in a more especial Manner we partake of him in the Blessed Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, wherein the Lamb of God offers himself to us for our spiritual Repast; and this is the Mouth whereby we feed upon him, and feeding, have everlasting Life. But as our Church hath rightly said, * "The Wicked, and such as be void of lively Faith, are in no wise "Partakers of Christ. They do not eat the Body and Bloud of Christ, but "only the Sign or Sacrament of so great a Thing.

* *Artic.* XXIX.

The Fourth Qualification is *Love to Christ*, a most ardent Love to him who instituted this Sacrament out of a great and inexpressible Love to us. It is a remarkable Circumstance which the Apostle adjoins to the *Institution* of the Lord's Supper, that it was *on the same Night in which he was betray'd*, 1 Cor. 11. 23. which, as it shews the transcendent Kindness of our Saviour, so it calls for a proportionable Affection from us. The cruel and malicious Jews were *now* devising how they might put him to Death; *Judas* was ready to betray him, and others were forging false Accusations against him; but he is resolv'd that his *Love* shall surpass their Hatred and Spight: And in the same Night that they were contriving his Murder, his Thoughts were employed about the Good and Happiness of his Servants. When he was going out of the World, he consulted their Welfare in it; and in this Sacrament bequeathed them the best Legacy that they could have desir'd to be left them. He gave Himself, his Body and Bloud for the nourishing and refreshing of their Souls to eternal Life. We ought then to look upon the Eucharist as the last and greatest Token of his Love; and therefore when we repair to that Sacred Feast, we should be actuated with most sincere and Cordial Affection to our Lord for this marvellous Pledge of his Grace and favour to us. It is certain, That if we will act like rational and understanding Persons, and will make the Love of Christ to us a Motive to love him again, we have all the Reason in the World to answer his Love with proportionable Affection. Or, if we consider his matchless Perfection, his unparallell'd Beauty and Excellency, these are able to extort a strong Passion from us, and to make us proclaim our Resentments in the Language of the Spouse, *Cant.* 5. 10. *My beloved is the chiefest among ten Thousands*; and in *ver.* 16. *He is altogether lovely*. For tho' vitious Men, (of whom the Prophet *Isaiah* speaks *Chap.* 52. 2.) thro' Ignorance and Prejudice say of the *Messias*, *He hath no Form or Comeliness, and when we see him, there is no Beauty that we should desire him*, yet every Holy Man and true Believer is ravish'd with the Contemplation of his divine Excellencies. And so should we be, more-especially when we have the Happiness to partake of the lasting Pledges of his Love and Affection to his Church in the Sacrament of the Eucharist.

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The Fifth Qualification and Attendant of our commemorating of Christ in this Religious Office, is *Thankfulness*. Indeed, I can't see how it is possible for us to call to mind our Saviour's Death at this Solemnity, without some Degree of Gratitude and Thanksgiving. How can we forbear breaking forth into grateful Acknowledgments of the infinite Kindness of our Lord to us? How can we but bless and praise our Redeemer, in the Words of the Holy Virgin, *Our Souls do magnifie the Lord, and our Spirits Rejoice in God our Saviour; for he hath regarded the Lowliness of his Servants; he that is mighty hath magnified us, and Holy is his Name.* Christ *gave Thanks* when he instituted this Sacrament. Ought not we much more to do so, who receive the Benefit of it? He gave Thanks for that which required his Death for the fulfilling of it: How much more then are we obliged to return Thanks, who receive Life by it? Therefore this Sacrament hath been justly styled by the Ancients the *Eucharist*, it being a Sacrifice of *Thanksgiving*, in which we offer up Thanks for the Mercy of our Redemption by Jesus, the greatest Benefit that God could give, or Man receive. With thankful Hearts then we are to appear at the Holy Table, remembring what Christ hath done and suffered for us, and what great Things he hath thereby purchased.

The Sixth Qualification is a sincere and hearty *Love of our Brethren*. The Paschal Lamb, which was a Type of the Lord's Supper, was to be eaten *in one House*, Ex. 12. 46. They were not to divide it, and to eat part of it at one Place, and part at another: But they were enjoined to have such a Company together in one Place as might eat the whole Lamb; to signifie the mutual Friendship, Love and Unity which should attend the celebrating of this Old Testament Sacrament. The like must be at this Gospel-Sacrament; and therefore it is observable, that our Lord, just before he instituted his Supper, wash'd his Disciples Feet, and enjoin'd them to do the like kind and obliging Offices to one another, *John* 13. 5. 15. and at the same time he left this * *Commandment* with them, *Love one another, as I have loved you*, ver. 34. Love and Charity were thought to be so absolutely necessary at this Sacrament, that it became a constant Custom in the Primitive Church to make at that Time an Offering of their Alms for those who were in Need and Distress. And 'tis well known that the Primitive Christians used to annex the *Lord's Supper* to their *Love-Feasts*; whence, in good Authors the *Communion* it self is call'd sometimes ἀγάπη, *Love* or *Charity*. This we are to take Care of, that we banish all Hatred and Rancour, all ill Will and Envy, when we intend to be Guests at this Love-Feast. We must come with loving and affectionate Minds, and with real Intentions of promoting that mutual Charity which becomes Brethren, and those who partake of the same Privileges, and are interested in the same common Salvation.

* *Whence* Maunday Thursday (*the Day Christ instituted the Sacrament, and wash'd his Disciples Feet*) or Mandat Thursday, *from* John 13. 34. Mandatum novum do vobis, *which was used to be sung on that Day.*

This Sacrament is a *Federal* Feast (as hath been said before) and accordingly is a Testimony of *Amity*, not only between God and us, but between one another. Here we are to maintain a sincere Love to our Brethren as Fellow-Members, and belonging to the same Body: Which is thus excellently express'd by the Apostle, in 1 *Cor.* 10. 17. *We being many are one Bread* (molded together as it were into one Loaf) *and one Body* (joined into one mystical Body) *for we are all Partakers of that one Bread* in the Sacrament, and consequently we ought to be as One. It hath prevail'd as an universal Custom through all the World (as both Sacred and prophane History acquaints us) to make Leagues of Friendship and Amity, by *Eating and Drinking together*. Much more is this *Sacred Feasting* which I am speaking of design'd to be a Bond of Love and Unity, of mutual Kindness and Affection. As we are all Parts and Members of the Body of Christ, the Church; as we are Branches of the same Spiritual Vine, we ought to sympathize, and compassionately resent the Conditions of one another. For in this Body, no less than in the Natural one, there are Pains by Consent and Sympathy. The Grief and Disease of one Part derives it self to another. Wherefore we are to shew our selves to be true and living Parts of that Body, whereof Christ is the Head, by being Kind and Loving, and tender Hearted, and bearing a Part in the Infirmities and Weaknesses of others, our Brethren in Christ Jesus. Yea, an Universal Love is required of us: We are to hate and envy no Body, but to love and wish well to all, and according to our Capacities and Abilities, to promote the Welfare both of their

Souls and Bodies. We must remember this, That those ought to be Masters of a great Love and Charity, who communicate of the Body and Bloud of Christ, who was so great a Lover of Mankind, and gave such undeniable Demonstrations of his Compassion towards them. He died even for his Enemies; therefore we may well afford to love ours, and freely to forgive all that have done us any Injury, as we hope for Pardon and Forgiveness from God.

Seventhly and Lastly, to sum up all in brief, Let no Man presume to come to this Feast in a State of Sin and Wickedness, but let him have some good Evidence of his being a renewed Person, and of his having put on the Lord Jesus Christ. This is the *Wedding Garment* in the Parable. Which is an Allusion to an old and known Custom of wearing at Nuptial Feasts a better sort of *Apparel* than ordinarily, a *Garment* suitable to the Solemnity. When we come to this Holy Festival, we must do the like, we must cast off our Old Vesture, and deck our selves with a new one, such as is agreeable to this Spiritual Feast. This *Wedding Garment* (as the Pious and Learned * Writers of the Church have well determin'd) is Reformation and Newness of Life, the Graces and Vertues conferr'd by the Holy Spirit, and the Spirit it self dwelling in our Hearts, and actuating them and our Lives, and in short, the Universal Practice of Religion.

* Irenæus *l.* 4. *c.* 70. Origen. *Tract.* 21 *in* Matth.

Thus we see how we ought to be *qualified*, how we must be *prepared* for the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper. And truly we cannot but think it reasonable and necessary that there should be some *Preparation* for so great a Work as the receiving of these Divine Mysteries. For there is no Action in Religion, for which the true Worshippers do not prepare themselves before hand. Before the hearing of the Law, they sanctified themselves; before the Passover they used Purifications, *Exod.* 19. 10. and so before Sacrifices, *Psal.* 26. 6. Yea, the *Gentiles* were taught by that Light which they had, to use Washings and Purifyings, before they entred upon any considerable Performance in their Religion. Much more doth the clearer Light of the Gospel dictate to us, that we ought not to undertake any part of Christian Worship, and especially This, which *is of* so high a Nature, without Preparatory sanctifying of our selves, that is, cleansing our Hearts, washing away the Pollutions of our Lives, adorning our Souls with Humility, Sincerity, Faith and Repentance, and fitting our selves for Converse and Communion with the God of Heaven. And when we are actually engaged in this solemn Part of Religion which I am now treating of, we must take care that we be very attentive to the present Duty, that we recollect our Thoughts, and summon all the Powers of our Souls, for we are concern'd in a Matter of the greatest Importance in the World.

And now here, by way of Appendage, we may enquire how we are to be qualified *after* our having been entertain'd at the Lord's Table. We ought to look back upon our Behaviour, and examine our selves (for *Self-Examination* is to be perform'd as well after the Lord's Supper, as before it) Whether we did truly and really sup with Christ, and Christ with us: Whether we discharg'd that Duty faithfully and sincerely, and exerted our Graces with that Vigour and Life which that Solemnity call'd for. And wherein we find that we were failing and defective, we are to reflect upon it with Remorse and Sorrow, and to endeavour to be more exact in our future celebrating of this Ordinance. But chiefly we are to consider what Obligations we have laid upon our selves to a Holy and Religious Life. We have solemnly, in the Presence of God, resolved to addict our selves to him, and to do nothing unworthy of Persons that bear the honourable Name of Christians, and are adopted into Christ's Family, and, being his Children, must be obedient to all his Commands. We are to think of this, how gross an Absurdity it will be to live prophanely and lewdly after we have been admitted to that Holy Employment.

The last thing I undertook, was to give an *Answer* to those *Objections* and *Scruples* which are rais'd by several sorts of Persons, whereby they think they sufficiently excuse themselves from coming to the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper. And these Persons are of four Sorts; namely, the Erroneous and Deluded; the Carnal and Prophane; the Careless and Slothful; the Weak and Dissatisfied.

First. There are *Erroneous* and *Deluded* Souls, who labour under false and perverse Notions concerning this Sacrament, and such are they that are usually called Quakers. This, say they, is *now* out of date. It is an antiquated Ordinance. The Infant-Church might use it, but now Christians being grown strong,

strong, and come to Maturity, this Sacrament doth not concern them Besides, this is a Carnal and Outward Ordinance, and doth not fit those whose Religion is inward and spiritual. These old Things are passed away, and all Things are now become new. Thus this People talk.

But I would ask them, How *they* come to be more Spiritual than the *Apostles*? And whence have they arriv'd to this *Growth* and *Maturity* in Christianity that they boast of? Will not the Ordinances of Christ Jesus please them? Can't they be content with the Institutions which he thought fit to commend to his Church? Are their Palates so fine and delicate, that they cannot relish that Supper which our Blessed Saviour himself treated his own Disciples with? And whereas they say, this Sacrament is *now out of Date* under the Gospel, I ask them, Whence they can prove it? And I directly prove against them, That this Sacrament is not to cease and expire under the Gospel; for the Apostle expressly saith, *As often as ye eat this Bread and drink this Cup* (which, by the way, implies this, That they should do it *often*) *ye do shew the Lord's Death till he come*, that is, till he comes to Judgment at the last Day. Which is a plain and peremptory Text against those, who say the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper is antiquated and abolished; for 'tis clear, from the Apostle's Words, that the Administration of this Sacrament is to last as long as the World doth; for by the celebrating of this Ordinance, we are to shew or declare the Lord's Death, that is, we are openly and solemnly to commemorate Christ's Passion, till the time when *He comes* to judge the World. This certainly is the Meaning of the *Lord's Coming*; and there is not one Commentator or Expositor who ever asserted otherwise: Tho' a * Scotch Quaker, who hath written in Defence of the Opinions of that Sect, hath the Confidence to say, That the *Lord's Coming* in the forementioned Place is not meant of Christ's outward coming to Judgment, but of his inward and spiritual coming into the Hearts of Men. A most ridiculous and impertinent Invention of his own Brain, without the least Ground and Foundation. But we have good Reason to believe, that as long as the Christian Church is here Militant upon Earth, we are obliged, and by Vertue of *this Text*, to observe this Institution. We are not to omit it till we come to Heaven, when the Church shall be glorious and triumphant: So then, they must either blot this Text out of the Bible, or else they must quit the Opinion which they maintain.

* Barclay *in his Apology*. p. 341.

Besides, I might adjoin this, that every Law is Valid and of Force till it be abrogated. Now, I desire they would shew me, if they can, at what time this Law and Constitution concerning the Lord's Supper was abrogated. But this they can't do, and I'm sure 'tis not in *their Power* to abolish Christ's Laws, tho' they most presumptuously and arrogantly attempt it. Moreover, when the Reason of a Law lasts, the Law itself can't be thought to be laid aside, but so it is here, there is as great Reason, if not greater, why *we* should observe the Lord's Supper in Remembrance of Christ's Passion, as there was, why the Apostles and Disciples did it in the Primitive Times. Some think to put us off with saying, That this Sacrament was administred at first among the *Apostles* only, and so it concerns not the whole Church. To which I answer, the Apostle St. *Paul* repeating the Institution of this Sacrament, enjoins it as an universal Duty, *I have receiv'd of the Lord that which I deliver to you*, &c. So that 'tis plain, the Christian *Corinthians* were concern'd in this Sacrament; and consequently all *other Christians*, as such, are to think themselves oblig'd to partake of this Sacrament. This is sufficient to be said to these modern Ἀντιποφισταί, these late Objectors and Cavellers against the Lord's Supper.

I am in the next Place to answer the Objection of the *Prophane* and *Debauch'd*, who addict themselves to a dissolute Course of Life, and undervalue all sober Admonitions, and care not to interest themselves in the solemn Acts of Religion, and so 'tis no wonder, that they despise that Sacred Office of Religion which I am discoursing of. It is no wonder that these Swine trample that Pearl under their Feet. They are not insensible how unfit they are for such a holy Exercise, and therefore, when they are call'd upon by those, whose Business it is to remind Men of their Duty, to forsake their Evil Ways, and to repair to this Sacrament, they alledge their Loose way of Living as an Excuse for their not coming. They tell us, That they are not disposed for such an Undertaking; they are so far ingenuous, as to own that this is no proper Work for them;

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and so, because they are Unfit, they never intend to be of the Number of Communicants. But let me propound this Question to such Persons, Do you intend ever to leave your Sins, and repent of them? If you *do not*, then 'tis in vain to treat with you: But if you *do intend it*, then I am sure, if your Intentions be hearty and sincere, you will take Care to put them into Execution; and if you do so, your Objection and Excuse for not receiving the Sacrament, will soon vanish; for then you can't plead that you are Unfit by reason of your wicked Life. That which I request of you then is this, That you would be serious, and mind what you say, that is, that you intend some time or other to leave your Sins. And if this be your Intention, I beseech you to think of this likewise, That unless you set about this Work speedily, you may be prevented, and so never have any Time to put your Purposes into Act. Wherefore you are concern'd to turn unto God forthwith, and to enter presently upon a Holy and Religious Life. And doing this, you will be accepted of God, and you will find Peace and Satisfaction in your own Consciences, and you will be made fit for Converse with God; and in a particular manner you will be welcome Guests at the Lord's Supper. And let not the former Omission of your Duty dishearten you. If you will *for the future* be mindful of it, your past Miscarriages will be forgiven you.

I proceed to answer the third sort of Objectors, who are the *Negligent* and *Slothful*. They go on carelesly and stupidly, and will not take Time either to think or discourse of this great Concern. They labour not under any positive Error and Delusion concerning the Sacrament; they are not to be tax'd with Prophaneness or Debauchery; but the Root of their Miscarriage is this, That they will not seriously *consider of* or *attend to* their Duty. Now, the way to deal with these Men is to rouze them, and effectually to convince them of the Danger and Folly of their being thus Careless and Unconcern'd. They are to be plainly told of these two Things, That whilst they absent themselves from the Lord's Supper, they bid Defiance to an express Command, and they oppose their own Good and Welfare.

First, I say, They confront the express Command of their Great *Master*, who hath injoyned this as an indispensible Duty. For besides that the *Institution* of the Sacrament is a Command to receive it, there is also an express Injunction, *Do this in Remembrance of me*. It is a great and gross Mistake, and yet is very common every where, that coming to the Sacrament is a Thing only enjoyned by the Laws of the Land, or of the Church. Thrice a Year they are commanded to communicate, and so in Obedience to the Government they must do it. But we are to look higher than this, and to perswade our selves that we ought to present our selves at the Holy Communion, not meerly because it is requir'd of us by our Ecclesiastical or Secular Rulers, but because Christ hath ordained it, because the Lord Jesus hath commanded it. That great Impostor *Mahomet forbad* his Disciples to drink Wine, and it hath been religiously observ'd among them: Shall our Blessed Saviour *injoyn* us the Use of Wine in the Sacrament, and shall we disobey him? O let not this be told abroad among Atheists and Infidels, and the rest of the Adversaries of the Christian Religion! I pray, whose Disciples are we? who is our Master? whom have we sworn Allegiance to? Is not Christ our Sovereign? why then do we neglect His Laws? or what Evasions and Shifts can we fly to, to frustrate a plain and peremptory Command of Christ? We complain of and cry out against the Church of *Rome*, that they multiply Sacraments too fast, and teach the People that there are no less than *Seven*; and shall we therefore, by our common Practice and sinful Negligence, give them to understand that we do not acknowledge *Two*; and that we disregard an Ordinance of Christ's own Appointment?

Secondly, Whilst we do this, we directly balk our own Good and Welfare. When we are careless of coming to the Communion, it is as much as to say, That we are backward to consult our own Benefit and Happiness. We deprive our selves of that Ordinance, which, through God's Blessing, might inable us to subdue our Sins, to reform our Lives, to grow in Grace, and to fit us for Death and Judgment. Shall we then unthankfully neglect, not to say wickedly despise this Great and Sacred Institution, which was designed for our spiritual Advantage? Shall we throw away our Hours, and spend them in Vanity and Folly, and find Leisure for needless Pleasures and Pastimes, and yet pretend

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we have no Time for examining our selves, and making such Preparation for the Lord's Supper as may render us, through Christ's Acceptance, worthy Communicants? Let us lay aside such idle Pretences and Excuses as these.

Especially, let no Man ground his Neglect upon *undervaluing* Thoughts of this Sacrament, as some seem to do, for what spiritual Virtue, say they, can there be in eating a little Piece of Bread, and drinking a small Portion of Wine? This is a very poor mean Thing, and who can think that this can have any Efficacy in Religion? But let such Persons remember, that it is the Prince's Stamp and Impress that makes the Coin current, have it never so much Allay in it. Much more then doth God's Institution and Appointment give Authority and Value to his Ordinances. The Brazen Serpent was lifted up on a Pole, and those that look'd up to it were heal'd. Why? Because it was God's Appointment; thence it prov'd Effectual to that Purpose. The same is to be said of the Elements in the Sacrament, which, though never so ordinary and mean in themselves, being ordained and appointed by God, are powerful and efficacious. We must look upon them as God's Institution, and on that Account expect Benefit from them. We are not to judge of the Lord's Supper after a vulgar manner, and according to common Estimation of Things: but we are to consider that nothing can be vile and contemptible which God appoints. Those then that despise and vilifie this Sacrament, despise not *it* only, but *Christ* who instituted it, and whose Institution makes it what it is. In a Word, Let us remember, That a *careless Omission* and *Refusal* of the Lord's Supper is to be accounted for, as well as a *Prophaning* of it, and that a wilful Neglecting of it is as dangerous as the unworthy Receiving of it.

I am in the last Place to answer the Objections of the *Scrupulous* and *Doubting*. These Persons are of different Kinds, and their Objections are so too. Some are affrighted at the *Greatness* and *Mysteriousness* of the Sacrament. Others dare not come because of their *Unpreparedness*. A Third sort are offended with the *mixt Communion*. And some again who are Weak, scruple at the *Rites* and *Ceremonies*, especially the Gesture of *Kneeling* made use of in this Sacrament. I will say something in Satisfaction to all these.

First, Some are affrighted and amaz'd at the high Quality and extraordinary Nature of this Ordinance. Praying and Hearing, and the like Institutions, carry not that Mysteriousness with them which this doth; and therefore, tho' these Persons can safely be concern'd in the former, yet they apprehend it not so safe to make bold with the latter. They look upon it as a very dreadful Thing, and have a Notion that it is too Great, and too Good for them. Now, I conceive, that this false Apprehension is derived to some People from the *Church of* Rome, where the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper is made so fearful a Thing, that only the *Priests* must partake of *all* of it; the People taste of half only. Something of this Notion remains among some Protestants, who are scar'd from the Lord's Table by an undue Representation of the Nature of this Sacrament. I have observ'd, that *Fear* and *Neglect* are the two chiefest Causes of Mens not coming to the Communion; they either entertain too frightful Thoughts of it, or else they have too low and mean an Opinion of it. The latter of these I have already consider'd, and now I am to speak of the former. And to speak freely, I apprehend, that this Extreme of *Excess* had its rise from the other of *Defect*. Too mean Thoughts of the Sacrament, occasion'd at last too high and affrighting ones. As thus, the Lord's Supper was prophan'd by the promiscuous coming of Persons to it, and thence the *Fathers* of old labour'd to vindicate it from Contempt, and accordingly set forth the Worth of it, and came at length to praise it extraordinarily, and to excess. And by setting it up too high, they made it so Awful and Terrible, that scrupulous and weak Minds dared not to come near it.

But such are to be inform'd, that the Sacrament was not instituted to terrify Believers, but to bring them into Converse and Familiarity with their Lord and Saviour, and to acquaint them with the Effects and Benefits of his Passion. Here we have free Communion with him, and with our Brethren. This is a Feast of Love, and therefore ought not to be dreadful to us. Moreover, if we study well the true Nature of this Sacrament (which I have endeavour'd to set forth) we shall soon have our Fears and Scruples removed. Some put off *this Sacra-*

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ment for the same Reason that some heretofore delay'd *the other*; namely, because they were affraid that their Sinning after Baptism would not be forgiven them. Some great and worthy Persons in the Church (as I have observ'd before) were guilty of this Miscarriage, and comply'd with this Supperstitious Custom, thinking that if they should defile themselves after the Baptismal Washing, their Case would be desperate. And so 'tis with respect to the Lord's Supper, some will by no Means venture to partake of it, because they are affraid they shall Sin afterwards, and then they shall find no Pardon, because their Sin will be so Great and Heinous.

To which may be justly reply'd, I. There is no Life without Sin, and therefore these Persons go upon a great and palpable Mistake. II. It argues a great Mistake and Folly to think that their Sins committed after the Sacrament are unpardonable. Such a Notion perhaps hath possessed some of the ignorant *Moscovites*, who endeavour to fall asleep as soon as they have receiv'd the Sacrament, to prevent by that Means any Occasion of Sinning. III. It is to be question'd whether their Pretence and Excuse be as sincere, as it seems to be specious. For we may rather think they are loth to oblige themselves to a Holy and Religious Life, but entertain a Kindness for their Sins, and on that Account are unwilling to prepare themselves for the Lord's Supper. But Fourthly, If it be true that they are affraid of sinning after their being at it, why do they not strive to fit themselves for it, that so they may not sin by keeping away from it? If these Things, which I have briefly suggested, be consider'd by the Persons I am now speaking to, they will find that their Objections and Evasions are fully answer'd.

A second Sort of Persons scruple to come to the Sacrament because of their *Unworthiness*. And this Unworthiness is found both in those that never yet came to the Lord's Table, and in those that have been there, but afterwards, upon Reflection, think they came unprepared. As for the first, that is, those who *never yet came*, but continually excuse themselves, by pleading that they are unworthy, I ask them whether they intend to make use of this Plea all their Life long? Will this Excuse serve them when they come to leave the World? Will Death be more favourable to them because of their Unpreparedness to die? For it is certain if they be not fit for the Sacrament, they are not fit to die. They cannot but acknowledge this, and therefore let them be prepar'd speedily, or otherwise they can't depart with Comfort. And let me tell them, That if they prepare themselves as well as they are Able, through the Imploring of God's Assistance, I can't think that they shall receive any Harm, but rather that they shall come with a Blessing. Let them do *their* Part, and God will not fail to do *his*. If they sincerely, heartily, and impartially repent of their Sins, and by a lively Faith rely on Jesus for Mercy and Pardon, they have no Reason to question their being welcome Guests at the Lord's Table; although they find in their Souls many Infirmities and Imperfections, and in their Lives many Offences and Obliquities. Yea, these very Considerations should prevail with them to resort to the Lord's Supper, that so they may receive Strength against these Weaknesses and Defects which they complain of, and that justly, and that by the Divine Grace, in the Use of Christ's appointed Means, they may have a full Conquest over all their Doubts, Scruples, and Jealousies.

Then, as to the Unworthiness of those who *have been* at the Sacrament, but afterwards reflecting on themselves, find that they come Unprepared to it, or that this sacred Ordinance was of no Benefit to them, but they return to their former Sins, and can't perceive that the Lord's Supper is any Preservative against them; and therefore for the future they resolve to absent themselves, especially they take up this Resolution when they think of those severe Words, *He that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh Damnation to himself.* 1 *Cor.* 11. 29. But here I have this to say, That it is the Duty of those that have been Communicants, and are conscious to themselves that they have broken the Vows and Resolutions they then made, to bewail with Bitterness of Soul this great Miscarriage, and to be asham'd of that gross Scandal and Reproach which they have brought upon Religion and the Professors of it, by returning to the Commission of their Sins after they have been admitted to the Lord's Supper; and then the next Thing they must do, is to fit and prepare themselves

themselve against their next approach to it, and after that to take care that they be no longer guilty of Apostacy, and revolting from God. Now, I say this upon this score, That as every Minister of the Gospel ought to endeavour to keep Men from a fond Presumption, so he is to be cautious that they be not driven to Despair. Thou say'st thou hast unworthily eaten the Body of Christ; it is well thou art sensible of it; see that thou doest so no more. And before thou comest again to the Holy Table, with profound Remorse lament thy past Behaviour, and then it will never hurt thee.

That Word *Damnation* may justly startle thee, and it is happy for thee that it doth; but know withal, that the Context of that fore-mention'd Place, shews sufficiently, that that Word may admit there of a milder Sense, 1 *Cor.* 11. 31. *For this Cause many are weak and sickly, and many sleep; for if we would judge our selves,* (i. e. *examine our selves*, for it referrs to the *Self-Examination* in *ver.* 28.) *we should not be judged*, that is, we should not be weak and sickly, and struck with mortal Diseases for our prophaning the Lord's Supper. Whence 'tis evident, that by *being judged* we are chiefly to understand outward, bodily, and temporal Judgment, not that which is Eternal; tho' this likewise all Offenders are obnoxious to, and who ever *hears the Word*, or *prays unworthily*, as well as he that *Communicates unworthily*, incurrs the Peril of *Damnation*. Every Sin is Damning in its own Nature, and so is unworthy Receiving in a *special Manner*; but hearty and sincere Repentance is an Expedient against this and all other Sins. And with Repentance must be join'd a great care of our selves for the future: We must now with more than ordinary Exactness charge our Consciences with the Performance of those Promises and Vows we have heretofore made. And having earnestly crav'd the Assistance of the Divine Grace (as well as Pardon for our Miscarriages) we may draw near and partake of the Lord's Supper. But let us take care of our Behaviour in the ensuing Acts of so solemn a Worship, and more diligently than ever prepare our selves for it, by flying unto the Holy Jesus for Help and Succour, and by begging his Grace to enable us to persevere in Holiness. This, I hope, fully answers the *Objection of Unworthiness*.

Thirdly, Some are offended at *the mixt Communion* that is at the Sacrament. We can't come, say they, because of the Company which we must meet with there, that is, vicious and wicked Persons, and * *with such*, St. *Paul* saith, *we must not eat*, not eat at the common Table with them; much less must we come to the Table of the Lord with them. That which is to be return'd in answer to this Scruple, is this, I. Tho' the Church of Christ be describ'd by *a Heap of Wheat set about with Lilies*, yet we may remember, that in another Place she is said to be *a Lily among Thorns*. It is impossible in this present State of Things, that the visible Church should be wholly free from Miscarriages and Disorders, and that all the Persons belonging to it should be pure. II. Where these Impurities and Miscarriages are seen, they ought to be redress'd, and the Laws of the Evangelical Church require it of the Governours and Overseers of it especially. But Thirdly, If there be a neglect as to this, and it be none of our Fault, that unworthy Persons thrust themselves into the Society of those that receive the Sacrament, we ought not to forbear coming to it, because of the Unworthiness of those Men. For neither the Hypocrisie of some, nor the open Prophaneness of others, can infect and poison the whole Congregation. Not the former, because no Man can certainly know who is an Hypocrite, till the Person discovers it himself by his Actions. Not the latter, for the Openness and Notoriousness of the Sins is a sufficient Antidote and Preservative against the Infection. Let a Man examine himself, and other ways prepare himself for the Communion, and then let him be assur'd of this, that the Unworthiness of others will not prejudice, hurt, or endanger him; the Impurity of others will not stain and pollute his Soul. This ought to satisfie him. And Fourthly, Whereas St. *Paul* forbids the believing *Corinthians* to *eat* with a Brother that is Scandalous, his Meaning is, that he ought not to entertain unnecessary Familiarity with him. But this a Man need not do by being present with such a one at the Sacrament. Fifthly and Lastly, This must be remembred, that as the Children's Bread is not to be thrown to Dogs, so there is no Reason that the Children should be depriv'd of their Bread because of Dogs. It is not fit that any one should debar himself of his just Privilege that belongs to him, because

* 1 Cor. 5. 11.

others partake of a Privilege that is not theirs, and which they partake of to their hurt. In short, because others come unprepared, I must not stay away who am rightly prepar'd.

The Fourth and Last Scruple is yet behind. Some *Conscientious*, but *unsatisfy'd Persons* absent themselves from this Ordinance because of the Rites and Ceremonies used therein by our Church. The chief of them, and which they most except against is, the Posture of *Kneeling*; and the two main Things alledg'd against it are these, that *it is not allow'd by Scripture*, and that it is *Popish*. As to the first part of the Objection, I conceive that this is a Satisfactory Answer; namely, that as God hath not in Scripture commanded *Sitting*, nor *Standing* at the Sacrament, so he hath not forbid *Kneeling*. If he had done either of these, it were something to the purpose of the Objectors; but I don't see that God hath commanded the former, or forbidden the latter. And therefore they are both of them Indifferent, and we may use either of them with a safe Conscience. And as for Practice, we see, that even the *Protestant* and *Reformed Churches*, differ among themselves as to the use of their Gestures at the Lord's Supper. The *Helvetian* Churches receive it Sitting or Standing, as they please; but the Ministers receive it Standing. The Protestant Churches in *France* enjoin'd Standing. The Churches of *Holland* and *Germany*, that follow *Calvin*, use Sitting. And I have read of some who take the Sacrament Walking, being perswaded it seems, that the *Jews* did eat their *Passover* (from which this Sacrament was borrow'd) in a walking Posture, because it is said in *Ex.* 12. 11. that they were to eat it *with their Shooes on their Feet, and with their Staves in their Hands.* And as for *our Church*, it is well known, (and this part of my Discourse supposes it) that she approves of none of these Gestures, but enjoins *Kneeling*.

Now, that which I say from the whole, is this, that we are not certain that any of these Postures are Christ's Institution. For that concerning *Walking* is an idle Conjecture, because they might have their Shooes on, and Staves in their Hands, and yet *sit* or *stand* at the Passover-Feast. And indeed several have indeavour'd to prove, that *this latter* was their Posture, and that our Saviour and the Apostles observ'd it at the Lord's Supper; and their Reason is, because it was at the *Passover*-Feast that this Supper was solemniz'd; therefore, say they, they us'd the *Passover*-Gesture. But this is not true Arguing, because we read that Christ Instituted the Sacrament *after* the *Passover*-Supper; and we do not find it recorded, that when the Apostles receiv'd the Sacrament, they continu'd in the same Posture (as suppose it was *standing*) which they us'd at the Time of their celebrating the *Passover*. And indeed, the *Lord's Supper* being quite distinct from the *Paschal one*, it is likely that there was another, and a different Posture us'd. But whether it was *Sitting*, *Standing*, or *Kneeling*, we are not able to determine. It is most probable that it was none of them, but that it was *Leaning* or *Lying along*, which was the usual *Table-Gesture* among the *Jews* at that Time, and the Evangelists in their Relation of the Celebrating of the *Paschal*, and of the *Common* Supper, make particular express mention of it. St. *Matthew* and St. *Luke* express the Paschal Gesture by ἀνακεῖσθαι and ἀναπεσεῖν, which signify *to lie down*, or *to lie in a leaning Posture*, tho' our *English* Translators render them by *sitting down*, Mat. 26. 20. Luke 22. 14. And St. *Mark* and St. *John* acquaint us, that this was the Gesture us'd at the Communion Supper, which succeeded the Paschal one, *Mark* 14. 18. *John* 13. 12. where the very same *Greek* Words are made use of again, tho' mis-translated. But none of the Evangelists take notice of the Gesture which was us'd at the *Post-Cœnium*, which was turn'd into the Lord's Supper.

Seeing then the Scripture is silent as to this matter, and doth not expressly tell us whether Christ and his Apostles receiv'd the Sacrament in the Posture of *Discombiture* (as they eat the Paschal and the Common Supper) or of *Sitting*, or *Standing*, or *Kneeling*, we ought not to be positive, and to take upon us to determine what Gesture is of Divine Institution. And as the Scripture saith nothing, so the Records of After-Times do not acquaint us what the immediate Followers of Christ and his Apostles did in this case, that is, whether they took that Holy Repast Sitting, or Standing, or Kneeling. So that it is my Opinion that it is best to leave Persons to their Liberty in this matter. But yet I think I may safely offer this, that if any Man, who is offended *at Kneeling* at the Communion,

Communion, and is rather desirous to *sit*, shall come to me and request the Delivery of the Sacrament to him in that Posture of Sitting, and shall make it out that Christ gave the Sacrament to his Apostles *sitting*, I engage I will deliver it to him in the same manner. But at the same Time he shall be engaged to come to the Sacrament, if he can't make that good: And then I am confident I shall see him a Communicant in a very short time.

But there is another way of proceeding with such Persons that scruple the Lawfullness of *Kneeling*, and are perswaded that *Sitting* was the Gesture used by Christ and the Apostles at the Sacrament. They are to be reminded of this, that tho' we should grant Christ and the Apostles sat at the Sacrament (tho' 'tis certain they did not *sit* as is in use with us at our ordinary Food; but, to speak properly, they did rather *lean* on one side, than *sit up*) yet it doth not follow thence that Christians in all Times and Ages are to use this Posture, and no other. For tho' there must be no Alteration in the Elements and Materials of this Sacrament, and in the Actions appertaining to them (for that were to change the Essence of this Sacrament) yet there are some *Circumstances* wherein it may be lawful to vary from the first Example and Practice. We are then to distinguish between the Substance of the Eucharist, and the Accidental or Occasional Circumstances of it. The former can admit of no Change (unless in Case of Necessity, as I have shew'd before) but the latter may; yea, we see that they are actually chang'd, and the most sober *Protestants* allow of it, and practise accordingly. Thus, at the first celebrating of the Sacrament *Men* only were admitted, but now *Women* as well as Men. Christ gave it to his *Apostles* only, and they but *Eleven*; but now *all Christians* are invited, and may come. Christ administred the Sacrament in the *Evening*; we celebrate it at *Noon*. For tho' the Evening or Night Season was the proper Time of eating the Passover, yet it was but accidental to the Lord's Supper; and therefore the Church of Christ is not obliged to eat it in the Evening or at Night. Again, the Apostles took it *after another Supper*, but we don't think our selves bound to eat a Dinner or Supper first. And indeed, this Circumstance was alter'd betimes, for St. *Paul* forbad eating the Sacrament after Supper, 1 *Cor.* 11. 21. and accordingly the Church receiv'd it fasting in St. *Augustin*'s Days, as * he testifies. Christ and the Apostles receiv'd it in an *ordinary House*, and in an *upper Room* of that House, but we in neither of these, but in a Church. * *Epist.* 18.

Thus there is a Change as to the Circumstances of Time and Place; yea, and as to the Quality of the Persons, who were at the first Instituting of the Sacrament, and this Change is generally approv'd of. And there is the same Reason why we should not be tied up to the same *Gesture* (as suppose it to be Sitting or Leaning) which was at first used. Or, if we must be confined to the same Gesture, why not also to other Circumstances, why not to the like Time and Place? Why not to the same Number of Communicants? And then likewise, how will the *other Sex* shew any Claim they have to the Sacrament? Nay, among *Men*, none but the *Clergy* must be admitted to it. The Laity must be shut out as prophane. If we consider these Things, we shall conclude, that there can be no Reason given why the *Gesture alone* should be strictly urged, when there is an Alteration as to the other Circumstances. The Result of all under this Head is this, that if it could be proved that Christ and the Apostles *sat* at the Communion, yet this doth not make it absolutely necessary for us to do so, because this Situation of their Bodies was but an Occasional and Temporary Circumstance, and therefore may as well be altered as the other Circumstances of Time and Place, and the Quality of the Persons; which we see all Parties take Liberty to dispense with in celebrating the Lord's Supper, and think it no Breach of Christ's Institution.

But the main Scruple which some have against Kneeling at the Sacrament, is, that it is an approaching *to Popery*, for the Papists kneel and worship the Hostie, and why therefore should any *Protestants* comply with them in this Gesture at the Eucharist, which by the *Papists* using of it, is become blameable and scandalous on this Occasion? I answer 1. The like Exception might be made against *Sitting*, which is abused by the *Socinians*, who therefore *sit* at the Communion, that they may not seem to give Divine Honour to Christ, whom they blasphemously deny to be God. Who would imitate these Men who deny

our Saviour's Divinity, and who were the first that used *sitting* at the Sacrament in the *Polish* Churches? Nay, it might be added, that the Pope sometimes receives the Communion *sitting*, as the Book of *Ecclesiastical Ceremonies* and * other Writings of the Romish Church acquaint us. And will those, who like and use the Gesture of *Sitting* at the Sacrament, conclude hence, that it is *Popery* to Sit? I suppose not. Neither can they from the *Papists Kneeling* inferr, that they ought not to kneel, or that it is *Popish* so to do. I answer secondly, The Papists abusing the Gesture of Kneeling, doth not make it unlawful for us to use it. We grant that they use it to an Idolatrous End; and if we should use it so, that Use were absolutely unlawful and detestable. But their abusing of the Gesture of Kneeling at the Sacrament, doth not, and cannot render Kneeling it self unlawful on that Occasion; for if it doth, or could do it, it might make Kneeling in other Exercises of Religion, as well as at the Sacrament, unlawful. And then we must not kneel at our *Prayers*, because the Papists do so; which the most Scrupulous will not admit of. Nay, tho' they *pray kneeling* to *Saints and Angels*, which is Superstitious and Idolatrous, yet Persons of the nicest Consciences do not refuse to kneel at their Devotions because of that. Which shews, that they acknowledge that Kneeling doth not become unlawful at the Sacrament, or at any other time by the *Papists* abusing it. And it must be so, for the Truth of the Matter is this, The same Circumstances and Gestures may be used by us and the Papists; and they may be Evil *in them*, but not so *in us*, because they use them to ill Purposes, but we do not. As particularly in the Case before us, they use the Gesture of Kneeling to Idolatrous Purposes, that is, they adore the Bread and Wine when they kneel at the Sacrament; but we innocently and lawfully use the same Gesture, because we do it to a lawful Purpose; namely, To adore the Great God, and his Son Christ Jesus, who is equal with him in Glory and Majesty.

* See Dr. Falkner's Lib. Eccles. p. 485.

And it is to be consider'd likewise, that this Gesture, above others, is fitted to the Solemnity; for the Lord's Supper is always receiv'd with Prayer and Thanksgiving, and with the utmost Efforts of Reverence and Devotion, and on this Account *Kneeling* becomes decent and agreeable. And this is a Gesture in Religious Exercises that hath the Allowance and Approbation of Scripture, on which and the other Considerations * Mr. *Calvin* allows of it at the Sacrament. And to reconcile us to this Gesture, we are to know, that it is not prescrib'd in our Church as an Essential Part of Worship, but only as an adjunct thereunto, as subservient to the seemly expressing of our Devotion to God in the Use of his appointed Ordinance. And the same Power that hath enjoin'd the Use of it at present, may alter it at their Pleasure: Which could not be done, if it were properly in it self an Essential and Necessary Part of Divine Worship. And moreover, it is professedly declared by our Church, that this Posture of Kneeling is enjoined only as a Thing Decent and Reverent, and not with the least Respect to the fond Opinion of the Church of *Rome*, which asserts, That the Elements of Bread and Wine are changed into the Real Body and Blood of Christ, and therefore are to be worshipped with Divine Worship. Our Church professes the contrary, and disowns the Kneeling at the Sacrament on that Account on which the *Papists* make use of it; as we may see at the End of the Office of our Church which is appointed for the Administration of the Communion. From reading of which, the most scrupulous Person may satisfie himself, that our Church intended the Posture of Kneeling at the Sacrament to be only a Token of Humility and Reverence, and such as is due in any great and solemn act of Devotion. However, if he think it not the best Gesture, let not that hinder him from partaking of the best and choicest Institution of the Gospel. Let not an Essential Part of Christianity be neglected because of a mere Gesture.

* Institut. l. 4. S. 37.

But after all that I have said, I think it were most adviseable to leave Persons to their Liberty, to use either Sitting or Kneeling, especially, because it is probable, that the *Adoration of the Host* was the first Occasion of using this latter Posture. And besides, I would have every one satisfie his *own Conscience* about what he undertakes; for if he should act contrary to that, it may justly create him Trouble and Disquiet. But because it is not in our Power to alter the appointed Rites of the Church, I desire him to consider meekly and impartially

tially what I have offer'd to his Thoughts. If I have not answer'd all the *Objections*, I am sure I have spoken concerning the chief and principal of them, and those that are most urged in Writings and Conference. I wish what I have said may prevail with Persons to lay aside their Scruples, and to come and feed on the Spiritual Food in the Lord's Supper. But let them first be *qualified*, as I have already mentioned. This is the *main Thing* they are to be concern'd in: And therefore my Advice is, Come prepared, or come not at all. The *Gesture* is not material, but *Preparation* is. Wherefore, by Faith and True Repentance, fit your selves for this Holy Feast, and be sure to excite your Appetites, and come to it with hungring and thirsting Souls. And this is certain, the Man that is truly Hungry, will not be Nice, but take his Food in any Convenient Posture, Sitting, Standing, or Kneeling.

Of PUBLICK PRAYER.

THE next Divine Institution and Ordinance to be treated of, is *Publick Prayer*, for of that which is *Private*, I shall discourse under *the Lord's Prayer*, but not excluding that which is *Publick*. This latter is proved to be a necessary Part of Divine Worship from the General Commands of our Saviour for Praying, which are frequent in the Gospels, and from those Words of his in *Mat.* 18. 20. which referr to the Publick Ministry of the Church, which consists partly in Praying, *Where two or three*, saith our Saviour, *are gathered together in my Name, there am I in the midst of them.* For if Christ promises to be present with them that meet together in his Name to *Ask* or *Pray*, (for that is particularly mentioned in *v.* 19.) we may rationally inferr that *Prayer*, and *Publick Prayer* more-especially, is Christ's own Institution.

And accordingly we find this practised by the Church, *Acts* 1. 14. *They continued with one Accord in Prayer and Supplication*; and afterwards it is said of the New Converts, that *they continued stedfastly in Prayers*, Acts 2. 42. which is meant of Publick Prayers, because these are join'd with *continuing stedfastly in the Apostles Doctrine, and in breaking of Bread*, that is, in Hearing, and Preaching, and Celebrating the Sacrament. We read in *Acts* 4. 24. that *the Company* of Christians *lift up their Voice to God with one Accord*, which signifies their entire Agreement in *Prayer*, for the Prayer it self, which they made, is set down in the following Verses. *We will give our selves continually to Prayer*, said the Apostles, *Acts* 6. 4. which is to be understood of publick Prayer, because there is immediately annex'd to it *the Ministry of the Word*, that is, Preaching. An Example of this Praying in the publick Assemblies is in *Acts* 12. 5. where it is said, that upon St. *Peter's* Imprisonment, *Prayer was made without ceasing of the Church unto God for him.* And in *chap.* 12. *ver.* 12. *Many* (the same with the *Church* mention'd before) *were gathered together, praying.* And the like we read in *Acts* 13. 2, 3. —16. 13. and other Places. The Apostle gives Advice concerning the regulating of Prayers in the Congregation, 1 *Cor.* 14. 14, 15, 16, 17. Publick Prayer is meant in 1 *Tim.* 2. 1, &c. for the Apostle here exhorts *Timothy* to discharge the Office of a Minister: And this Epistle was written to him, that *he might know how he ought to behave himself in the House of God*, 1 Tim. 3. 14. Wherefore when the Apostle *exhorts that first of all, Supplications, Prayers, Intercessions, and giving of Thanks be made for all Men*, &c. 'Tis not to be doubted but that he speaks of Publick Prayer. And from all that I have alledg'd, it appears, that putting up Prayers to God in the publick Assemblies of the Faithful is a Divine Ordinance, for it is authorized and approved of by our Blessed Lord and his Apostles, and the Saints in those Times.

Afterwards, Prayers were part of the publick Service, as *Justin Martyr* testifies.* *After Sermon is ended*, saith he, *we all stand up together, and send up Prayers to Heaven.* For it seems the main Body of Prayers was at that time wont to be after the Exhortation or Sermon. But they began with Prayers, according to *Tertullian*, who represents it as the great Business of their † *coming together in a full Body, that they might as it were with main Force surround the Deity, and obtain of him their Requests.*

* Ἐπειτα ἀνιστάμεθα κοινῇ πάντες, καὶ εὐχὰς πέμπομεν. Apolog. 2.

† *Coimus in cœtum & congregationem, ut ad Deum quasi manu factâ precationibus ambiamus orantes.* Apol. cap. 39.

And

And from plenty of other Writers, it is manifest that publick Prayers were part of the Divine Service in all Christian Churches. And for the more decent and convenient Performance of this Office, they appointed set Times, and made choice of certain Places for it. Thus we see that *publick Prayer* is an Institution of the Gospel, and warranted by the Practice of the Apostles and the Primitive Christians.

But the Question is, *What manner of Prayers* the Apostles, and first Christians, and those that followed them used in their publick Assemblies, that is, Whether they were *Conceiv'd* or *Prescrib'd* Prayers, and which of these have been used since, and most approved of by the Reformed and Protestant Churches. To this Question, which hath been so fiercely bandied up and down, I will give an Answer in these following Propositions.

PROP. I. Though Christ and his Apostles repair'd to the Temple and the Synagogue, yet (as hath been before shew'd) they join'd not with the Prayers of the Jewish Priests and Levites there; or, if it could be proved that they join'd with them, yet we can't thence inferr, That our Saviour or his Apostles approv'd of the using of Set Forms only. For though God appointed the Jews some short Forms of Prayer and Blessing, (as in *Numb.* 6. 23. *Deut.* 26. 13. 1 *Chron.* 16. 7.) and the xcii Psalm, and some others, seem to be prescribed Prayers, yet we don't read that they had any *Intire Liturgy.* * One who was well skill'd in the *Jewish Service*, and hath given us a particular Account of all the Parts of it, mentions Three or Four Collects that the Jews used in their Publick Worship, and that is all. He could not find any thing like a Liturgy; and, truly, one of those which he calls *Prayers*, hath nothing of that Kind in it, but is meerly an Encomium of the Sentences of the Law, which were written in their Phylacteries. Wherefore if we should suppose that the Apostles were present at these few short Collects which the Jews used, no Man of Sense can gather from this, That the Using of prescribed Forms of Prayer, and no other, are warrantable in the Christian Service, and that the Apostles by their Practice allow'd of a formal Liturgy.

*Dr Lightfoot in his Temple-Service, chap. 9.

PROP. II. But our Saviour shew'd his Allowance of some Set Form of Words in Prayer by dictating a particular One to his Disciples, and in them to all Christians. For that which we usually call the *Lord's Prayer* is not only a Pattern for our Prayers, but a Prayer it self, and to be used by us, not only in private, but in publick. To which purpose 'tis observed by * that Learned Man before mentioned, That this Prayer, the first Time it was deliver'd, was taken for a Form of publick Prayer, because of the *Amen* added to it, which was never used but in publick, and is a Note of publick Prayer. And when the Disciples desired Christ to teach them to pray privately, he repeated the same Form, but omitted the *Doxology* and *Amen*, which signified its Use in publick. So that it is an express Form which may be used both in publick and private. I do not say, 'tis such a Form as is to be used in every Prayer, as if no Prayer were acceptable, unless this were affix'd to it. This is an Extreme on one Hand, as on the other that it ought not to be used at all. But this we may gather from our Saviour's teaching the Disciples this Form, that a prescribed Form is lawful; for our Saviour would not have dictated any thing that was not so. And it is not improbable that the Disciples used this Prayer generally, though 'tis not expressly recorded. But it may be collected from *Mat.* 11. 25, 26. *When ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have ought against any, that your Father also which is in Heaven may forgive you your Trespasses. But if you do not forgive, neither will your Father which is in Heaven forgive your Trespasses.* In which Words of our Saviour, it is supposed that they prayed the Lord's Prayer, wherein is this Petition, *Forgive us our Trespasses*, &c. And there is a plain Reference also to the Beginning of that Prayer, *Our Father which art in Heaven.* And the Using of this Prayer among Christians in the Apostles Times is implied in those Words, *Rom.* 8. 15. *Ye have receiv'd the Spirit of Adoption, whereby ye cry Abba Father*; and in those in *Gal.* 4. 6. *God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your Hearts, crying, Abba Father.* Both which Places seem to allude to the general and common Use of the Lord's Prayer, wherein we pray, and *cry, Our Father.*

*Dr Lightfoot *Hor. Hebraic.*

PROP. III.

PROP. III. In the Times of the *Apostles* and *Primitive Christians*, immediately after Christ's Ascension, there was *no other prescribed Prayer* used but the *Lord's Prayer*, in the publick Service of the Church. And the Reason was because they were then immediately Inspired, and they had no need of *Forms* as long as that Dispensation lasted. Only they were obliged to use the Lord's Prayer, because it was particularly injoyned them. From the *Acts of the Apostles*, and from St. *Paul*'s First Epistle to the *Corinthians*, *Chap.* 14. and other Places, we learn, That not only the Apostles, but other Christians and Believers were endued with extraordinary Gifts, and that of *Praying by Inspiration*, among the rest. Which is acknowledg'd by * St. *Chrysostom*, and others, who tell us, That Apostolical Men made use of this Gift, (or *Grace*, as they sometimes call it) when they pray'd publickly in the Assemblies. We may therefore look upon the *Liturgies* which go under the Names of St. *Peter*, St. *James*, St. *Matthew*, and St. *Mark* as supposititious, as some of the † Popish Writers themselves confess. Besides that, it is evident from many Things that occurr in them, (which were not Extant at that Time, but a considerable Time after) that they were forged. And from hence we may gather how rashly 'tis pronounc'd by a late Writer, That ‖ *Liturgies were Always used by all Christians, and in all Places:* And by another, That * *there is not one Single Proof or Instance either in the Bible, or any other Ancient Writer, of the Joint Use of any one Prayer conceiv'd* ex tempore. It is strange that any Man should advance this Doctrine, and seem to be in good Earnest when he publishes it, whereas all those Prayers mentioned in 1 *Chron.* 29. 18, *&c.* 1 *Kings* 8. 22. 2 *Chron.* 20. 3, 4. *Ezra* 8. 21. —9. & *Neh.* 1. 11. —4. 5. *Acts* 2. 42. —4. 24. —8. 15. —12. 5. —13. 3. —14. 23. —20. 36. —21. 5. —27. 36. are far from being Set Forms; for they were conceiv'd and dictated by the Spirit at those particular Times when they were utter'd, and no One ever had the Confidence to assert the contrary 'till of late, and to tell us, That † *it doth not appear that ever Christ Assembled his Disciples, or that they met at all for that Purpose*, (namely, for *Joint Prayer*) *otherwise than according to the Way and Liturgy of the Jews.* And though the Jews never had a Liturgy, yet this Writer dreams of such a Thing in every Place in the Bible.

* Homil. *in* Rom. 8. 28.

† Balsamon, *Cardinal* Bona, *and others.*

‖ *Mr.* Dawson *of Original Laws.*

* *Mr.* Bennet *of Joint-Prayer.*

† *Mr.* Bennet's *Rights of the Church.*

PROP. IV. Nor can we prove that in the Times immediately following the Apostles, that is, in the Second and Third Century, there were Intire Liturgies and Set Forms of Prayer in the Christian Churches. *Clement*'s Epistle to the *Corinthians*, which makes mention of ‖ *a determined Canon of Ministry*, needs not to be restrained to a particular Form of Divine Service; for the Word λειτουργία, is not restrain'd to That, as all the Learned very well know. *Ignatius*'s * *One Prayer, and One Petition* signifies no more than their uniting in the *same Matter* of Prayer. The same may be meant by *Justin Martyr*'s † *Common Prayers*, and *Cyprian*'s ‖ *Publick* and *Common Prayer*. Perhaps, you will say we read that Κύριε ἐλέησον, and *Sursum corda*, were used by the Ancients in their publick Devotions: But what is this to the purpose? Can any sober Man thence collect that there was a Set Form for the whole Duty of Prayer? They might use those Words in their own Conceived Prayers, and in the celebrating the Sacrament; as at this Day in extemporary Prayers, several Set Passages are taken out of the *Psalms*, and other Places of Scripture, and particular Expressions are generally used, as, [*Through the Merits and Mediation of Christ*], [*To whom be all Honour and Glory*], and the like. To bring the Business to a short Conclusion, How can we know that they had a Set Liturgy in those Times, unless some of their Writers had told us so, or unless we had those Liturgies, or some considerable part of them now remaining? But there are no Writers that relate any such thing, and we cannot say that these Liturgies, or any considerable part of them are still extant.

‖ Θεσμὸν τῆς λειτουργίας κανόν.

* Μιὰ προσευχὴ, μιὰ δέησις. Epist. *ad* Mag.

† Κοιναὶ εὐχαί.

‖ *Publica & communis Oratio.* *De* Orat. Dom.

PROP. V. In the Fourth and Fifth Centuries, when Extraordinary Gifts wholly fail'd in the Christian Church, *Set Forms* of Prayer were introduced into some Churches, which the Bishops and Pastors provided the People with. And it is probable that some of these Prayers were part of those that were conceiv'd

conceiv'd by an extraordinary Spirit in the Apostles Times, and were preserv'd in some of the Hearers Memories; or were set down in Writing, and so transmitted to the next Age of Christians, and were used by them. This I give as an Account of those Liturgies and Prayers before-mentioned, which go under the Names of St. *Peter*, &c. For I apprehend it is likely that some of the inspired Devotions which came from the Mouths of those Persons, were inserted into these Composures; and thence these have been receiv'd as their Liturgies. But excepting these few Strictures of Apostolical Devotion, all the rest is counterfeit; that is, it was not of the Apostles Inditing. Which I prove thus, We can't think that St. *Basil* and St. *Chrysostom* would have composed *Liturgies*, as they did, if they had thought those *others* were Authentick; that is, that they were made and composed by the Inspired Apostles. But these excellent and pious Fathers framed their Liturgies and publick Prayers because the Extraordinary Gift of Prayer was ceas'd in the Church, and therefore there was now Occasion for stated Plat-forms of Prayer. And that some of the Christian Churches had Set Forms of publick Devotion, and used them Morning and Evening, is clear from the Testimony of Fathers, and Councils, and Ecclesiastick Writers.

PROP. VI. In what Times so ever the publick Prayers of the Church were performed in *Set Words*, I am sufficiently persuaded that they did not wholly exclude all *Extemporary Prayer*, or praying without Book, as we say. This may be gathered from several Passages in the Writings of the Ancients, and particularly from that of *Tertullian*, who saith, They * *pray'd without a Monitor, and from their Hearts.* Which he speaks of the publick Prayers of the Christians, and thence 'tis evident, that they did not read their Prayers out of a Book; for he could not have expressed the contrary more plainly than he doth. Wherefore 'tis not to be doubted, that *praying without a Monitor*, and *from the Heart*, is praying *ex tempore*. And it is strange that any Men should oppose this, and with so much *Fierceness* as they do, against all Grammar, Authority, Sense and Reason. So *Justin Martyr* tells us, That *the President*, or Bishop, sends up Prayers and Thanksgivings * *according to his Ability.* Another ancient Father speaks after the same manner, *We worship*, saith he, *with Supplication one God according* † *as we are Able:* And again, || *According to the present Ability that is given us.* Which doth most fully and emphatically express their *Conceiving of Prayer*; but can't possibly be applied to the praying out of a Book. Without doubt the other was the Usage in those Times upon emergent Occasions; they then took Liberty, even in publick, to utter those Things in Prayer which they immediately *conceiv'd.* Even in those Churches where Set Prayers were generally used in the publick Service of God, we have Reason to believe, That sometimes the Ministers pray'd by their own private Gift, and utter'd Things which were not contained in any of their Forms. This is included in the Observation which the *Ecclesiastical Historian* makes concerning the different Customs in the Christian Churches about Praying; and then concludes thus: * *Among all the Religious Modes of Praying, you can't find two of them in any Place that agreed among themselves.* And other Writers acquaint us, That in some Churches the Prayers were before Sermon, in others after it: Sometimes the Lord's Prayer was used before their other Prayers, as *Tertullian* testifies in his Book *concerning Prayer*; sometimes after them, as we use it at this Day. And the Lord's Prayer was generally, but not always used in the primitive Churches. And as for other prescribed Forms, it was the Custom, for the most part, to make use of them; but sometimes conceived Prayers were thought fittest, as is plain and evident from the Writings of *Eusebius*, *Socrates*, *Sozomen*, *Theodoret*, and other ancient Writers. In brief, It appears from Ecclesiastical History, That though there were Set Forms of Prayer in publick, yet in some Churches there was not a complete Common-Prayer Book, or Body of Devotion; only some Prayers of certain Holy Men were introduced, and used by them: And in other Churches, where composed Prayers were ordinarily used, they did not exclude Prayers even

* *Sine Monitore quin de pectore oramus.* Apolog. cap. 30.

* Ὅσον δύναμις αὐτῷ. Apolog. 2. cap. 39.

† Κατὰ τὸ δυνατὸν ἡμῖν. Orig. *cont.* Cels. lib. 8.

|| Κατὰ τὴν παροῦσαν καὶ δοθεῖσαν δύναμιν. Ibid.

* Καθόλου μέντοι παντοχοῦ καὶ πάσαις θρησκείαις τῶν εὐχῶν, οὐκ ἔστιν εὑρεῖν ἀλλήλαις συμφωνούσας δύο ἐπὶ τοῦ αὐτοῦ. Socrat. Hist. Eccles. lib. 5. cap. 1.

even of their own conceiving, as they saw Occasion for it. This is the truest Account of the Matter.

PROP. VII. According to this Ancient Pattern, the Ministers and Pastors of the Modern and Protestant Churches have used both a stated Form of Prayer, and some Composures of their own, either before prepar'd, or conceiv'd in an extemporary Way. All the Reformed Churches hold prescribed Forms of Prayer, and that in publick Worship, to be Lawful. And the *Lutheran* Churches use them, and so do some of the *Calvinists*. *Calvin* himself approved of a Set Form in the Solemn Worship of God; yea, he declares, That he would not have the Pastor deviate from it in the least, whilst he performs his publick Ministry, as we may see in his *Epistle to the Protector*. He always used the same Prayer before his Sermons, as *Beza* acquaints us in his *Preface to* Calvin's *Sermons* on *Job*; and so did *Beza* himself, as may be seen in his *Lectures on the Canticles*. And he tells us in *Calvin*'s *Life*, That *Calvin* constantly concluded his Prayer before or after Sermon with the *Lord's Prayer*. Some have fansied that his Prayers before and after his Sermons on *Job*, were a kind of *Bidding of Prayer*, and are much like our Church's, *Ye shall pray*, &c. But this is a Mistake; for *Calvin*'s * Words are a direct Prayer, and not a bare Exhortation to it.

* *Invocabimus Deum——precantes ut illi libeat——libeat etiam——Precabimur autem ipsum dicendo*, Pater noster, *&c.*

And concerning the *Bidding Prayer*, as some call it, of our Church, we must know, that it had its Beginning in *England* in King *Henry* VIII's Days, even when the rest of the Service was in *Latin*; and it was thought to be only a telling the People what they should pray for at that Time in the Lord's Prayer; which is a very odd Conceit. Others thought it was like the *ἐκφωνήσεις* used by the *Fathers* of Old, which was suggested only to bring the Thing into some Repute. It was afterwards put into the *Canons* of our Church in Queen *Elizabeth*'s Time, and is there intituled, † *The Form of a Prayer to be used by Preachers before their Sermons*. And 'tis said there, That *the Ministers shall move the People to join with them in Prayer in this Form, or to this Effect, as briefly and as conveniently they may*. Which Words, *to this Effect*, shew, That this is a Form to be *imitated*, not *expressly used*, and so indeed the * *Latin* Copy of the Canon makes it evident. And besides, when 'tis enjoyned that the People shall be moved to join in Prayer in this Form *as briefly* as they can, it is manifest thence, that the very Words themselves are not to be precisely rehears'd, and that it is not *properly* a Form that is here required; for the same Form cannot be made *briefer* or *longer*. The Meaning then of the Canon is, That Ministers in their Prayer before Sermon shall imitate this Form of Words, and compose such a Prayer of their own as shall comprize the Heads contained in this Exhortation. And that they are left to this Liberty, appears from the Practice of many of the most zealous Churchmen, who never used this *Bidding of Prayer*, which some thought the Canon enjoined. Nay, Dr. *Ravis* and Dr. *Fletcher*, Archbishop *Whitgift*'s Chaplains, and afterwards Bishops, who drew up that LVth Canon, always used a Form of their own before Sermons; and most of the Clergy imitated them therein: And some of the highest (as well as the inferiour) Order of Clergymen used a short Prayer of their own in the Pulpit, and they do so at this Day. It seems then, that this was, and is their Judgment, That praying in publick in a Set Form of Words appointed by the Church, doth not *exclude* Conceived Forms of the Ministers own composing, according as there shall be *Occasion*; for there cannot be a publick Form that comprehends all Things. For this Reason Free Prayers in the Pulpit are allowed; and the LXVIIth *Canon* authorizes such Prayers at the *Visitation of the Sick*. And to this end a Minister should compose such Prayers as may represent the several Conditions of sick Persons, and make use of them as he sees fit. This may be better than to leave the Inditing of them 'till he hath Occasion to use them. Thus I have finish'd the last Proposition, which asserts, That the Reformed Churches, following the Example of the Ancient One, make use of the Common Form of Devotion, with a Mixture of their Own.

† Can. 55.

* *Precationis formula à Concionatoribus in Concionum suarum ingressu imitanda.*

Now, I will briefly shew the *Reasonableness* and *Expediency* of both. First, as to Set Forms, they can't but be thought requisite, because every one hath not an Ability to express his Mind to God of a sudden in fit Words in publick, or with others. For in order to this is required Elocution, and a good Memory, which all Ministers are not furnish'd with. So that we have those Helps of Forms and Set Prayers by reason of the Inability of some that are employed in the Ministry of the Church. Again, by a publick and set Liturgy, not only the Weakness of Men is consulted, but the publick Worship of God is made more solemn, and is performed with the greater Caution and Reverence. Besides, in praying in the same Words, we shew our Consent and Agreement with our Brethren and Fellow-Worshipers. The Faithful are united by such an Unanimous Harmony in Devotion. The Reasonableness of which is yet further manifest, by considering the simple and plain Nature of a prescrib'd Form of Prayer: For what else is this but a preparing of Words beforehand, to ask such and such Things of God? Now, if the Things be fit to be asked, and the Words be fit to express the Desire of the Things, surely such a way of Devotion can't but be commendable in it self. And we are sure it can't be unacceptable to God; for he hath no where forbid us to prepare Words beforehand; nay, we see he gave the first Example of it, and was the Institutor of it. A Set Form of Words in Prayer was not Man's Invention, but God's.

Then, on the other Hand, it is reasonable that there should be a Mixture of *other Prayers* in the publick Worship of the Church, because this (as well as that before mentioned) is sometimes expedient and requisite. For there are certain Occasions and Emergencies which are not provided for by Set Liturgies, and therefore these are left to the Discretion of the Ministers of the Church, who, as often as they happen, are to make them the Matter of their Petitions or Thanksgivings, or some ways to fit their Devotions to them. Besides, it is as reasonable that the Ministers and Pastors of the Church should be permitted to use their own Occasional Prayers in publick, as they are to make and preach their own Sermons. Now, we know that they are suffered to do the latter, though there be standing *Homilies* for them to use. Why then should they be debarr'd the former, though there be a standing *Liturgy* provided for them? I don't see but one is as accountable and reasonable as the other. And without question the Church thought so, and never designed that the Common Prayer should wholly exclude the Occasional Devotions of the Minister, no more than it design'd that the Homilies should shut out the Sermons and Discourses of their own composing. No, no; our Church (as we may see from this very Thing I have mentioned) never intended that her Sons of the Ministry should *always* and on *every Account* be confined to a set Form of Words; for she knew that this is not according to the true Tenour and strain of Devotion, but is greatly prejudicial to it.

Therefore it may be observ'd, that when in the Ancient Churches of Christ set Forms of Prayer were composed and used, yet they were never *Imposed* then upon the Ministers of those Churches; but (as hath been said before) they sometimes used conceived Prayers, or Composures of their own, when there was a just Occasion for it, because they knew, that though Set Prayers in the publick Congregations are generally best, yet there is occasion sometimes for those of another Nature. Which thing might be partly learnt from God's Dispensation towards the *Jews*, his own peculiar People, who, though their Service and Worship as to all other Things was exactly and punctually set down and determin'd, so that there was no varying from it; yet, as to their Prayers and Devotions, they were left much to their Liberty. They had some little Set Forms prescrib'd them, but I could never see it prov'd, that they had a *Complete Liturgy*, which they were confined to in all their Ecclesiastical Offices and Ministrations. God was pleased not to tie them up strictly, but to allow of their using Occasional Devotions, as their Ministers saw fit. And can we think then that a prescrib'd Form is *now* and *always* requisite in the *Christian* Church, that is, so that there must be no Mixture of other Devotion? No certainly, it is reasonable to believe, that if a Set Form of Liturgy had been requisite, especially if so requisite and necessary as some pretend, our Saviour would have left us one, or order'd his Apostles to compose one; but we find no such thing, and therefore we justly inferr, that a fixed Liturgy is not of

absolute

absolute Necessity. But in this all agree (and 'tis the main thing I design'd to shew in this Discourse) that publick Prayer is absolutely necessary, and always to be used in the Church. Both Ministers and People ought with united Zeal to flock to the House of Prayer, and with all imaginable Expressions of Humility and Reverence, offer up their joint Requests and Praises to the Almighty. For it is a Church-Ordinance, and therefore is to be used in common by all the Church.

What may be further said of Prayer in general, see in *the Discourse on the* Lord's Prayer.

Of the LITURGY *of the* CHURCH *of* ENGLAND.

UNTO what I have said, I will annex a Brief Account of the Common Prayer and Liturgy of the *Church of England*, which is a signal Pattern of publick Prayer. And here I will First premise something concerning the *Original* and *Extraction* of it. And Secondly, I will briefly sum up the *Matter* and *Substance* of it. And Thirdly, Return an Answer to the Common Objections against it. First, As to the Original of this publick Form of Devotion in our Church, it was for the most Part taken out of the Holy Scriptures. Some of it was selected out of the publick Prayers of the Christian Churches of the First Centuries, as that short Ejaculation [*with thy Spirit*] which is mention'd by St. *Chrysostom* and other Fathers. And [*Lift up your Hearts : We lift them up unto the Lord*] with other Prayers belonging to the Minister, and *Responses* proper to the People, were borrow'd from the Ancients. Another Part of our Liturgy was inserted by the *Roman* Church afterwards. And the rest was added by our *Reformers*; so that it is a Medley of Devotion.

If it be suggested that our Service is taken out of the *Mass-Book* of the Church of *Rome*, the true Account of it is this.

First, Whatever is in the *Missal* is not necessarily bad and blameable, because 'tis there, for then some Places of Holy Scripture, and Doctrines taken out of it (which are to be found in that Book) should be blamed; and the *Lord's-Prayer* and the *Creed* should be condemned because we find them there. This is certain, that the Papists using of these doth not make them unlawful, no more than the * Κύριε ἐλέησον's being used by the *Gentiles* renders it such. * Arrian. *l.* 2. *c.* 7.

Secondly, Many Things in our Liturgy were used in the Primitive Churches before the *Mass* was compiled, and therefore they can't with any Reason be said to be taken out of that Book.

Thirdly, The Errors and Superstitions of the *Mass* are not to be found in our Service; for there are here no Prayers for the Dead, no Forms of Blessing the Priest's Apparel, and other Garments and Ornaments. No Forms of Benediction of Salt and Water, and Flowers, *&c.* in order to Exorcising. Here are no Blessing and Sanctifying of Candles and Torches, and the Utensils of the Altar. Here are no such foolish Ceremonies as the Priests spitting in his Left Hand, and touching the Ears and Nose of the Infant at Baptism. Here is no praying to Angels, as *Michael*, *Gabriel*, and *Raphael*; nor to the Virgin *Mary*, nor to Patriarchs and Prophets, Apostles, Evangelists, Martyrs, Confessors, Monks, *&c.* Here is no Form of Prayer for such as go on Pilgrimage. Here is no Form of Extreme Unction. But all these were in the *Old Missal*, or *Roman Common Prayer Book.* Yet,

Fourthly, It can't be denied, that several Things in the *Breviary* or *Missal*, are retained in our Rubrick and Liturgy, and the Form and Shape of them are much the same; because our Reformers intended that our Service should in a great manner resemble that of the Romanists. They composed it on Purpose after this Model, to gratifie the *Papists* at that time, that they might not be discouraged from joining with us in the publick Service. For as a * Great Man of our Church saith, *Our desire is, they would join with us in these Prayers and Holy Ceremonies which are common to them and us; and so accordingly by singular Discretion was our Service-Book compiled by our Fore-fathers, as containing Nothing that might offend them, as being almost merely a Compendium of their own Breviary and Missal*; so * *Mr.* Hale, *Fellow of* Eaton. *Sermon on* Rom. 14. 1.

so that they shall see nothing in our Meetings but what they shall see done in their own: Though (as he adds most truly) *many Things which are in theirs, here they shall not find.* And what these Things are, I have mentioned.

This is a true and impartial Account of the *Extraction* of our English Liturgy, which was compiled into this System and Form wherein now it is (excepting some few Alterations) by Learned, Grave, and Judicious Men, by Bishops, and other eminent Divines in King *Edward* VIth's Reign; some whereof were afterwards Martyrs, as *Cranmer*, *Ridley*, and *Latimer*, and were burnt at the Stake for the Defence of the Protestant Religion; and others were Confessors and Sufferers for the Truth of Christ. It might here be noted, That Dr. *Tailor* and Mr. *Sanders*, Two eminent Martyrs in Queen *Mary*'s Days, expresly approved of and commended the Book of Common Prayer, as that which was according to God's Word, and that no Christian Conscience could be offended at the Things contained in it. And we must know this, That they spoke of that Book of Prayers which was set forth by King *Edward* VI.

Secondly, I will briefly sum up the *Matter* of this celebrated Body of Devotion, and display it in its several Parts. In the Prayers for Morning and Evening, we may observe, That there is in the first place some seasonable *Sentence* to be read out of the Scriptures to prepare and stir us up to our following Devotions. Then, there is is a serious *Exhortation* to an humble Acknowledgment and Confession of our Sins, and to worship God. Next is the *Confession* it self, which hath these two Properties; it is *pithy* and *comprehensive*, though it be short: It is *plain* and *intelligible*, and fitted to the meanest Capacities, and every One's Condition. It may be further observed, That this Confession is injoined to be said with *an humble Voice*, to denote, that we are unworthy to open our Mouths before that God whom we have sinned against. It is a Fault then that the Confession is generally said with a loud Voice: After the Penitential Confession, follows the *Absolution*, or the Declaring of the Forgiveness of the Peoples Sins on their true Repentance and unfeigned Belief. These Parts of the Liturgy, together with the Lord's Prayer, and most of the Petitions, Supplications, and Thanksgivings appropriated to the Morning and Evening Service, are constant and unchangeable. As for the *Lord's Prayer*, it is made an Entrance (and that very fitly) to our Solemn Devotion; yea, and is used not only in the Beginning, but is inserted into other Parts of the Liturgy, to supply the Imperfections (as some would have it) of the other Prayers. Or rather, This Repetition is to be imputed to the Diversity of Services, which our Liturgy consists of.

In this Body of Devotion there are larger, and there are shorter Prayers, which latter are call'd *Collects*, perhaps because they are generally collected out of that Portion of Scripture to which they are prefix'd. The *Litany* is a famous Model of Devotion, and consists of *Deprecations* against all Evil, and *Supplications* for all Good, and both for the sake of Christ's Meritorious Undertakings. There are in it, and in the Prayers annex'd to it, several *Reiterations* and *Repetitions* of the same Words, to signify our earnest Desire of being heard, and to make the greater Impression of the Things upon our Minds. And they can't be condemn'd as *vain Repetitions*, because the Devout *Psalmist* is wont to repeat the same Petitions, and to utter the same Words frequently in his ardent Addresses to God. At the end of all the Prayers and Thanksgivings *Amen* is added, and enjoin'd to be pronounc'd with an audible Voice, it being the Primitive Custom in the Christian Churches, 1 *Cor.* 14. 16. and often mention'd by the * Fathers. In the close of all the Psalms and Hymns there is adjoin'd the *Doxology*, *Glory be to the Father, &c.* which is the Christians constant brief Hymn, and short Creed.

* *Ad similitudinem cælestis tonitrui Amen reboat.* Hieron. Præfat. Epist. *ad* Galat.

After the *Psalms* and *Hymns* there are *Chapters* to be read out of the *Old* and *New Testament*. The former of these is read over once a Year, and the latter thrice. Hereby the Harmony of the Scripture is preserv'd, and 'tis seen that the *Old* and *New Testament* agree. The Types, and the Things typify'd are plainly shew'd, to answer to one another. Prophecies are discern'd to be fulfill'd,

fill'd, and Promises and Threatnings to be perform'd, which are a great Confirmation of our Faith and Religion. But our Church hath order'd, that in reading of the *Old Testament* the Book of *Chronicles* shall be omitted, because the Contents of it are for the most part extant in *Samuel* and the *Kings*. And some Chapters of other Books, chiefly relating to the *Jewish* State, are left out, together with the whole *Book of the Canticles*, in Imitation perhaps of the *Jews*, who read not this Book in their Synagogues, nor some Chapters of the Book of *Genesis*, as being not so edifying, they think, as the rest. And in the *New Testament*, according to the Appointment of our Church, some Chapters in the Book of the *Revelation* are not publickly read, for the like Reason as some are pleas'd to think. As the Liturgy hath peculiar Devotions for *Festivals*, so it chooses for us particular and suitable Lessons, that is, Chapters out of the Moral Books of the *Old Testament*, as *Proverbs* and *Ecclesiastes*, and out of the Apocryphical Books, as *Ecclesiasticus*, *Wisdom*, *&c.* which commemorate the Vertues and Graces of Holy Men, or consist of Rules and Instructions of Holy Living.

Besides the Chapters read in the Yearly Course, there are select Parcels of Scripture appointed to be read at extraordinary Times, as the *Epistles*, which are choice Places for Instruction, and for the regulating of our Manners; and the *Gospels*, which contain the most remarkable Histories and Passages of our Saviour's Life. These latter are of great Antiquity, for they are Places of Scripture that were set out for the Lord's Days, and other solemn Times by St. *Jerome*, who did it by Order of *Damasus* Bishop of *Rome*, A. D. 370. And the former, namely the *Epistles* were added, *A. D.* 770, by *Paul*, Deacon of *Aquileia*, in *Charles the Great*'s Time.

In our Common-Prayer-Book there are *Three Creeds* which are enjoin'd to be recited, the *Apostles*, the *Athanasian*, and *Nicene* Creed, which were framed to instruct us in the main Points of Faith, and the Mysteries of Christianity. The Creeds at first were only private Confessions of Faith, as is plain from the Form of the *Apostles* and the *Nicene* Creed; for they run in the First Person Singular, *I believe*. Whereas, if they had been designed for the publick Service, they would have been in the Plural Number. This shews, That the Creeds were intended to be a single Rehearsal of the Articles of the Christian Faith, and were not fitted to the publick and common Devotion. They only repeated the Creeds at Baptism, not else in the first and earliest Ages. But afterwards these were taken in as Parts of *publick Worship*; which was not 'till the beginning of the Sixth Century in the Eastern Church, and 'till the latter end of the same in the Western Church, according to the Account which is given us by the Learned Author of * *The History of the Apostles Creed*. There are the *Ten Commandments*, with a short *Ejaculation* between every one of them, which begs Pardon, and implores God's Assistance. * Chap. 46.

There is all this, and much more contain'd in that part of the Liturgy which is for our daily Use and Devotion: Not now to speak of all its other *Offices* and *Directions* in all other Religious Matters whatsoever, as *Forms for Administring of Baptism* both publick and private) and the *Lord's Supper*, for celebrating of *Marriage*, for *Visitation of the Sick*, for *burying the Dead*, for *Confirmation of Children* when they are presented to the Bishop, for *Mother's returning of Thanks* at their first going Abroad into the Assemblies after Child-bearing. These are the several Parts of the Common-Prayer-Book, and we see what Variety there is of Petitions, Deprecations, Thanksgivings, Hymns, and Songs of Praise, Confessions, Exhortations, *&c.* all order'd and methodized in the best manner (as was thought at that Time when they were composed) for exciting Affection, and stirring up Devotion, and for being a proper Help and Instrument of Piety.

In the Third and Last Place, I am to answer an *Objection* which some have made use of against our Liturgy, and it is fetch'd from *Geneva*, and from the most Renowned Person there. He was pleas'd to give this as his Judgment concerning the *English* Common-Prayer-Book, that * *he found many tolerable Fooleries and Trifles in it*. Therefore certainly, if so Wise and Judicious a Man pronounced thus of our Service, we can entertain but a mean Opinion of it; and it can hardly be thought fit and convenient, that Trifles and Fopperies should be mingled with our Devotions. The true and just Reply to this Allegation, is this,

* *In Anglicana Liturgia, qualem describitis, multas video fuisse tolerabiles ineptias.* Calvin.

this, That many *English* Protestants, in the Year of our Lord 1555, to avoid the Persecution which Queen *Mary* had set on foot, fled to *Frankford* in *Germany*, where they were in debate whether they should use the Liturgy and Ceremonies prescribed by the *Church of* England, or whether they should lay them aside. The Party that favour'd this latter sent to Mr. *Calvin*, then in great Esteem, and ask'd his Advice about them, they having first given him a Description of them. He, after he had weigh'd what they said, check'd and reprov'd them, telling them that it was very unseasonable and unseemly to raise Dissentions among themselves, and at such a Time as that especially, and that as to that System of Prayers and Devotions which they had sent to him, he did not find any Impiety, or Superstition in it, but only *several Trifles which might be born with.*

Which Censure of his doth not affect the present Service-Book that is now in use, if we consider these two Things, First that this Censure proceeded only from that Information which that part of the then *English* Refugees gave concerning the Liturgy, which it is likely was given in such a manner, as *Calvin* could not but be induc'd to disapprove of it. He had not seen it, and perused it, but gives his Judgment of it on their sole Representation of it. Secondly, We are to consider, that this Censure was of that Book of Common-Prayer which was set out first of all by King *Edward* the VIth. and accordingly Mr. *Knox* and Mr. *Whittingham*, who were the principal Men that writ to Mr. *Calvin* to send his Opinion of it, mention'd some *Ceremonies* which were *then* in use, and enjoin'd by that Book, but were presently after laid aside. We must know then that the *English* Liturgy, which was compos'd in King *Edward* the VIth's Reign, was in his Reign also alter'd and amended; and in the first Year of Queen *Elizabeth* it was allow'd again, and a third Time in the first Year of King *James*'s Reign, after the *Conference* at *Hampton-Court*; and lastly, at King *Charles* IId's Return. Wherefore at this Day *Calvin*'s Exception against the Liturgy is alledg'd unseasonably.

Of READING *the* HOLY SCRIPTURES.

R*Eading the Scriptures* is another solemn Act of publick Worship. This was used in the *Jewish* Church, by God's Special Command. Moses *took the Book of the Covenant* (*i. e.* the Laws and Statutes deliver'd by God to the People) *and read it in the Audience of the People*, Ex. 24. 1. And in *Deut.* 31. 11, 12. *Moses* is commanded *to read the Law before all* Israel, *in their hearing*,——*that they may hear, and that they may learn.* And it was ever afterwards a constant part of their Service and Worship to have the Scriptures read to them in the publick Assemblies. Thus we are told, that *the Prophets were read every Sabbath-Day*, Acts 13. 27. *And again*, Moses *in old Time hath in every City them that preach him, being read in the Synagogues every Sabbath-Day*, Acts 15. 21. And the Apostle tells us, that *the Veil* (*i. e.* of Ignorance) *remain'd untaken away, in the reading of the* Old Testament, 2 *Cor.* 3. 14. The *Old Testament* then was read; and to that end the *Pentateuch* was divided into Fifty four *Parasha*'s or *Sections*, which they read in Fifty Two Sabbaths, joyning Two of the shortest twice together; so they finish'd the Law in a Year's space, by reading a *Parasha* or Lecture every Sabbath-Day. They had other Portions out of the *Prophets*, which they call'd *Haphtarch's*, which they also read in order in their Synagogues. Yea, and they caus'd to be publickly read all Divine Messages and Warnings, all Admonitions and Predictions of Judgments; as *Jeremiah*'s Prophecy *was read in the Ears of the People, and in the Ears of all* Judah, *Jer.* 36. 6. In so great Esteem was the *publick Reading* in the *Jewish* Church, before the Return from the Captivity. And afterwards they betook themselves to the same Way of Worship; an eminent Instance of which we have in *Neh.* 8. 18. All the Time of the celebrating of the Feast of Tabernacles, Ezra *read in the Book of the Law of God.* And afterwards upon a Day of solemn Fasting, *they* (*i. e.* the *Levites* and Ministers named in the next Verse) *stood up in their Place, and read in the Book of the Law*, Neh. 9. 3.

If

If then the Reading of the Scriptures was part of the Divine Worship prescrib'd by God in the *Old Testament*, we are not to doubt but that it is to prevail in the *New*. For all Acts of Moral and Religious Worship, and which have no relation to the *Jewish* Dispensation, or can be thought to be meer Rites and Ceremonies, are of perpetual Obligation; and consequently *Christians* are concern'd in them as well as *Jews*. For this Reason the publick Reading of the Bible is constituted a standing part of Worship by Christ himself, *Luke* 4. 16. *He went into the Synagogue on the Sabbath-Day, and stood up to read*; and accordingly he read a Section out of the Prophet *Isaiah*. Which Practice and Example of our Saviour doth for ever authorize the like Practice in the Christian Churches; for we may be assur'd, that if he allow'd of the publick reciting of the Scriptures of the *Old Testament*, (as we see he did) he did at the same Time signify his Approbation of rehearsing certain Portions of the New, in the Congregations of Christians met together to Worship God. And from this very Example we have ground of concluding, that reading the Scripture both of the *Old* and *New Testament*, is a part of Divine Worship.

And we are farther confirm'd in this from the Practice of the Church afterwards. Thus St. *Paul*'s Epistle to the *Colossians* was publickly read in the Church of *Colosse*, and in that of *Laodicea*; as may be gather'd from *Col.* 4. 16. *When this Epistle is read among you, &c.* Another Instance of which we have in 1 *Thess.* 5. 27. *I charge you by the Lord that this Epistle be read unto all the Holy Brethren.* From which Passages we may reasonably inferr, that the Pastors of Churches did read the other *Apostolical Epistles* in the publick Assemblies; and if they read these, there is no Question but they read the *Gospels*, and for the same Reason the rest of the Holy Scriptures, they all being of equal Authority, as being from Divine Inspiration. And this publick Reading of the Inspir'd Writings, is partly meant, I conceive, by *giving Attendance to Reading*, which *Timothy* is charg'd to do, 1 *Tim.* 4. 13. For I observe that this *Reading* is join'd with *Exhortation* and *Doctrine*, in the same Verse, which referr to the publick Office of *Preaching*; and consequently the *Reading* here enjoin'd hath respect to the publick Ministry, and is one part of it.

And to descend to the Christians in After-Times, *Justin Martyr* testifies that the Bible was read in the publick Assemblies, for describing the publick Service he saith, * *The Records of the Apostles* (that is, the *New Testament*) and *the Writings of the Prophets* (that is, the *Old Testament*) *are read.* *Tertullian* likewise giving an Account of the publick Worship in his Time, tells us, that † *they met together to read or recite the Divine Writings, according as the present Occasion or Season requir'd.* By which he means, that they chose proper Lessons to read to the People. That this was part of their publick Worship, is attested by ‖ *Cyprian*, by * *Origen*, by † *Chrysostom*, and others of the Antients. And in those Times the reading of the Scriptures in the publick Assemblies of the Faithful, was a particular and distinct *Office* in the Church, and was generally a Step and Preparative to Sacred Orders. These Ἀναγνῶσται, these *Readers* are mention'd by ‖ *Sozomen*, and by * *Theodoret*, who tells us that *Julian*, afterwards known by the infamous Title of *Apostate*, was one of these Readers in the Church. When he was next Heir but one to the *Roman* Empire, he thought it an honourable Employment to read the Scriptures publickly.

* Τὰ ἀπομνημονεύματα τῶν Ἀποστόλων ἢ τὰ συγγράμματα τῶν Προφητῶν ἀναγινώσκεται. Apol. 2. cap. 39.

† *Cogimur ad divinarum literarum commemorationem, si quid præsentium temporum qualitas aut præmonere cogit aut recognoscere.* Apologet. cap. 39.

‖ Epist. 34.

* Cont. Cels. l. 3.

† Homil. 8. *in* Epist. *ad* Hebr, & Hom. 19. *in* Act. Apost.

‖ Eccl. Hist. l. 4. c. 3.

* Eccl. Hist. l. 3. c. 2.

Thus from Primitive *Institution* and *Practice*, it sufficiently appears, that Reading of God's Word is a publick Duty of the Church; and *Reason*, as well as Divine Appointment and Primitive Example, leads us to this Perswasion, for the Holy Scriptures are the grand Rule of our Faith and of our Lives. And therefore these Sacred Writings are to be consulted not only at Home, but they are to be recited in the Congregations, that our Duty may be the more solemnly publish'd, and that we may openly acknowledge it, and continually have it in our Ears, and in our Memories, by the orderly and successive Reading of the Books of the *Old* and *New Testament*. To this purpose the publick Reading of them was establish'd as a Divine Ordinance, and a part of publick Worship,

Worship, and so is to continue in all Ages of the Church. For there is the same Reason for Reading the Scriptures now, that there was at first.

Of Catechizing, *or* Instructing *Children and others in the* PRINCIPLES *of* RELIGION.

THE next Divine Institution, or Sacred Ordinance, is *the publick Teaching*, or *Instructing the People*. For the publick *Ministry of the Word* (as tis call'd *Acts* 6. 4.) consists either in the *Reading* of the Word, of which I have already spoken, or in *Catechetically* propounding it, or in *Preaching* it, of both which I am now to speak. For those that are to be taught or instructed, are not only those that are Novices in Religion, and ignorant of the Principles of Christianity, but those also that have attained to some Knowledge of the Christian Principles: For these are further to be informed, and those Principles and Heads of Divinity are to be practically applied to them, and affectionately urged and pressed upon them by the Ministers of the Gospel. Whence arise those two necessary Offices in the Church of *Catechizing* and *Preaching*.

I begin with the former, the useful and necessary Exercise of *Catechizing*, or the delivering the Heads of Divinity in a Catechetical way. In pursuance of which, I will undertake these Four Things:

1. To explain the Nature of this Work.
2. To shew the Antiquity and Authority of it, as it consists in a Summing up the main Points of Religion, and as it is framed into the Way of Questions and Answers.
3. To propound a brief Idea or Platform of Catechetical Doctrine.

And, 4thly, To shew the Reasonableness, Usefulness, and Necessity of *this* Way of Instruction, as also the Danger of Neglecting it.

I shall very largely, and more than ordinarily exspatiate on this Head, because it is too evident in this present Age, that there is an extraordinary Neglect of the *Grand Principles* and *Grounds of Religion*; whence it is that *Scepticism* and *Indifferency* in Religion, and even *Atheism* reign among us: and likewise, because in Handling of *Catechizing*, I shall comprehend a great part of the Materials of *Preaching*.

1. As to the *True Nature* and *Notion* of *Catechizing*, it is an Instructing of those that are Young, and those also of Riper Years in the Principles of Religion. For both these are to be instructed: the Former, that is the Younger sort, that they may learn to Know God, and Serve Him betimes; the Latter, namely, those of Elder Years, that, if they have neglected the Knowledge of God and their Duty in their Childhood and Youth, they may no longer go on in their Ignorance, but now at last understand the main Points of Faith, and the Grand Principles of Divine Truth. This then I lay down as a *General* Account of the Nature of *Catechizing*: It is an Instructing of All Sorts of Persons in the *plain* and *necessary* Principles of Religion. It is the laying the Foundation of Christianity. So that *Preaching* is the same with *Catechizing*, if you speak of the General Notion of Catechizing, which is Instructing both Young and Old in the Fundamentals of Religion. This is One great Task and Imployment of a *Preacher*. Both Preaching and Catechizing are to inform Persons concerning the Great and Necessary Points of Religion. Thus Catechizing may be performed in the Pulpit no less than in the Reading-Pew. All Sermons should give Notice of some Grand Principle of Religion. A Minister may catechize and preach at once; that is, He may preach in a Catechetical Way, which is no other than Handling the Fundamental Truths in a plain and intelligent manner, without meddling with difficult and controverted Points.

And

And this (as Ecclesiastical History acquaints us) was a particular and distinct Office in the Primitive Times. Authentick Writers tell us that the *Catechist* was he that instructed the *Catechumeni*, that is, Those that were to be initiated into the Church by Baptism. The Catechist's Office was to prepare Persons for that Sacrament, and sometimes for the other, by informing them concerning the most material and substantial Points of Christianity. The Records of ancient Times make mention both of these *Catechists* and the *Catechumeni*. *Eusebius* acquaints us, that there were very eminent Persons in the Church that undertook this necessary Office of catechizing the Youth and Others, and fitting them for receiving the Sacraments. He relates that at *Alexandria*, the First Catechist, was *Pantenus*, a Christian Convert from the Stoick Philosophy: He was Instructor and Teacher of the Catechumens in the Principles of Religion. *Origen*, after him, had this Office, in the Famous School of *Alexandria*, of Instituting those that were newly come to the Faith. This *Origen* was of no small Note, and is said to have been very active in Restoring the Exercise of Catechizing in that Great City. *Optatus* was appointed by St. *Cyprian* to be publick Catechist and Instructor of the Youth in the chief Points of Christianity. And St. *Jerom* mentions *Gregory Nazianzen* and others who had this Office in his Time, and he tells us that himself was instructed and catechized by them. Those that were thus Instructed, were styled not only *Catechumeni*, but *Audientes*, *Discipuli*, Hearers, Scholars, Probationers, Learners in Christianity. Such a one was St. *Augustine*, when he became of a *Manichee* a Christian, and he wrote several Treatises as a *Catechumen* before he was baptized by St. *Ambrose*. Such a one was *Ambrose* himself before he was chosen Bishop; for he was chosen Bishop whilest he was Governour of *Milan*, the Church and the Necessities of it so requiring it, when *Arianism* had over-run the greatest Part of the Christian World. *Eusebius* hath many Things concerning these *Catechumeni* in the Tenth Book of his *Ecclesiastical History*.

The Sum of all that may be further said on this Head, is, that in the Primitive Churches after the Apostles Days the *Catechumeni* were of two sorts, First, Those that were Converts and Proselytes to Christianity from *Gentilism* or *Judaism*. These before they were baptized, were catechized, they being adult Persons, and able to understand the Principles of the Christian Faith. The *Catechetical Discourses* of *Cyril* (afterwards Bishop of *Jerusalem*) were made to such as these; namely, to instruct them, in order to their being admitted to Baptism, and initiated into the Christian Communion. Secondly, Those that were Children of *Christians*, and born in the Church: These being Baptized, were afterwards Instructed, and so were admitted to the Holy Communion, the Catechists having first prepared them for it. It may be gathered then from what hath been said, that the Ancient Catechizing was not of mere Children, but of those also who were past their Childhood, and were come to Years of Discretion. Thus it was generally, so far as I can perceive, and the Catechizing of *Children* was not the only Work of these Persons before named. It appears then that the Pulpit may be the proper Place for that Catechizing, which was in use among the Ancients. Whilest the Minister is employed in laying the *Foundations* of Religion, he is a *Catechist*. And truly this is of great and indispensible Use, so that we need not wonder that it was of Long Continuance in the Church, and is still retained in the Practice of all the Faithful Guides of Souls.

Neither is this the Work and Task of the *Ministers* of the Gospel only; but it is the Concern, and ought to be the Study and Practice of all that are indued with Abilities to inform their Charge in the Knowledge of the Principles of Religion. The Ecclesiastical Records acquaint us, that some of the *Catechists* whom I spoke of were not Evangelical Priests or Ordained Ministers: As particularly they tell us, That *Origen* was a Lay-man when he discharged that Office. And accordingly this was performed by them in some School, and not in a solemn Assembly of the whole Church. All Persons then who are able to instruct others in the Principles of Christianity are concerned in this Duty. *Schoolmasters* should teach the *Catechism*, the Grounds of Religion. This is requisite in a Christian Nation, besides, that it is expressly commanded by the *Canons* of our Church. Those likewise that are *Parents* and *Governours of Families*;

lies, are to take Care that their Children and Servants be taught the Articles of the Christian Faith. But the *Ministers* and *Dispensers of the Gospel* are *more-especially* obliged to perform this Work. They are to Teach with Authority, as being particularly set apart and designed by the Church for the Instructing of Souls, and building them up in their most Holy Faith. They are grosly neglectful of their Ministerial Office, and Unfaithful in the Discharge of it, if they take not Care to instill the Principles of Religion into the Minds of those who are their Flock; if they do not rightly inform them in all the Fundamental Doctrines of Christianity. Thus I have given you the *General Notion* of Catechizing, which is no other than this, To lay the Ground-work or Foundation of Religion, to teach the first Rudiments and Principles of Christianity.

But besides this more general Notion, if you would have a *particular Account* of the Nature of Catechizing, I conceive it contains in it these Three Things; First, Catechizing in the Restrained Notion which we of late commonly take it in, is Instructing of *Children* and *Youth* only. And herein the Difference between *That* and *Preaching* is easily perceived. Secondly, Catechizing is a *Brief Summing up* of the Principles of Religion. It is an Abbreviature and a Compendium of Christian Doctrine. A *Catechism* is a Summary of the main Heads of our Holy Religion. And in This also it differs from *Preaching*, which is a more large way of handling those Doctrines. Thirdly, Catechizing is the conveying of the Knowledge of the Principles of Religion by way of *Question* and *Answer*. This is Catechizing according to the import of the *Greek* Word from whence it is derived, as you shall hear afterwards. Hence that which we call a *Catechism*, is a Treatise composed of the chief plain Heads of Divinity, and proposed in way of Queries, and Answers to them. Thus far I have gone in pursuance of the First Particular, *viz.* The *Nature* of Catechizing.

II. I am to set before the Reader the *Antiquity* and *Authority* of Catechizing, at it is a Summary of Divinity, and as it consists of Questions and Answers.

First, The Antiquity and Authority of the Catechistical Way; namely, as to its *Summing up in short the Heads of Divinity*, and giving an Account in Brief of the several Points of Religion, are clear and undeniable. The ancient Records of Holy Scripture acquaint us, That this way of Catechizing hath been long in Use in the World. *Briefs* and *Compendiums* of Religion have been anciently receiv'd in the Church of God, and that by the immediate Appointment of God himself. Thus God reduced All the Duties of Religion to Ten Heads; or, as the Hebrews speak, to *Ten Words*, which we call the *Commandments*. This was an Abridgment of Divinity delivered to the Jewish People, and was to be ever in their Eye, to present them with a short Account of what God required of them. And the *Jewish Rabbies* are of the Opinion that the *Phylacteries* and *Frontlets* which the Jews were ordered to make and wear, were first instituted by God for this Use; namely, That certain Abridgments of the Law might be written in them. And the Hebrew Doctors mention some particular *Texts* of the Law which they usually copied out, and bore about them in these Parchment Memorials. The Ten Commandments are contracted into a Lesser Number in *Mic.* 6. 8. *He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good: And what doth the Lord require of thee but to do Justly, and to love Mercy, and to walk Humbly with thy God.* Here our whole Duty is summed up in Justice, Mercy and Humility. *Solomon* seems to follow this Way of Abbreviating, in the Close of his Book intituled *Ecclesiastes*. *Let us hear*, (saith he) *the Conclusion of the whole Matter: Fear God and keep his Commandments, for this is the Whole Duty of Man.* In these few Words is comprised the *Whole of Man* (for so it is in the Hebrew): All that a Man is concerned in, as to Religion, is briefly summed up in Fearing God and Keeping his Commandments. There is Nothing more required to constitute us the Children of God, and to make us Happy.

There are also several short and compendious Abstracts of all Religion in the New Testament. Our Saviour hath reduced All Duties unto Two in *Matt.* 22. 37, &c. There you read, That a Pharisee, who was a Lawyer, came to our Lord, and asked him a Question; he would needs turn a sort of Catechist. *Master*, saith he, *which is the Great Commandment in the Law?*

Jesus

Jesus saith unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy Heart, and with all thy Soul, and with all thy Mind. This is the First and Great Commandment. And our Saviour goes on to satisfy him above his Demands; for he only asked, What was the First Commandment, but Christ proceeds to tell him what was the Second also. *The second is like unto it; Thou shalt love thy Neighbour as thy self. On these Two Commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets.* Love of God and our Brethren are the Abstract and Epitome of All our Duty. You will find St. *Paul* likewise drawing up an Abridgment or Summary of Christian Divinity: All that is requisite to Salvation is reduced by him to Two Heads in his Farewell-Sermon at *Miletus*, where relating to them his Integrity and Faithfulness in preaching the Gospel to them, and how that he had kept back nothing that was profitable to them, he gives this as a Confirmation of it, That he had taught them both publickly and privately *Repentance towards God, and Faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ*, Acts 20. 21. Here is the Summ of the Whole Christian Religion; here is a Compendious Account of All the Necessaries of our Salvation. Faith and Repentance, in the Large and Comprehensive Acception of them, take in All Christianity, and include our Whole Duty. Let us go on yet further in the New Testament, and discover what Footsteps there are of this sort of *Abridgments*.

Those Words in *Rom.* 6. 17. are undoubtedly meant of this; *Ye have obeyed from the Heart that Form of Doctrine which was delivered you.* This τύπος διδαχῆς, this *Form of Doctrine* was some Known and Received Standard of Divine Truths, some certain Rules of Christianity delivered by the Apostles to the Church, and were to be acknowledged and professed by all Persons of Understanding that were admitted into the Church by Holy Baptism. It is probable that the Apostle intended these in *Rom.* 12. 6. *Having Gifts*, saith he, *differing according to the Grace given to us, whether Prophecy, let us prophesie according to the Proportion of Faith.* This ἀναλογία τῆς πίστεως, this *Analogy* or *Proportion of Faith*, referrs to those Set and Acknowledg'd Forms of Doctrine which were in those Times: And no Persons were permitted to prophesie, to expound the Scriptures of the Old Testament, or to explain the Mysteries of the Christian Dispensation, unless they kept close to these Forms of Doctrine, these Received Truths, these Acknowledg'd Verities, these Standing Rules and Directories of Christianity, which were deliver'd on purpose that all Doctrines might be examined by them. To these the Apostle seems to referr in 1 *Tim.* 4. 6. *If thou put the Brethren in Remembrance of these Things, thou shalt be a good Minister of Jesus Christ, nourished up in the Words of Faith and of Good Doctrine, whereunto thou hast attained.* These λόγοι τῆς πίστεως, these *Words of Faith* are of the same Nature with the Analogy or Proportion of Faith before-mentioned. And these λόγοι τῆς καλῆς διδασκαλίας, the *Words of Good Doctrine*, are the same with the Form of Doctrine above-named. This is called a *Good Profession*, 1 *Tim.* 6. 12. in respect of which Christ is said to be the *High Priest of our Profession*, *Heb.* 3. 1. This is the *Commandment* which *Timothy* is *charged to keep without Spot*, 1 *Tim.* 6. 14.

Of this the Apostle speaks with great Earnestness in 2 *Tim.* 1. 13. *Hold fast the Form of sound Words which thou hast heard of me, in Faith and Love which is in Christ Jesus.* That *good Thing which was committed to thee, keep by the Holy Ghost which dwelleth in us.* Here is a Form, a Pattern, an Exemplar, a Frame, a Model, a Draught, a Platform of sound Words, for all this is signified by the Word ὑποτύπωσις, and represents to us that brief and summary Account of Evangelical Truths which was then extant among the Christians. This was a Pattern of *Sound* or *Wholesome Words*, in Contra-distinction to those Unsound and Erroneous Doctrines which Men of perverse Minds had at that Time scattered amongst them, and even poysoned some part of the Church. This is also styled here καλὴ παραθήκη, *a good Depositum*, which they were to *keep* and hold fast; by which is meant no other than a Summary of Christian Divinity which was delivered from one to another before the Books of the New Testament were all written and extant. The Apostles especially were obliged to keep and preserve inviolably this Platform of Orthodox Doctrine in all their Plantations, when they were at the greatest Distance from one another.

If you should ask me, What were the particular Heads of that *Form of Doctrine* and *Sound Words?* I answer, It is not necessary that, in order to the Proving of what I have laid down, I should assign the very particular Heads; for it is sufficient that *a Form and Model of Doctrine* are mentioned in so many Places. But to give you yet further Satisfaction, I can referr you to a Place where these Heads of Divinity are particularly set down as the *Catechistical Points* of Christianity; and I question not but they are the very individual Doctrines which are meant by the Apostle in those *Texts* which I have above mentioned, and in another which I have not yet mentioned; namely, *Heb.* 5. 12. *Ye have need that one teach you again which be the first Principles of the Oracles of God.* Whence it appears, that Catechizing or Instructing in the First Rudiments of Christianity was in Use in the Apostles Time. But I proceed to the Place I design'd, which is *Hebr.* 6. 1, 2. where we have these Words, *Therefore leaving the Principles of the Doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto Perfection, not laying again the Foundation of Repentance from dead Works, and of Faith towards God, of the Doctrine of Baptisms, and of Laying on of Hands, and of the Resurrection of the Dead, and of Eternal Judgment.* These are the Catechistical Heads which the Apostle in other Places calls the *Form of Doctrine*, and the *Words of Faith*, and of *Good Doctrine*, and the *Form of Sound Words*. Here are Six Fundamental Principles of the Doctrine of Christ, *viz.* Repentance, Faith, Baptism, Laying on of Hands, the Resurrection, and the Last Judgment. These are call'd a *Foundation*, or they are several Stones in the Foundation of Christianity. Let us take a particular and distinct View of them all.

The First Fundamental Doctrine is that of *Repentance*, and is here called *Repentance from dead Works*, that is, from Sins, for so Sins are styled in Scripture. This is a very large and comprehensive Principle, and contains in it all those Necessary and Substantial Doctrines which relate to Regeneration, Sanctification, Self-denial, Mortification, and all Holy Conversation and Godliness; for all these are included in this First Principle of Repentance.

The Second is *Faith*, which is also a very large Principle, it comprehending under it an Assent to all the Doctrines of the Gospel, and a hearty Approving of them, with a firm Confiding and Relying on the Mercy of God, and the Merits of Christ Jesus. And besides, this Faith containing in it the Doctrine of *Justification*, must be a most important Head of Christian Divinity; this being the Subject which the Great Apostle repeateth and inculcateth with so much Earnestness in his Epistles to the *Romans* and to the *Galatians*.

The Third Doctrine here mentioned is that of *Baptisms*. Some, indeed, will have *Doctrine* and *Baptisms* to be two distinct Things; and according to them the Doctrine of Baptisms is that Doctrine which was taught Persons before they were admitted to Baptism. But the plain and more obvious Sense is this, That the Doctrine or Principle concerning *Baptizing*, is another very Great and Necessary Fundamental of Christianity. And it is called the Doctrine of *Baptisms*, in the Plural, because it referrs to the Baptizing of several Persons, both young Children, and those likewise of riper Years. Here then is meant that Sacred Institution and Ordinance of admitting Infants and others into the Church of Christ by washing or sprinkling them with Water, in the Name of the FATHER, SON, and HOLY GHOST. And here likewise is included the other solemn Sacrament, that of the *Lord's Supper*. For this is the usual way of the Scripture-Style to be very Succinct and Brief, and to express the Whole by a Part, and to Intend more than is expressed. One Sacrament is mention'd when Two are designed. So that the *Doctrine of Baptisms* is as much as the *Doctrine of the Sacraments*.

The Fourth Catechistical Principle is the *Laying on of Hands*, viz. First in an Extraordinary manner, for the conferring the Miraculous Gifts of the Spirit, which was in Use in the Apostles Times. Second, In the ordinary Way, *viz.* In Ordaining of Ministers. All the Faithful were to be taught and instructed in this Point of Christianity. They were to understand the Office and Dignity of the Evangelical Ministry, that they might be Obedient to their Discipline, and Attentive to their Doctrine. The Ministry of the Word is meant here (by a *Synecdoche*) by *Laying on of Hands*.

The

The *Resurrection of the Dead* is the next Principle, which touches in it all our Comforts and Assurances relating to another Life.

Eternal Judgment, or the Last Account, when eternal Life or Death shall be adjudged to all, is the Sixth and Last Principle here named; and of what vast Importance and Concern That is to us all, I need not take Pains to acquaint the Reader. Thus we see that the *Catechistical* Way of Divinity (that is, so far as it signifieth an *Abridgment* or *Compendium of Evangelical Truths*) was of great Antiquity in the Church of Christ. This Text to the *Hebrews* gives us an Account of the Apostles Practice at that Time, and of the Usage which then prevailed among them. So that *Calvin* in his Comment on these Words expressly saith, *This one Place of Scripture abundantly testifies that the Custom of Catechizing had its Rise from the Apostles.* Which is as much as to say, It was of Apostolical Institution.

Some are of the Opinion that the *Creed*, which goes under the Name of the *Apostles*, was composed by them, and appointed to be received in the Church as the Model and Platform of Christian Belief. Accordingly in the Ages ensuing the Christians made use of these Articles of Faith at the Administration of Baptism; and those who were Proselytes and Converts to Christianity were required to make a publick Profession of these Articles before they were Baptized: But of this I may more pertinently speak afterwards. That which is to our present Purpose is this, That there is plain Proof in the *New Testament* that *Settled Forms* and *Abridgments* of Christian Divinity were used by those primitive Founders of the Gospel.

And from their Practice we have derived a like Usage. All sober Christians in well-govern'd Churches retain certain Forms of Doctrine, as the Standard and Test of their Religion. Thus the *Creed*, the *Lord's-Prayer*, and the *Ten Commandments*, (the Matter of our present Undertaking) obtain universally in all Reformed Churches. These are look'd upon as a Full, though Brief Account of all Religion. For we must be reminded that there are these Three Things in Religion, *viz.* Things to be known and believed, Things to be desired and prayed for, and lastly, Things to be done and practised. The Sum and Substance of the Doctrine of Christianity consists of these Three general Heads, *Believing*, *Praying*, and *Doing*. These are the Things that are required of us, and all Religion is reduced to These. And it is worth our observing, that the Three great Evangelical Graces, that is, *Faith*, *Hope* and *Charity* are the proper Helps to us in the discharging of our Duty as to these Three Things. For by *Faith* we Believe all that God hath revealed, be it never so improbable. By *Hope* we expect and pray for all good Things, though they be never so difficult to be obtained: And by *Love* and *Charity* we are inabled to do our Duty towards God and Man with great Pleasure and Chearfulness; because, Love makes all Things Easy. *Faith* doth mighty Things, because 'tis founded on God's Truth and Faithfulness, which cannot deceive us. Hope is very Effectual and Powerful; because it relieth on the Divine Goodness and Mercy in Christ Jesus, which are inexhaustible. Finally, *Charity* works Wonders; because it is founded on God's Love and Kindness to Us, which is the most powerful Incitement imaginable to endeavour and perform all that we can. Thus those Three main Duties of *Believing*, *Praying*, and *Living well* are set forward, and promoted by these Graces. And the *Creed*, *Lord's-Prayer*, and *Ten Commandments* administer plentiful Matter in order to those Duties. For the *Creed* is a compendious Draught of the choicest Articles which are the Object of our Assent and Faith, especially as we are Christians. The *Lord's-Prayer* is an Abbreviature of all Things that are to be desired, hoped and prayed for by us. And the *Commandments* are an Abstract of the whole Moral Law.

And because it is fitting that the *Seals* should go along with the *Deeds* and *Covenants*, the Doctrine of the *Sacraments* (which are as it were the Seals of the Evangelical Covenant) is a necessary Appendage to these great Things of Religion which I have named.

Thus you see how the necessary Heads of Catechetical Doctrine, which are the chief Principles of Knowledge in order to a Holy Life and Practice, are comprehended in the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, the Decalogue, and the Doctrine of the Sacraments. Consequently, the *Catechism* of the *Church of England*,

England, as small as it is, comprises in it the main Things necessary to Salvation. And it is the Task of those who are the Guides and Instructers of Souls to *inlarge* upon them, and to *display* the several particular Heads of Divinity which are couched in them, and to annex the *Christian Graces* to the *Moral Ones*. Thus I have given an Account of the *Authority* and *Antiquity* of the first Part of Catechizing, *viz.* the suming up of the Principles of Religion, and contracting them into a narrow Compass.

Secondly, I will speak of the Authority of the other Part of Catechizing, which is by Way of *Question and Answer*; For the Word κατηχεῖν, which signifieth to *Resound* or *Echo back again* (from whence *Catechizing* is derived) denotes unto us this particular Manner of Catechizing. There seem to be some Footsteps of this in the most Sacred Antiquity. This was commanded the *Jews* of old, as some of the *Hebrew Doctors* gather from *Deut.* 6. 7. *The Words which I command thee thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy Children.* Where they observe that it is in the Hebrew, *Thou shalt Whet* or *Sharpen them* upon thy Children. Which, say they, imports this particular way of teaching and instituting Children, *viz.* by Catechizing; which being performed by asking of Questions, and demanding an Answer to them, is accompanied with more Acuteness and Vigour, than if it were done only in the Way of Lecture or Discourse. These *Interrogatories* pierce with some Sharpness into the Minds of those that are Catechized, and they are Returned with *Replies* which whet the Doctrine yet more and more upon their Understandings.

And it is probable that this particular Way of Instructing is meant in *Prov.* 22. 6. *Train up a Child in the way he should go*: For tho' the Verb be rendred by our Translators *Train up*, (alluding to a *Military Discipline*, as if the wise Man had said, Train up or Exercise a Child as a young Soldier, discipline the unexperienced Youth, bring them up to the Spiritual Warfare, that is, to fight against the Devil, the World and the Flesh): And though the *Septuagint* render it, *Dedicate a Child* (with an Allusion, and that very fitly, to *Temples* which are dedicated and devoted to God as soon as they are built: Thus Childhood and Youth are to be consecrated early. They are Holy Ground, they are Temples of the Holy Ghost, they are set apart for Religion, and it is Sacrilege to alienate themselves.) Though these forenamed *Versions* give us this good Account of the Word in the Original, yet the *Hebrew* is Fuller and more Emphatical, and indeed is not sufficiently translated by our *English* Interpreters. For there are these Three Words in the Hebrew, *Chanak gnal pi*, which, if you will render Word for Word, must be done thus, *Instruct according to the Mouth.* Which seems to be an Excellent Allusion; for it relates to the way of Mothers and Nurses *feeding their Children.* A familiar, but very significant Comparison.

I must confess my self not so well skilled, as to be able to express fully how this is; but the main thing is this, The tender and loving Mother is careful to dispense the Food to her Little Ones in that manner which is most Agreeing to them. She doth not in a hasty Way offer it to them, or force it upon them, which is a Method of Choaking rather than Feeding; But she orderly and deliberately tenders the Nourishment to them, and gives them Time to accept of it, and, in short, so orders the Matter, that it plainly appears that she considers the Capacity of their little Mouths, and the narrow Passages which afterwards are to receive the Food. This is to Feed, as discreet Mothers and Nurses do, *Gnal Pi, according to the Mouth.* And it is very appositely accommodated here to the instructing of Children and Ignorant Persons, which must be orderly and gradual, and according to their Capacities. This therefore expresses the Way of Instructing, which is by *Catechizing.* This is giving of Milk to Babes; this is dispensing the Spiritual Food in a fit manner; this is instilling the Principles of Religion by degrees; this is teaching and informing according to the Age and Understanding of those that come to be taught. This cannot be better effected, than by putting *apt Questions* to them, and by requiring a *pertinent Reply* to what was asked. Therefore the Margin of our *Bibles* renders the Hebrew Word by this English one, *Catechize.* Catechize a Child in the Way he should go, instruct him in the first and easy Doctrines of Religion, ask him concerning the Necessary and Fundamental Points of *Divinity*,

Divinity, and demand an Answer of him concerning them. This seems to be the Import of the Original Word.

And perhaps *Enoch*, that excellent Patriarch, in the first Age of the World, took his *Name* from this Practice; for *Enoch* or *Chanoch* (for so it is in the *Hebrew*) is as much as *one Catechized*, Instructed, Initiated; because it is probable this godly Person was instructed betimes in the Principles of Religion, and in that manner which I am now mentioning. Hence *Chanik* is *tyro*, a *Novice*, a *Catechumen*, in the Style of the Hebrew Doctors and *Chinnok* is the Word used by them for a *Catechism*. The most excellent *Theophilus* was one that had been Catechized, for St. *Luke* tells him (*ch.* 1. *v.* 4.) that he thought good to write to him, *that he might know the Certainty of those Things wherein he had been Instructed*, or *Catechized*. * And of *Apollos* it is said, That he was a Man † *instructed in the Way of the Lord*, Acts 18. 25. The Greek Word signifieth as much as *Catechized*. And when the Apostle saith (1 *Cor* 14. 19.) that he chose to speak in the Church with his Understanding, *that by his Voice* || *he might teach others also*: I doubt not but by Teaching by his Voice, he means a very plain and intelligible way of Instructing, such as this of Catechizing is. St. *Peter* also seems to allude to this manner of Instructing, 1 *Ep. ch.* 3. *v.* 15. *Be ready always to give an Answer to every Man that asketh you a Reason of the Hope that is in you.* Where you may take Notice that the Apostle speaks of giving an *Answer* or rendring a *Reason*, or (as 'tis in the *Greek*) *an Apology* or *Defence*; which all are done either to a *Question* or an *Accusation*. If the Words referr to the former (as our Translators render them) it is clear that the Apostle speaks of giving an Account of the Christian Faith by way of *Interrogation* and *Answer*, and that is the manner of Catechizing and Instructing, which I am now treating of. We find then that there are some References to it in Scripture.

* περὶ οὗ κατηχήθης. † κατηχημένος. || ἵνα καὶ ἄλλους κατηχήσω.

And you may satisfie your selves also that it was in Use in the Church afterwards. It hath been Thought, and asserted by some, I know, that the *Catechumeni* in the ancient Times were instructed by way of *Question* and *Answer*, and that the Office of the *Catechist* was discharged in a Compliance with that Usage. But I have given already an Account of the *Catechists* Employment in the first Times, and I do not find that any good Author doth so much as intimate that that Officer discharged his Work *Interrogatively* or Dialogue-wise; but he only discoursed, or read a Lecture of the Principles of the Christian Religion. Yet so, as at other times he might *enquire* of his Scholars concerning the Points he had read or discours'd to them about. And it is not to be doubted but that this was done: For otherwise how could he know what Proficiency the *Catechumeni* had made in the Principles of Religion? But the Office of Catechizing, as it signifies the *Questioning* the Christian Scholar or Disciple, belonged chiefly to the *Ordained Minister*, who was to admit the *Catechumeni* to Baptism.

It is certain (if Credit may be allowed to the Testimony of the ancientest Fathers) that this Questioning of the Convert, and this demanding an Account of his Faith was in practice in the primitive Church, in the solemn Office of Baptism. The Person who was to be initiated into the Church by that Sacrament did publickly return Answers to such Questions as were put to him by the Minister. To his *Credis*? he answered *Credo*: and to his *Abrenuncias*? he answer'd *Abrenuncio*. The Original of which you may find in the Example of *Philip* and the Eunuch, *Acts* 8. 37. And some think those Words of St. *Peter* in his 1 *Ep. ch.* 3. *v.* 21. *The Answer of a good Conscience towards God*, which is spoken of *Baptism*, allude to the Custom of the Catechists who put certain Questions to the adult Converts before they were Baptized, and received Answers from them.

Our Church, though the *Reason* of these Interrogatories and Responses, according to the Judgment of some, be ceased, is pleased yet to retain them, and enjoins a Conformity to them; which being a Compliance with Antiquity, and not expresly disallow'd by Scripture, we may in that, as in other Rites and Usages, yield our Obedience to it. And thus far I have presented you with the Authority and Antiquity of Catechizing, as it signifieth a Summary of Christian Religion, and a taking and giving an Account of our Faith in the way of Question and Answer.

III. I am to offer a *Brief Idea* and *Plat-form of Catechistical Doctrine*. And we may remember what was said before, that all the sober Professors of Christianity have unanimously pitch'd upon the *Creed*, the *Lord's-Prayer*, and the *Ten Commandments* as an Abstract of Christian Divinity; and this may be seen in all their *Confessions* and *Catechisms*. I will therefore give an Account of this Abstract which is allowed in all Reformed and Orthodox Churches.

As for the *Creed*, that is Three-Fold, for there is the *Apostle's Creed*, the *Creed of St.* Athanasius, and *the* Nicene *Creed*. All these we make use of in our Liturgy, and concerning them our Church saith, * The Three Creeds, *Nice* Creed, *Athanasius*'s Creed, and that which is commonly call'd the *Apostles* Creed ought throughly to be received and believed; for they may be proved by most certain Warrants of Holy Scripture.

* *The 8th of the 39 Articles.*

I begin with the *Apostles Creed*, which is most frequently and constantly rehearsed by us in our Assemblies. It bears that Name, because *the Apostles* were thought by † some of the *Fathers* to be the Compilers of this Creed. *Rufinus* seems to say as much, and *Bramhall* and *Hooker* incline this way. And so did *Luther*, *Calvin* and *Beza* before them. But it must be acknowleged, that even the *Fathers* differ among themselves as to what they assert concerning this matter. Some say it was made just after the Holy Ghost descended upon them: Others say it was made before that Time. Some hold it was a certain Form to be expounded to the *Catechumeni*, and such as were to be Baptized: Others think all were concern'd in it, and that the Design of it was to prevent Dissention and Disagreement in Doctrine. Some affirm that every Apostle contributed an Article, and so they amounted to Twelve: yea, St. ‖ *Augustin* and others tell us *which* of the Articles were made by every one of them particularly. But in this Assignment they do not agree. And how can they indeed, when it is very likely, not to say certain, that these Articles of Belief were not composed by the Apostles themselves? For is it not reasonable to think that the Apostles would in their Sermons or Epistles have made mention of these Articles, they having occasion so often to speak (as we see they *do*) concerning the Rules of Faith?

† Tertullian *de* Virgin. veland. c. 1. Irenæus, l. 1. c. 2. Origen, Ambros.

‖ De Temp. *Serm.* 115.

But it may be some will say, that these Articles are understood by the *Form of sound Words*, and by *the Form of Doctrine* spoken of by St. *Paul*. To which I answer (and I am perswaded there can be no Reply made to it) that this Creed, commonly call'd the Apostles Creed, cannot be meant by the Form of Doctrine or sound Words, nor could this Creed be made by the Apostles, for then it would necessarily follow, that this Creed should have been put into the Canon of the *New Testament*, and be a part of it; for it is clear and undeniable, that if it was indited and written by the Apostles, it is *Canonical Scripture*, and therefore cannot by any Means be left out of the Bible. This, as I conceive, Irrefragably proves, that this Creed was not drawn up by the Apostles themselves.

And there is another Thing which may serve to confirm us in this Opinion, namely, what as great a Scholar * as this latter Age hath produced, acquaints us with, which is this, that not one Ecclesiastical Historian mentions this Creed, or the Compiling of it. A very considerable Thing certainly; for if this had been drawn up and made by the Apostles, we can't think that *Eusebius*, and *Socrates*, and *Theodoret*, and all others who write of Apostolical and Ecclesiastical Affairs, would have omitted it. We may then have a Reverence for this Creed, as it hath been allow'd of in all Reformed Churches as a Model and Abstract of Christian Principles: But there is no Reason that we should pay a greater Respect to it than is its Due, or that we should think that it was made by the Apostles themselves, or is as ancient as the Apostles Times. If we will speak freely and impartially (and for my part, I am always inclin'd to do so; for then Truth is generally spoken) we must own, that this Creed hath been deliver'd in different Shapes. There have not always been the *same Articles* of this Creed. More or fewer Words and Sentences have been found in it. For the Learned *Vossius* tells us, that there were three of these Creeds, that of *Rome*, another of *Aquileia*, and a third call'd the *Eastern* Creed; and this Worthy Person shews in particular Instances, how they differ. It is certain that the *Roman* and *Eastern* Creeds have not the Article of the *Descent into Hell*; the *Aquilegian* hath not the *Communion of Saints*; and neither the *Aquilegian* nor *Roman* have the *Life Everlasting*.

* Joh. Gerard. Vossius *de Tribus Symbolis.*

From

From the *Difference of these Creeds*, from this *Abstracting* and *Adding*, it is plain, saith *Vossius*, That the Creed, which bears the Apostles Name, was not made by them. But in my Judgment it is plain, that his Inference is not good, and therefore herein I must acknowledge my dissent from that Excellent Person. It might be truly Apostolical and Divine, notwithstanding that *Diversity*, for otherwise we should shake the Divine Authority of *Holy Scripture*, if we argued in that manner from *some Difference* which we find in the *Copies* of the *Old* and *New Testament*, some of which contain that which others leave out. But that which may be justly, and with good Reason maintained, is *This*, that there appears no Certainty of the Apostles Compiling this Creed, which goes under their Name. Nay, on the other Hand, it is certain that they were not the Authors and Enditers of it, for if they had been, it must necessarily be *Inspired Scripture*, (as I suggested before) but I meet with none that venture to assert this. It is very probable (as the fore-named Author endeavours to make it out), (and this is the *true Inference* which may be made from the *Difference* of the Articles in this Creed, *viz.*) that this short Body of Articles was made up by Degrees in several Ages, and that at last it arriv'd to this which we now have. And it is call'd the *Apostles Creed*, for this Reason only, because it contains the sum of what the Apostles believed. It is certain that it hath obtained a Repute even among the most Sober and Orthodox Christians; and the numerous Comments and Expositions of Ancient and Modern Divines upon it, assure us of this, that it was a Summary of Christian Doctrine, universally receiv'd, and that they thought it worthy of their serious Descanting upon it. I cannot be blamed if I tread in their Steps; and accordingly I will give an Account of this Plat-form, and Exemplar of Christian Divinity, and that first in a *General* manner, and then more *Particularly*, by explaining the several Articles contained in it; but all must be done very briefly, because the great Work itself, which I am now about (under which this present Account is contain'd) is wholly spent upon these Articles; yet so as I shall have occasion to insert *here* some useful Observations, which were not so fitting to be brought in under the larger Undertaking, which consists of *Set Discourses* or *Treatises*.

First, To give an Account in General of the Apostle's Creed, and to let the Reader understand what Things *are* comprised in it, and what *are not*, let him take it in these following Propositions:

First, It must be acknowledged, that this Creed contains not in it *All* the great and weighty Points of our Belief. It was designed to be an *Abridgment*, and therefore on that Account it could not possibly comprehend *Every* important and weighty Doctrine. More Particularly

Secondly, There are some *Speculative Verities*, some *Notional Truths*, which are of good use in Divinity, which are not inserted into this Creed, because they are not great and weighty, they are not material and necessary.

Thirdly, There are some Truths which are *Piously Credible*, and yet they are not mentioned here, because they are not necessary to be believed.

Fourthly, There are some Doctrines which are not plainly Revealed by God, but remain *Mysterious*; and these are not contained in this little Body of Divinity, which was designed to present us with such Truths only as are plainly discovered.

Fifthly, Some Doctrines concerning Matters of *Practice*, and the Duty of Christians, are not inserted here. Here is no mention of *Good Works*, or *Praying*, or *Celebrating the Sacraments*, or the like, because the Holy Scriptures, and particularly the Commandments, are to be consulted about Doctrines which relate to Practice. This Creed contains only Articles of meer Belief.

Sixthly then, This Creed comprises in it the great and weighty Points of Belief, which are Articles of meer Belief, and which are plainly Revealed, and which God hath commanded to be particularly divulged to All, and which are requisite to be believed by All. These are *Explicitely* and *Expressly* contained in this Creed. They are such as these, the Doctrine of the Holy Trinity, that God is One in Three Persons; that the Father was Creator of all Things; that the Son was made Man in Fulness of Time; that he Redeemed Mankind

by his Death and Passion; that he rose from the Dead; that he ascended into Heaven; that he will come thence to judge the World; that the Holy Ghost is the Sanctifier of Believers; that God hath chosen to himself a Church, the Members whereof live in Communion, though never so dispers'd; that God by his infinite Mercy will forgive the Sins of his People; that there shall be a Resurrection of our Bodies; and that after this Life there shall be another, which shall have no end. Or conceive it thus, the necessary Truths of Christianity contain'd in this Confession of Faith, are either concerning *God* or his *Church*. Concerning the former we have the Doctrine of the ever Blessed Trinity, Father, Son and Holy Ghost, and what is requisite to the Knowledge of their Persons, and of Christ's different Natures, Actions and Undertakings for us both here and hereafter. Concerning the latter, the Two great Blessings and Privileges of the Catholick Church here in this Life are distinctly mention'd, viz. Communion of Saints, and Forgiveness of Sins; and it's Two Prerogatives in the other Life are also specified, *viz.* the Resurrection of the Body, and the Life Everlasting. These are the weighty Matters of our Belief, which this Confession consists of, and which are expressly set down in it.

Seventhly and Lastly, Though other important Truths, even such as are necessary to be believed, are not here *Expressly* set down, yet they are contain'd here *Implicitely*, or by way of Reduction. And accordingly Divines generally reduce all Points of Faith to this short Plat-form of Belief.

Having thus spoken in General concerning the Apostles Creed, and the several Parts of it, it remains now that I briefly descant upon the Articles *in Particular*. We must know then that the first Word, *I Believe*, is to be carried through the whole Creed, and prefixed to every Article, though it be but Twice expressed, viz. in the Front or Beginning of all, and afterwards before the Article concerning the *Holy Ghost*. Yet, I say, *that Word*, and the *Sense* of it, must be carried through all the several Articles. This being Premised, we are to understand aright the meaning of that first Word. *To Believe* is to Assent to a Truth upon Testimony. As human Faith is grounded on a human Testimony, that is, of Man to Man; so Divine Faith, (which is here meant) is Assenting to something on the Testimony of God. More Particularly, I *Believe*,

1. Implies that we know and understand these following Heads of Divinity. And therefore by the bye observe, That ignorant People cannot truly rehearse the Articles of the Creed, for they have no Knowledge of them.

2. This directly signifies our inward Assenting or Consenting to these Things, that they really are. We hereby testify, that there are such Persons and Doctrines as are here named, and that what is said of them here is true.

3. This also signifies our outward Confession, and open Expression of our Assent. We do by this publickly and professedly declare our Belief, and we tell the World that we are not ashamed of it.

4. This denotes that we put our Trust and Confidence in the Persons of the Holy Trinity, mention'd in this Creed, and we are so piously affected with the several Doctrines and Truths contained in it, that we hope and rely upon them. This is included in [*Believing in*], which is more than [*Believing*], or *bare Assent* and Acknowledgment; though I deny not that sometimes no more is signified in Scripture by [*Believing in*]. Whence some Learned Persons will have it taken so here, and indeed some of the *Greek* Fathers have applied it to all the Articles of the Creed, *i. e.* not only to those concerning *God the Father, Son*, and *Holy Ghost*, but to the rest also, concerning the *Church*, the *Communion of Saints*, &c. Which might incline us to think, that [*Believing in*] signifieth no more than a being really perswaded that these Things are, and that we openly own the same. But seeing we ought to understand Words in their full and comprehensive Sense, and it is undeniable, that [*Believing in*,] doth oftentimes signify both in the *Old* and *New Testament*, Hope and Recumbency, I see no Reason why it should not import the same here, but yet in a different manner, accordingly as it is applied to different Articles. For as it respecteth *God*,

it is to be taken in one way, as it referrs to other Things another way. Thus *I Believe in*, i. e. *Trust in* God the Father, Son and Holy Ghost Primarily, Independently, and Absolutely; but I trust and rely on the Truths and Doctrines of the Creed, as they are delivered and revealed by God, and as they lead our Minds to *Him*, and no otherwise. We see then the Extent of the first Word in the Creed.

Accordingly, Take the Sense of the first Article [*I Believe in God, the Father Almighty, Maker of Heaven and Earth*] in this manner: I am firmly perswaded that there is a *God*, a Supreme, Infinite, All-sufficient, and most Perfect Being. I heartily accept of this Truth, and close with it, for *he that cometh unto God, must* (in the first Place) *Believe that he is*, Heb. 11. 6. I do firmly therefore believe his Existence. Again, I openly profess to the World this my Belief, as often as I rehearse this Article. And moreover, I put my whole Trust and Confidence in this Infinite and Eternal Being. And I as firmly Believe, in this large Sense of Assent, Acknowledgment, and Trusting, that this God is *the Father*, *i. e.* that this first Person in the Ever Blessed Trinity is by Eternal Generation the Father of Christ our Lord, and by Adoption the Father of all Believers, and by Creation the Father of all Creatures. And I as fully Believe, that this God is *Almighty*, that is, that he can do all Things, and that nothing is difficult or impossible to him; which appears from this, that he is the *Maker of Heaven and Earth*; the whole World was Created out of Nothing by his Almighty Power, and it is continually govern'd by his *Providence*. I not only Assent to this first Article of the Creed; but I make open Profession of it, and stedfastly trust and rely on this God, the Father Almighty, who made Heaven and Earth; and being thus Omnipotent, he is most deservedly to be trusted and confided in.

And here I might observe, that the *Creed* begins as the *Holy Scripture* of the *Old Testament* doth, with the *Creation* of all Things, the *Making of Heaven and Earth*. Which as *Moses* there plac'd first of all, to be an Incitement to Obedience, so here it is the first thing in the Creed, to promote and incourage our Belief. Therefore in rehearsing these Articles, we ought to look back alaways to these first Words, and to let them have a just Influence on all that followeth. We profess that we believe in God the Father, who is *Almighty*. This cannot but be serviceable to us in believing the rest of the Articles; for we having premised this as the matter of our Belief, that the God we Worship is of Infinite Might and Power (which was seen in *Making* all Things out of Nothing), we have no Reason to boggle at any other Point of Faith, for though they may seem to be difficult, and we cannot comprehend how this or that may be, yet it is highly reasonable that we should Assent unto all these Propositions, because we are assured that God is *Almighty*, and what is thought hard and impossible by us, is not so with Him. He can do what he pleaseth. The Resurrection of our Bodies (which is one Member of our Creed) is as possible and easy with him as the first making of them. And thus I might instance in the other Articles.

Thus far concerning our Believing in the *First Person* of the *Trinity*, *God the Father*. Now follow the Articles which relate to the *Second Person*, viz. *God the Son*: And all the Six next have reference to *him*. I will explain them in order. And (as I said before) the First Word must go along with us in all the Articles. [*I believe*] must be perfixed to this, [*in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord.*] That is to say, I not only believe the First Person in the Glorious *Trinity*, but the Second also. I not only believe a God that made the World, but I also believe in Christ Jesus the Saviour of the World, the only begotten Son of the Father. I believe, I say, that he was begotten by the Father, *i. e.* that he had the Divine Essence Communicated to him by the Father, the First Person in the Trinity: For this Communicating his Essence from all Eternity is the true and proper Generation by which he begot the Son; and No other is the Son of God in this Sense. He is called *Our Lord*, because we are become his Servants by Creation, for he hath made us, and not we our selves; by Redemption or Purchase, he having bought us with his own Blood; by Obligation and Covenant, for in Baptism we solemnly Promise to serve him.

I know, believe, acknowledge and trust in this Jesus the Son of God, *Who was Conceived by the Holy Ghost*; by which Words I attest that I am perswaded that the Holy Ghost did immediately and miraculously enable the Virgin *Mary* to conceive him in her Womb, as was promis'd in *Luke* 1. 35. *The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee.* By which we are to understand, that it was by the singular Operation of the Holy Spirit that she Conceiv'd. And Christ was thus Conceiv'd to distinguish him from all Mankind, who are impure. The common Way of Humane Propagation is corrupt; therefore the Conception of the Virgin *Mary* was above the Laws of Nature, that what was Conceived in that manner might be sanctified, and originally Pure, and free from all Defilement. Christ thus *Conceiv'd* was *born of the Virgin* Mary. That is, I firmly assent unto, acknowledge, and rely on this Truth, that the Second Person in the ever-blessed Trinity was not only True God, but True Man, and that he was born after the manner of Men, though of a Virgin.

We believe further that *Christ suffered under* Pontius Pilate, *i. e.* We declare that he truly suffered in his Humane Nature, as was prophesied of him. And withal we take notice of the Person under whom he suffer'd, *viz. Pontius Pilate*, a *Roman* by birth, sent by *Tiberius*, the *Roman* Emperor, to be Governor of *Judæa*, the Jews being made Tributary to the Romans. His Office was the *Procuratorship* of *Judæa*, and he had Power of Life and Death over the *Jews* and *Romans* in that Country. He is mentioned here: 1. To signifie the Time of Christ's Passion, to let us know that he suffered in the Reign of *Tiberius*, when *Pontius Pilate* was the *Cæsarean* Procurator of that Nation. 2. He is named in the *Creed* upon another Remarkable Account, *viz.* because this was the Man who deliver'd Christ up to the Rage of the *Jews*, notwithstanding he had pronounced him Innocent. The Holy Jesus had no fault found in him by this Inquisitive Judge, he was openly acquitted by him. Thus *Wisdom is justified* not only of *her Children* but of her Adversaries. We also believe concerning Christ, that he *was Crucified*; which was both a painful and a shameful Death. The former it was because it stretched out the Limbs of the Person, and put him on the Rack, and there left him to expire after long and tedious Torments suffered. It was also the latter, because it was a Servile Death, a Punishment only for Slaves among the *Romans*.

We add, that *He was dead.* By which we declare that Christ's Soul and Body were disjoined, although the Divinity was still united to the Body and Soul, by the Subsistence of the Second Person in the Trinity; for the Word, after it was made Flesh, was never separated from Soul or Body.

We say also, that *He was Buried*; for though it is true, that by the common Rule of the *Roman Law*, the Crucified and Hanged had no Burial, but hung still in the Place of Execution, and were exposed to the Fowls of the Air; yet it was in the power of the Magistrate to grant Burial, and accordingly it was indulged to *Joseph* of *Arimathea* (a Councellor) and *Nicodemus* (a Ruler) that they might bury Christ's Body. But by *Burying* here is meant the *Embalming* of his Body, which was the Preparative to his Burial, and is particularly taken notice of and recorded by the Evangelists.

It is added, that *he Descended into Hell.* There is nothing that is questionable and disputable in the Apostle's Creed, but this one Thing. For some think that the *State of the Dead* is here to be understood. But others say it is meant of, some *certain Place* to which the Souls of the Dead go. And 'tis not to be denied, that the *Ancient Fathers* held that Christ's Soul, separated from his Body, went down into those lower Parts, which they thought were the Habitation of Souls departed. But let it suffice us to believe, by virtue of this Article, that our Saviour was not only Crucify'd, Dead, and Embalmed, but that he underwent that particular Condition of a Dead Man, namely, to be *laid in a Grave*, or *Sepulchre*, which is the proper Receptacle of the Dead. Thus he fully satisfied the Law of Death. That is the main thing which is meant here.

Next of all it is professed by us, that Christ *Rose again from the Dead.* His Soul, before separated, was now re-united to his Body, and thereupon he rose out of his Grave on the Third Day after his Passion, and appeared to his Disciples frequently, to give them a Demonstration that he was really Risen, and had vanquish'd the Powers of Death and Hell.

After

After he had ſtaid upon Earth Forty Days, *He aſcended into Heaven*; he left this Earth, and went up to the Heaven of Heavens, the higheſt Place of Glory. And he really Aſcended with the ſame Body and Soul with which he Lived, Died, and Roſe again. *And he ſitteth on the Right Hand of God, the Father Almighty.* The Right Hand ſignifieth God's abſolute Power and Dominion, and therefore this is called in *Mat.* 27. 64. *Sitting on the Right Hand of Power.* And it denotes the Honour and Glory which Chriſt hath obtain'd, the moſt honourable Place among Men being that on the Right Hand. And by his *Sitting* is meant the full and abſolute Sovereignty which he hath gained over all his Enemies. He is Inthron'd in the higheſt Heavens, where he Reſides and Governs his Church in all Ages, till the Time of the Reſtitution of all Things.

From thence (i. e. from Heaven) *he ſhall come to Judge both the Quick and the Dead.* In which Words we acknowledge, that Chriſt ſhall come from Heaven in Glory and Majeſty, to Judge all that died before his Coming, and all that ſhall be alive then when he cometh. And this Task and Office of Judging the World at the Laſt Day, is particularly committed to the Son, as the Reward of his former Sufferings. It is this Laſt Judgment that makes a final Deciſion of every Man's Caſe, and conſigns him to an Eternity either of Miſery or Happineſs.

It follows, *I Believe in the Holy Ghoſt*, i. e. I not only believe in God the Father, and God the Son (as hath been declared before) but I believe in the Third Perſon of the Bleſſed Trinity, who is an Uncreated Perſon, proceeding from the Father and the Son, for as the Son was from the Father by Generation, ſo the Holy Ghoſt is by Proceſſion. That he is a really diſtinct Perſon from the other Two, is clear and evident from many Paſſages of Holy Scripture, which it is impoſſible to evade. So that in the Unity of the Godhead there are three diſtinct Perſons ſubſiſting, and theſe three Perſons are Coeternal, and of the ſame Eſſence, Power, Wiſdom, and Goodneſs. This is our Belief and Perſwaſion, this we openly atteſt and acknowledge, and in this Holy and Undivided Trinity we put our Truſt and Confidence for our Salvation and Happineſs.

Next follows the *Belief of the Holy Catholick Church.* By which we acknowledge, 1. That there is ſuch a Myſtical Body, there is here upon Earth a Company and Congregation of Perſons profeſſing the Chriſtian Faith, Baptized, hearing God's Word, receiving the Sacrament of the Lord's-Supper, joining in Prayers and all Holy Ordinances. Theſe are Chriſt's *Church.* 2. We profeſs that this Church is *Holy*, it is the Congregation of Saints and Elect Perſons. Therefore thoſe People who maintain all manner of unholy Principles and Practices, deſerve not to be call'd a *Church.* 3. We add, that the true Church of Chriſt is *Catholick.* Which Term, though it was inſerted after *Rufinus* and *Auſtin*'s Time, yet it is no contemptible Epithet affixed to the Church. For the Chriſtian Church may juſtly be ſaid to be ſo, firſt in Oppoſition to the *Jewiſh* Church, which was confined to one Nation, *Judea.* The Church of God was then within narrow Bounds, but now it is inlarged, and hath ſpread it ſelf over all the parts of the World, the Goſpel being commanded to be *preached to every Creature under Heaven.* Thus it is *Catholick* or *Univerſal.* Secondly, It is called Catholick, to diſtinguiſh it from *Heretical* Aſſemblies. For we read in Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtory, that the Ancient Chriſtians were not only call'd the *Brethren*, and the *Faithful*, and *Saints*, (as they are often in St. *Paul*'s Epiſtles) but they were alſo in ſucceeding Ages termed *Catholicks.* For the *Arians* and other *Hereticks* glorying in the Name of *Chriſtians*, it was thought fit to diſtinguiſh the true Chriſtians from the Falſe, by the Name of *Catholicks*, *i. e.* ſuch Perſons who held the True and Orthodox Faith, the Faith which was once deliver'd to the Saints, the Faith which was approved of by the Univerſal Conſent of all ſober Chriſtians. We are alſo to believe, under this Article, that all particular Churches and Congregations of the Faithful, are Members of this Univerſal and General Church diſperſed over all the World. This then is a great Privilege and Bleſſing, that God hath conſtituted ſuch a *Church*, and I am throughly perſwaded of the Truth and Reality of it, and I am obliged ever to own and profeſs it, and I truſt and rely on this great Point of Faith, as matter of unſpeakable Comfort, knowing this, that *the Gates of Hell ſhall never prevail againſt* this *Church.*

The

The Privileges belonging to the Catholick Church are, the *Communion of Saints*, *the Forgiveness of Sins*, the *Resurrection of the Body*, and *the Life Everlasting*. Accordingly *I Believe the Communion of Saints*, i. e. I know and assent to this Truth, that the Members of this Holy Church, who are separate from Sinners, and are purified and Sanctified, have Communion with God (1 *Joh.* 1. 3. *Phil.* 2. 1.), and with Angels and Saints above, (*Heb.* 12. 22, 23.) and with one another here on Earth, 1 *John* 1. 7.

The next Article is *the Forgiveness of Sins*. This is a Privilege obtained in the *Church of Christ*, and no where else. It was his Blood only that could avail for the washing away our Sins, and procuring Pardon and Forgiveness. *Without Shedding of Blood there is no Remission*, *Heb.* 9. 22. Christ therefore was made a Sacrifice for Sin, and by Shedding his Precious Blood obtained Forgivness of Sins for us.

The Resurrection of the Body is the next Thing we acknowledge. The very same individual Body shall arise: This being Possible with God, who first made it of Nothing. And the same Soul likewise shall again be United to the same Body or Flesh; thus *in our Flesh* we shall at the Latter Day *see God*, as Holy *Job* of old professed.

The *Life Everlasting* is the last Article of all. It is true, that Life Everlasting, in the Style of Holy Scripture, signifies only the Life of the *Blessed* in Heaven. But here it is to be taken in a larger Sense, and comprehends the Life of the Righteous and Unrighteousness, the Eternal Happiness of one, and the Endless Torments of the other, Heaven and Hell. These two States shall have no End; they continue for Ever, without any Period. This is a sad Consideration to those who believe not, and whose Lives are wicked and ungodly. It is deplorable to consider that they shall *Eternally* be punish'd for their Unbelief and Impiety; that if they slip the Time and despise the Opportunity of Salvation, there shall be no Place for Repentance, but they shall inevitably feel the Effects and Fruits of their gross Folly, and that *for ever*.

These are the Twelve Articles of the Creed commonly called the *Apostles Creed*, which we duly rehearse in the publick Assemblies. Here we profess our Belief, Acknowledgment and Reliance on *God the Father*, who decreed the Redemption of Man, and to that End sent His Son; on *God the Son*, who came and fulfilled what the Father had designed, by His Birth, Life, Death, Resurrection, and Ascension; on *God the Holy Ghost*, by whose Operation both God the Father and Son perfect the Work of Grace and Salvation in the Hearts of Men. And let me observe this, That as the First Article of this Belief referrs to God the *Father*, and the Six following to God the *Son* (as hath been observed before), so the last Five appertain to God the *Holy Ghost*: For upon our Belief of God's Holy Spirit doth genuinely follow our Belief of the *Holy Catholick Church*, which is sanctified by the Spirit of Holiness, and on this depends our Belief of the *Communion of Saints*, i. e. the Fellowship of Holy Persons, who are Regenerated and Purify'd by the Holy Ghost; as also our Belief of the *Forgiveness of Sins*, which is made effectual to us by the Working of the Spirit of Grace. And likewise the *Resurrection of the Body* is expressly said to be the effect of this Sanctifying Spirit, 1 *Cor.* 14. 5. And Lastly, The Holy Ghost is the Lord and Giver of Life, and accordingly the Belief of *Everlasting Life* is deservedly annexed as the Close of all. This is a brief Account of the *Apostles Creed*, which by the Divines of all Churches is commended as an Abstract of Christian Belief, wherein that Doctrine of Faith, which we are to contend earnestly for, is collected into a little Body, and the chief Heads and Principles of the Best Religion in the World, lie in a little Room, and are digested into few Articles.

But besides the *Apostles Creed*, there are *Two others* which our Church rehearseth at Solemn Seasons in her publick Liturgy. And because these are enjoin'd in the Service of the Church, it will not be improper to say something of them.

First then I will speak of the *Athanasian Creed* or *Quicunque vult*, which takes its Name from a worthy Saint and Servant of Christ, one well known to all those who are versed in Ecclesiastical History. *Athanasius* (for so he was call'd) was

was a Man valiant for the Truth upon the Earth; and with great Vigour and Zeal opposed and confuted the *Arian* Heresy, *i. e.* the Denial of Christ's Divinity, which prevail'd so much in his Days. But as we said concerning the former Creed, so we may of this, that it is probable it bears not the Name of the Author and Compiler of it. For that * Learned Man, whom we had occasion to alledge before when we spoke of the other Creed, assures us, that this, though it goes under *Athanasius*'s Name, yet is not to be found in his Authentick Writings, nor is it so much as mention'd by him in any of his Works: Nay, it is not so much as mention'd by any Writer or Historian of that Time who speaks of him or his Life. There is not one of the Fathers that quotes it, when they are oppugning the Hereticks that denied Christ's or the Holy Ghost's Divinity. And 'tis evident that it was made after *Athanasius*'s Time, because we find that it expresly renounces the Errors of the *Nestorians* and *Eutychians*. That so formal rejecting of those Heresies, shews that the Creed was compil'd on purpose against *those Hereticks*, as well as the *Arians*, and consequently it was compos'd after the Council of *Chalcedon*, which was after *Athanasius*'s Death. It is likely therefore that it is call'd *Athanasius*'s Creed, not because He made it, but because it contains the Sum of what *Athanasius* believed, especially concerning the Trinity. *Usher* is of Opinion that it was extant in the Sixth Century: But *Vossius* thinks it was made by some French Divine in *Charles* the *Great*'s Time. And he tells us in the same Place *who* were the First Authors that call'd it the *Athanasian* Creed, and saith there, that it gain'd that Name somewhat above 400 Years ago. *Du Pin* and Dr. *Cave* are enclined to think that it was made by *Vigilius Tapsensis*, who lived towards the Close of the Fifth Age of the Church, and composed Five Books under the Name of *Athanasius*.

* Hooker *Eccl. Polit.* B. 5.

Whatever the Date of this Creed be, our Church hath order'd it to be made use of in her Liturgy at Certain Seasons. And truly, if we lay aside Prejudice, we cannot find any thing in it that is really * Offensive and Hurtful. The Beginning indeed of it is very harsh and severe; [Whosoever will be saved, before all Things it is Necessary that he hold the Catholick Faith; which Faith except every one do keep whole and undefiled, without doubt he shall perish everlastingly. And the Catholick Faith is this, *&c.*] And in the Conclusion there are these Words, [This is the Catholick Faith, which, except a Man believe faithfully, he cannot be Saved.] Is then the Belief of *Athanasius*'s Creed absolutely Necessary to *Salvation*, and do all *perish Everlastingly* that do not give their Assent to it? I answer, That the *chief Articles* and *Doctrines* of which this Creed consists are Necessary to Salvation; as namely, the Doctrine of the Trinity, Father, Son and Holy Ghost; the Doctrine of the Incarnation of Christ, and of his Sufferings, and of his Resurrection and Ascension, and Coming to Judgment; as also the Doctrine of Everlasting Life and Happiness. But the *Inlargements* on some of these Doctrines are not Necessary to Salvation, as the *Particular Explications* of the Mystery of the *Trinity*. And indeed all that the *Athanasian* Creed hath more than the rest, and peculiar to it self, is about the *Trinity*, and the Expressing of that Mystery. Here are High and Lofty Notions, and such as transcend the Level of mean and ordinary Capacities. Some of them (as I have taken Notice in our Churches) are expressed in such Terms as Gravel the Mouths of those Ordinary Devotionists who will attempt to pronounce that which is their part of them. What they can't *Speak*, surely they will hardly *Understand*: And therefore here I cannot see that *Salvation* is indanger'd.

* *Excepting one Passage,* [So there is one Father, not three Fathers] *for no man ever pretended to say so; therefore this seems to be vainly inserted.*

It is to be said therefore that this Creed was calculated for the more knowing and intelligent Persons, and chiefly for those who had some Understanding of the Controversy between the *Orthodox* Christians and the *Arian* Hereticks. And truly if we consider how some of those Hereticks, who defended Arianism and other Heresies in Opposition to the Orthodox Faith, did it out of Spight and Malice, and direct and wilful Opposition to the Apostolick Truth, we may thence apprehend how those Words of the Creed are to be understood, *Whosoever will be saved, it is necessary that he hold this Faith*, and unless he doth, *he shall perish everlastingly*. Though mean and ordinary Persons, and such as are simple and of weak Brains, may be safely Ignorant of those Things which are set down

in this Creed concerning the Trinity, yet those who are of a higher Rank, and are of clearer Understandings, and deeper Insight into these Things, are in danger of Perishing Everlastingly if they *willfully* shut their Eyes against these Doctrines, and stubbornly oppose the Truth which was maintained by the Pious Fathers of the Church. Then it becomes the Fault of their Wills, not of their Understandings, and this is it which makes the contrary Belief damnable.

Or, I will give this Answer, which ought to satisfie all Parties: *Athanasius's* Creed (which we sometimes recite in the publick Service of our Church) is not composed after the same Form that the *other Creeds* are. For when we pronounce *them*, we make a *Personal* and *Downright Profession* of such and such Articles of Faith. Every Person for himself declares what he believes, *I believe* this and that. But the *Athanasian* Creed tells us only the Sense of the *Church* and the *Fathers* at that time when this was made, or thought to be made, Their Sense concerning the Trinity, and concerning the wilful and malicious Dissenters from that Doctrine is barely laid down; but we do not *personally* profess our Assent to every individual thing therein contained. Though we declare the Churches Mind, and what she thought as to that Matter, yet no Man is hereby ingaged Positively and Absolutely to assert such particular Propositions: But he is left to the Liberty of his own Thoughts and Perswasion, where any Thing occurrs in this Creed that is difficult and disputable. And so much for the *Athanasian Creed* used by our Church, which because we are enjoined to repeat with the Minister, I thought it not amiss to say something of it, to give a right Notion concerning it, and to represent the true Sense and Meaning, and Design of it, so far as I apprehend.

I will now add a few Words of the *Third Creed*, and that is the *Nicene*; for that also is used (and more frequently than the other) in our Service, *viz.* immediately after the Reading of that Portion of Scripture which is call'd the *Gospel*, the first Words of which are, *I believe in One God*. It is call'd (say some) the *Nicene* Creed, because it was made by the Fathers of the First General *Council of Nice*, which was in the Fourth Century. But it was not made when the Council sat; for the Creed, as we now have it in those *particular Words*, is not mentioned by any Writer to be made at that time, or to be produc'd in the Council; tho' a *Creed* was then recited by *Eusebius* Bishop of *Cæsarea*, and allow'd of by them, as *Socrates* (Eccl. Hist. Book 1. chap. 5.) and *Theodorete* (Book 1. ch. 11.) testifie; and an Addition was made to it, with an *Anathema* in the Close, by those Fathers, which we find particularly set down by *Epiphanius* in his *Ancoratus*. But after the Council was dissolv'd, it is thought by some that this Creed was compiled, in these very Words which we now have, by some of the chief *Fathers* of that Synod. But others more probably think that it was composed, or rather amplified and compleated, by the *Constantinopolitan Council*. This is certain, that the Creed which we now use is not the same exactly with what was agreed on at the *Nicene* Council, as from the Writers of that History is clear: But this is to be known that the first general Council of *Constantinople*, which met after that of *Nice*, confirmed that Creed in all Things, and also added this Article in particular (which is now inserted into the *Nicene* Creed) *I believe one Baptism for the Remission of Sins*. So that in Truth this which we call the *Nicene Creed* was drawn up by the Fathers of the First General *Council of Constantinople* in the Reign of *Theodosius* the Elder, which was in the Year of our Lord 381. But it is commonly call'd the *Nicene* Creed, because it was first of all, as to the main of it, made in the Council of *Nice*. And this may be truly said, that whatever is in the *Nicene* Creed is Word for Word in the *Constantinopolitan* one, and whatever this latter hath added is vertually in the former, and was added chiefly for greater Clearness and Perspicuity. This Creed therefore may well be call'd (as it is among Writers) by *both Names*. I might tell you also that the Church of *Rome* afterwards in a Synod added *Filioq*; to the Article of the *Procession* of the *Holy Ghost*; for whereas it had passed before in these Words, [I believe in the Holy Ghost, the Lord and Giver of Life, who proceedeth from the Father] the *Latin* Church ordered it to run thus, [who proceedeth from the Father and the Son] which caused a great Schism and Distraction between the *Latin* and *Greek* Church. The short is, that the

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Nicene Creed, as 'tis commonly call'd, is indeed the *Constantinopolitan*, with an Addition of *Filioq*; which was adjoin'd by the Western Church.

I thought good to give this short Account of this and the other Models of Christian Belief, that we may have some Knowledge of the Things which we Converse with so often, and that we may have a true Relation of those Forms and Patterns of Belief which we make use of in the Worship of God. We have Variety of Creeds, and yet All are but one and the same as to the main Articles. We have the Apostles Creed, the *Athanasian*, and the *Nicene*. Choose you which you will, a Collection of *Apostolical Sayings*, or a *single Father*, or a *whole Synod*. They all present you with the great and Fundamental Truths of Christianity; but one in one Way, and another in another, and a third in a different from that. They may all of them be subservient to one another, if you please to compare them together. Though these Forms of Doctrine are Inferior to the Scripture of Truth, yet they are Collections from that inspired Book, and may be Helps to our Faith, as certainly they are to our Memories by representing so many Fundamental and Necessary Truths in so short and narrow a Compass.

These are the Things which are to be *Known* and *Believed* by us, as they are presented to us in the *Creeds*. I am in the next Place to give you a Brief of those Things which are to be *Desired and Prayed for by us*. And those are Epitomiz'd in that comprehensive Prayer, which we call the *Lord's-Prayer*. This includes in it every Thing that we are to ask of God, as (to specifie in the several Petitions) we pray

First, That *God's Name may be hallowed*, i. e. That God may be known, feared, loved, worshipped and honoured in the World; that his Glory may be exalted among Men, and that all his Excellent Attributes and Perfections may meet with Esteem and Reverence, with Praises and Adoration in all Places.

Secondly, We pray that *God's Kingdom may come*, i. e. that the Kingdom of Grace may be inlarged every where, and that Mankind may more universally subject themselves to God their Creator and Redeemer, and at last may be saved by him: That the Kingdom of Glory (as well as that of Grace) may be set up, that a Period being put in God's good Time to the sinful and calamitous State of Men here, we with all those that have departed in the Faith of Christ may reign with him in eternal Bliss and Glory.

Thirdly, We pray that *God's Will may be done on Earth as it is in Heaven*, i. e. That we who are the Inhabitants of this Earth may be made every Day more like to the Holy Ones in Heaven, by a Conformity to God, by Obedience to his Laws, by doing his Will and Pleasure with all Alacrity, Vigour and Activity.

Fourthly, We pray that *God would give us this Day our daily Bread*, i. e. That our frail Natures may have their necessary Support and Sustenance, that in our daily Service of God and Passage through this World, we may be continually provided for, and that in order to it we may be Diligent and Industrious in our Callings, and that God would vouchsafe a Blessing to our lawful Endeavours and Labours.

Fifthly, We pray that *God would Forgive us our Trespasses as we forgive them that trespass against us*, i. e. that God would for Christ's sake pass by all our Sins, and receive us into Favour, as we our selves are ready to pardon the Wrongs which others have done us, and to be reconciled to them.

Sixthly and Lastly, We pray that *God would not lead us into Temptation, but deliver us from Evil*; i. e. that we may be kept from Temptations, or delivered from the Sin and Evil which usually attend them, that we may not be Hurt by Satan, or wicked Men, or by our selves.

And then we are taught to conclude our Prayers and Petitions with Praises of God. *Thine is the Kingdom, and the Power, and the Glory.* Thou, O God, art the King and Sovereign of the World, thou art of infinite Power and Might, and all Glory and Honour belong unto thee *for ever and ever. Amen.* These are the several Parts of that excellent Platform or Abstract of Prayer prescribed us by our Lord. Upon a serious View of it, we shall find that it comprehends all those Things in short which are the Object of our Desires and Prayers.

I must now, according to my propounded Method, proceed to give an Abstract of the Things that *are to be done and practised by us*, and then I have finished this part of my Task. The Things to be *Done* are contain'd summarily in the *Ten Commandments*, which are these,

I. *Thou shalt have no other Gods but me*, i. e. We must serve and worship the true God, and him only. This Service and Worship must consist in Heart, Tongue, and Life: All the Faculties of our Souls must be devoted to him, and our Outward as well as our Inward Man must be concerned in the Adoration we give to God our Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier.

II. *Thou shalt not make to thy self any Graven Image, or the Likeness of any thing*, &c. This Commandment requires that we worship God in Spirit and in Truth, not with Images or bodily Representations, for these are unworthy of God who is a Spirit and Invisible. By Vertue of this Commandment also we are to serve and worship God according to his own Will and Appointment, and not according to our own Devices, which certainly are a Dishonour to him, and will at last lead us to Idolatry.

III. *Thou shalt not take the Name of the Lord thy God in vain*, i. e. we ought to use God's Name and all Things belonging to him with great Reverence; especially when we appeal to him by an Oath, we must be careful to do it devoutly and Reverently, and to abhor all Prophaneness and Perjury.

IV. *Remember to keep holy the Sabbath Day*, &c. *i. e.* We must set apart a certain Time for the more solemn Worship of our Creator; especially now since the *Christian* Oeconomy hath taken Place, the *Lord's-Day must be spent* in all Holy and Godly Exercises, in Praying and Preaching, and celebrating the Sacraments, and whatever other Religious Duties are proper for that Season.

V. *Honour thy Father and thy Mother*, &c. The Intent of which Commandment is this, That Princes, Parents, Masters, and all Governours and Superiours Rule in the Fear of God, and that all Subjects honour and obey their Princes, all Children their Parents, all Servants their Masters, and all Inferiours those who are set over them, with due Subordination to God who is the highest of all.

VI. *Thou shalt not kill.* Which requires that we do Nothing against our Neighbours Life, Health or bodily Welfare; but that we carefully preserve these as our Own, it being enjoined us by God to love our Neighbours as our selves.

VII. *Thou shalt not commit Adultery.* Here it is commanded that we preserve our own and others Chastity, and use all good Means in order to it.

VIII. *Thou shalt not steal.* This requires that we wrong not any Person in his Estate or Goods, but that we preserve our Neighbours Estate and Goods as our Own.

IX. *Thou shalt not bear false Witness against thy Neighbour*, i. e. we must not wrong any Person in his Name and Credit by Reproaches, Slanders or Backbitings: We must not pervert Justice by bearing false Witness: We must not lye, but speak the Truth from our Hearts.

X. *Thou shalt not covet thy Neighbours House*, &c. Which Last Commandment forbids and condemns all Covetousness and Ravenousness, and bids us be content with what we have. We must be so far from desiring what is our Neighbour's, that we ought to help him with what is Ours, and on all Accounts to do to others as we would have them do to us.

This is the Sum and Substance of those Duties which are commanded us in the *Decalogue*. And thus I have finish'd the Task which I set my self, *viz.* To present the Reader with an *Idea* or *Platform* of *Catechistical Doctrine*, i. e. Of those Things which we are to Know and Believe, to Desire and Pray for, to Do and Practise. And *These*, as I have shewn, are briefly summed up in the *Creeds*, the *Lord's Prayer*, and the *Ten Commandments*, which are *largely* and *fully* insisted upon in those *Treatises* which compose our present Work.

IVthly and Lastly, I am to set before you the *Reasonableness* of this Exercise of *Catechizing*. I will speak, First, Of the *Necessity*; Secondly, Of the *Usefulness* of it. And in both these the Great Danger of Neglecting it will appear.

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As to the *Necessity* of it, I shall make that evident from the Consideration of these Two Things; First, That the Foundation of Christianity is laid by Catechizing. Secondly, That we being assured by Christ and his Apostles that there are Babes and Novices, as well as Grown Men in Christ, it is requisite that the former be dealt with in a Way which is Agreeable and Suitable to their weak Condition.

1. The Foundation of Religion is laid by Catechizing, and therefore he that doth not apprehend a Necessity of this, apprehends Nothing. The Apostle's treating of the Principles of the Doctrine of Christ, is (as I observ'd before) call'd by him, *Laying the Foundation, Heb.* 6. 1. The *Foundation* bears up all the Building, and therefore it is indispensibly requisite, that *That* be carefully looked after. The Knowledge of the First Principles of Religion is as Necessary to a Christian, as the Knowledge of the Letters in the Alphabet is to him who is to read and understand Books. Those that would be conversant in Religion to any purpose, must not forget to be throughly acquainted with the First Elements of it. If they would have others likewise advance in Christianity, and make daily Improvements in Divine Knowledge, they will do well to use them to this sort of Institution. *Socrates* (whose Mother took upon her the Profession of a Midwife) was himself (as he saith) but the Midwife to Knowledge and Reason, *i. e.* (as he explained it) by Questions and fit Interrogatories, he could stir up, fetch forth, and deliver Men of their Notions, and thereby in a wonderful manner promote Truth and Knowledge. The same certainly may be said of the *Christian Catechist*: By that Way of propounding Questions, and demanding Answers to them, he doth happily promote the Bringing forth of Truth; and furthers the Growth of Knowledge; and renders Persons very sagacious in Religion.

2. There being Babes in Christ, there being Novices in Religion, yea, there being great Numbers that are Ignorant, and no ways acquainted with the First Principles of Religion, it is *Necessary* that a Christian Minister or a Christian Parent, should be (what the *Jew* boastingly said he was) *A Guide of the Blind, a Light of them which are in Darkness, an Instructer of the Foolish, a Teacher of Babes.* It is remarkable that Christ charged St. *Peter* not only to *feed his Sheep* but his *Lambs*, and (which is further observable) first his *Lambs*; *John* 21. 15. A great and singular Care is to be taken of those who are Weak and Feeble; a peculiar Method is to be used towards such. We must consider their Condition, and deal with them accordingly. The plain and intelligible Principles of Religion are to be laid before these: The First Principles of the Oracles of God (as the Apostle calls them) must be the Entertainment of these Persons; for these are such as *have need of Milk, and not of strong Meat, they being Unskilful in the Word of Righteousness*, as the Apostle speaks in *Heb.* 5. 12, 13. It is plain then, that there is a Difference among Christians; those that are Babes, Feeble and Infirm, Ignorant and Shallow, must be Instructed in a Manner fitted and proportion'd to their Condition: And this is that which is required in the *Catechetical* Way of delivering the Points of Divinity; and indeed it is required as a Thing absolutely Necessary.

Again, I am to shew, not only the *Necessity* but *Usefulness* and *Profit* of this Instructing by way of Catechizing, and Propounding the Fundamental Doctrines of Christianity. The Benefits of it are such as these, 1. This is the Way and Method which the Generality of Persons are most capable of. 2. This is most fitted to their Memories. 3. This proves a great Preservative against Error and false Doctrine. 4. This enables Persons to receive Profit by the publick Ministry of the Word. 5. This conduces to Practice and a Holy Life. 6. This contributes very much toward the Peace of the Church. 7. This leads us to Happiness here and hereafter.

1. I say, These Catechistical Doctrines, these necessary Truths of Christianity are the Things which *most People are capable of*, and which they can sufficiently understand; and therefore on that Account they may be urged upon them with the greater Advantage and Success. There are some great and Profound Mysteries, some high and lofty Disquisitions in Theology, which puzzle the greatest Clerks themselves, and perhaps when they talk most confidently of them, they least of all understand them. But as for the necessary

Doctrines couched in the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, and the Decalogue, the Understandings of most Persons are able to deal with them in some Measure. The very Light of Nature teacheth them to believe a God, to love him, fear, honour and worship him. The same teacheth them to love their Neighbours, and to do as they would be done to. And by the like Principle they are taught to be Sober, Chast, Humble, Contented. Their own Minds and natural Faculties instruct them in these. They are able to understand how reasonable it is that God alone should be Worshipped; that some Time more-especially ought to be set apart for his solemn Service; that we should not prophane God's Name; that our Parents should be Honoured and Respected; that we should not injure our Brethren in Body, Estate or Name; that we should pray unto God, and desire his Aid and Assistance, for nothing can be done without him. These Things are plain to all Understandings, and therefore are very fitly the Subject of our Catechisms. But there are other Matters which are the peculiar Doctrines belonging to the *Gospel-Dispensation*, and are not Natural but Revealed Truths. The Knowledge of these makes us *Understanding Christians*. Now, among these, those which are the first Principles and plainest Heads, are very fit also to be instilled into the Minds of the ordinary and meanest Learners; for they are as clear and intelligible as the other Doctrines before-named; though it is true the Consequences and Improvements of them require a greater Judgment, and more Inlargement than is proper for the Catechistical Way. But I pass to the

Second Benefit of this Way of Instruction. It is fitted conveniently for their *Memories* who are Learners and Beginners in Learning. In all Arts and Sciences it hath been thought useful to reduce the main Things of them to certain brief Rules, that they may the more easily be remembred. And there is the same Reason that there should be Abbreviatures and Abstracts in Religion, and that the chief and necessary Heads of it should be summed up in short, this being an excellent Expedient to preserve the Principles of Religion entire, and to convey them with Ease to the Mind, and to lodge them safely in the Memory.

Thirdly, This will be a Preservative from Error and Falshood, from Sects and Heresies, from Seducers and false Teachers. For this is one cause of those erroneous Doctrines and fond Opinions which have infected the People of this Land, that they are not instructed and well-grounded in the Fundamental Points of Religion. In these Times which pretend to more than ordinary Light and Wisdom, and undertake to correct the Faults of former Ages, the standing Principles of Christianity are wholly neglected in many Places, and Disputes and Controversies take up Mens Thoughts and Studies, and nice Notions and Speculations about unnecessary Matters amuse Mens Minds. Hereupon they decay in sound Knowledge, and have little Understanding of the substantial Doctrines of Christianity. The Generality of Persons have not a Foundation; and then it is no wonder that the Building totters, that they are carried about with every Wind of Doctrine, that they run into all Kinds of Errors and Delusions, and many of them into Atheism and Irreligion, into Ranting and Swearing, and open Prophaneness. The

Fourth Benefit and Advantage of Catechizing is this, that it makes Way for Hearing the Word Preached, and inables Persons to profit by the publick Ministry of it. Those will never be edified by the Dispensing of the Word, who have not first been grounded in the general Principles of Christianity. The want of this plain, brief and orderly way of Instruction is the cause of an unfruitful Hearing the Word. Hence it is that we meet with so many Persons, in whom is fulfilled the Prophecy of *Isaiah*, who saith of them, *In Hearing they shall hear, but not Understand.* Hence it is that there is such a Number of Aged Infants, Persons that are well stricken in Years, and yet have not the Understanding and Knowledge of Children; such, who, when for the Time and Opportunities they have had, might have arriv'd to the Knowledge of *Teachers*, yet *have need that one teach them again which be the first Principles of the Oracles of God, and are become such as have need of Milk, and not of strong Meat*, as the Apostle speaketh. Such Persons come to Church, but how is it possible they should profit by what they hear? For until their Milk be digested, they will receive no Nourishment from stronger Food. They must first imbibe the *Principles of the*

the Doctrine of Christ, before *they go on to Perfection* (i. e. to higher Points of the Gospel), as the said Apostle acquaints us in *Heb.* 6. 1. The

Fifth Benefit of Catechistical Doctrine is, that it conduces much to Practice and a Godly Life. All Religion must be founded on Knowledge. This is the first Step to Piety, to know aright. Good Principles are the very Groundwork of Holiness. A right Understanding and Judgment prepare the Way for Living well. For no Man can so much as enter into the Way of a Religious and Vertuous Life, unless, first his Understanding be enlightned, and he entertains certain Principles of Truth in his Mind. And then it is as true and undeniable that he cannot continue in a Way of Godliness, unless *he adds unto Virtue Knowledge.* Nothing is more evident than this, that Men not only err in Doctrine, but are faulty in Manners for want of due Principles. It is no wonder that they run into all Vice and Immorality, seeing they are in the dark, and so cannot govern and direct their Steps. Ignorance leads to Wickedness, and all kind of Impiety and Prophaneness.

Sixthly, Another Benefit of the Catechistical Way of Instructing is, that this makes for the *Peace of the Church*, and for Quietness and Agreement among one another. And certainly, what promoteth *Peace* and *Truth* together, is very beneficial and profitable to the World. That it prevents Disorder, Schism, Faction, and Sedition, I make appear hence; namely, that where the plain Method of Catechistical Instruction and Preaching is laid aside, and where the People are not instructed in the easie and necessary Heads of Religion, and in the indispensible Duties of Godliness, there fond and erroneous Notions are soon taken up, false Perswasions are easily entertained, and Seducers have the Advantage of doing what they please with this sort of People. They may set them against all Order and Decency, they may cause their Minds to be prejudiced against the Ministry of the Gospel, and they may bring them to a despising of Magistracy and Government, and after that to an Affronting, and even Rebelling against it, and to a treading under Foot all Civil Laws and Constitutions.

Seventhly, To say all in one Word, The Things contained in the Catechistical Way of Divinity, *i. e.* the Fundamental and necessary Truths of our Religion, with the Experimental and Practical Knowledge of them, are the only Things which conduct us to Happiness in this World, and in another. These, these are the Things which render us capable of the Divine Favour, which is our greatest Felicity in this Life; and these through the All-sufficient Merits and Satisfaction of Christ Jesus our Redeemer, will bring us safe to endless Glory hereafter. We are therefore highly concern'd to mind these. Our Eternal Blessedness depends thereupon. These are the Things which will yield us Comfort in the whole Course of our Lives, and at the Hour of Death, and which will give us an Inheritance among the Saints in the World to come. Fruitless Speculations and Controversies cannot do this, for they divide our Thoughts, disturb our Minds, draw us off from the more serious attending to solid and necessary Truths, and from the Practice of real Duties. Disputes were never known to build us up in our most Holy Faith; but the Knowledge of the necessary Truths of Christianity will effect this. They furnish our Souls with useful and profitable Notices, and they lead us directly to the Fruition of God and everlasting Happiness. Thus I have briefly represented to you the *Reasonableness* of this Performance. You see how *Necessary* and *Profitable* it is to instruct Persons in the first Principles, and Essential Doctrines of Religion, and to manage this Undertaking according to the Capacities of those who are to be instructed.

Suffer then a Word of *Exhortation.* Be perswaded to entertain a good Opinion of this Benefical Exercise of *Catechizing*, and that not barely because 'tis commended to you by our Church, but because it is in it self so Useful and Advantageous, and conduceth to such excellent Ends and Purposes. Many slight and despise it as an inferior kind of Instruction; but be not you prevail'd with to do so. This hath been an ancient and laudable Exercise in the Church, and hath been found a very advantageous Help to the Knowledge of Divine Truths. Make use of it with a Conscientious Care. And that you may be directed aright in the discharge of it, you are to know (or rather to remember,

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for I have suggested it already) that the Work of Catechizing is not the Performance or Office of one but many. Accordingly I exhort you, 1. To Catechize your Cuildren and Servants *at Home*. 2. To send them *Abroad* to receive that Instruction. 3. Incourage them to be instructed in that Way *at Church*. 4. Train them up to the Hearing of the *Word Preached*, which is designed to explain and enlarge upon the Heads of the Catechism. A Word of each of these.

1. You that are Parents and Masters, Guides and Governours of Families, instruct your Children and Servants within your own Walls. Let your Religious Charity to them begin at Home. The first Priests were Masters of Families. Priesthood commenc'd in private Houses, and had staid there if the World had not increased. You that preside over Families are still a sort of *Priests*, and your Lips should preserve and propagate Knowledge. You must teach your Charge how to know God, and by that how to serve him. It is your Task to instill the Principles of Religion into them betimes. The Apostle lets you know that it is your Duty to *bring up your Children in the Nurture and Admonition of the Lord*, Eph. 6. 4. You cannot discharge this Duty in a more successful Way, than in that of *Catechizing*, which I have proved to you already.

2. Let that pious Charity which began at Home, spread it self Abroad. Send your Children to others to receive Instruction from them. Let the School as well as your own House be the Place of Catechizing. Those who are in that Employment, *viz.* of Instructing the Youth at *School*, are nearly concerned in this Particular. It is their Office to Catechize, and the Canons of our Church (as I told you) enjoin it them as their Duty. I hope they will not decline so excellent a Task. To Teach and Instruct Youth is a worthy Employment. A Schoolmaster, who is rightly qualified for that Work, is of great Use to the World. He prepares the Children to be Men. He fashions Youth in order to their Behaviour when they shall arrive to Years. This is a very Honorable, and excellent and noble Task. None therefore need be ashamed of it, but those who are conscious of not Performing it aright.

3. After you have taken care that your Children be Catechized *at Home* and at *School*, remember to bring them to *Church* to receive that Instruction there. The Guides of Families (as useful as they are) are but in Subserviency to the *Ministerial* Employment and Function, and Schoolmasters (as great as I represented them) are but Ushers to the Evangelical Pastors, who take the Youth into their more immediate Care, they being appointed by the *Church* to Instruct the young Ones in the Principles of Religion, especially in that *Catechism* which she hath Compiled. Left Parents and other Tutors should have been defective in this Work, it is devolved upon *Ministers*, as those whose more proper Function and Office it is to instruct Souls, and to shew the Way to Truth and Godliness. They are obliged therefore to perform this Work, as they are Spiritual Shepherds and Guides, and it must not be done Superficially and Slightly. As it is manag'd in many Places, it is of little Use; and Catechizing is brought in only to thrust out Preaching. But it is certainly of great and singular Use, if it be performed with due Care, Attention and Faithfulness. It is your Duty then to command your Children and Servants to repair to the Minister at Church, to be instructed by him in the Grounds of Religion.

Fourthly and Lastly, Repair thither to hear the Word of God Expounded and Applied. The Catechism is well designed for Beginners: But there is also *Preaching* appointed both for them and others. And of that I proceed to speak in the next Place.

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AN APPENDIX TO THE

Foregoing DISCOURSE, *being a* PASSAGE *inserted into a* SERMON *preached at* Cambridge *on the said* SUBJECT.

THERE are *others* besides *Parents*, and *Masters of Families*, and *School-Masters* and *Parochial Ministers*, that are concern'd in this great Duty which I have treated of, I mean such as *We* who are Members of the Learned Societies in this *University* (for I see I speak to some of this Rank at this Time) and I speak this the rather, because there being several *Under-Servants* and *Attendants* belonging to us who want our Instruction, the Ignorance of the greatest part of them in the common Principles of the Christian Faith, will be a great Reproach to us who have Opportunities of informing them. I have been often thinking to mention this, but now I believe it is as Seasonable as ever, and I hope it will be accepted with that Candor and Simplicity with which I offer it. How great a Reproach, I say, will it be to *us of the Gown*, and most of us devoted to the Study of *Divinity*, if those who converse within our Walls, and whose Faces we daily see, and whose Service we continually need, and have the Benefit of, remain almost as ignorant as *Heathens* in the greatest and most Fundamental Truths of the Gospel? What! shall we engross the Knowledge of Religion to our selves, and not permit our Servants to have some Share of it? Shall it be said that they live among the *Sons of the Prophets*, and yet have no Advantage from them of their Divine and Heavenly Profession? Or will it become knowing Heads to despise the Weak and Simple, or to have no regard to them because they are our Inferiors, and in a Servile Condition?

It hath been generally acknowledg'd by the Wisest Men, that all Souls are alike, that is, as to their natural Frame and Make: Nay, this is certain, that the Souls of the meanest that wait on us, and go of our Errands, would be every Ways equal with those of the greatest Philosophers and Divines among us, if they were alike Cultivated. And therefore let us not reckon those whose Lot it is to be so much below us, in their present Station, to be meer Animals, and such as have nothing but Carkase belonging to them, as some Prophane Ones are apt to think, yea and dare to speak. Let this rather be thought of, that we have frequent Opportunities of instilling into this sort of Persons the Principles of Divine Knowledge. And surely we need not to be reminded what a noble and generous Thing it is to do good to the Souls of Men, especially those that stand so much in need of our Guidance and Instruction. O how brave and excellent, how commendable and praise-worthy is it to be instrumental towards the opening of their blind Eyes, toward the illuminating of their dark Minds, toward the quickening of their dull Capacities, toward the giving them a full View of their Duty, and toward leading them to Heaven and Happiness! How laudable a Thing would it be, if in every one of our Colleges a fit Person were chosen out on Purpose to discharge this Office, and on this Day (the *Lord's-Day*) more especially?

Or

Or those of the Sacred Ministry among us in our respective Societies, might take this Employment upon them by Turns, namely, to *Catechize* this inferior People, to instruct them in the necessary Points of Religion, to lay before them their wretched State by Nature, to convince them of their Sin and of their Misery, to shew them the Way how they may escape eternal Wrath and Condemnation, and accordingly to acquaint them with the true Nature of Faith and Repentance, and to set them right in the Knowledge of all the other Principles of the Christian Religion, and earnestly to call upon them to mind the Concern of their never-dying Souls; besides there are *Occasional* Admonitions and Instructions, which the Members of every Society are capable of giving them.

Let us be sensible of our former neglect in this matter, and now with great Seriousness apply our selves to the redressing of it. That is, let us be careful to impart unto our Servants, whose daily help we need, those *Divine Truths* without the Knowledge of which it is impossible they should arrive at Heaven, and share in the Happiness which Christ Jesus hath purchas'd by his precious Blood. O let us not suffer any of them to live and die in the Ignorance of those necessary Principles of Christianity. Let us endeavour to furnish their Minds with the Saving Doctrines of the Gospel, which are requisite to be known by them in order to their Eternal Salvation. Such a Work as this, well performed by us, will derive a lasting Blessing on our Societies, and will take off that scandalous Imputation, that our Domesticks are ignorant, by an *Antiperistasis*, that is, the more they are surrounded with Knowledge and Learning, the lesser Portion they have of it.

Of PREACHING.

PREACHING succeeds Catechizing, and is another establish'd Office and Institution of the Gospel. And here I will shew, 1. That this Way of Teaching and Instructing the People, is authoriz'd by the Practice of the antient Patriarchs, and of the *Jewish* Church. 2. By the particular Institution and Practice of Christ and his Apostles. 3. By the Example of the Churches of Christ in the next succeeding Ages. And Fourthly, I will briefly assign the Reason of this Institution.

First, I say, this publick Way of Instruction is warranted by the Example of the ancient Patriarchs, and of God's People the *Jews*. *Adam* and *Seth*, and *Enoch* were *Antediluvian* Preachers, and instructed the People of those Times in the Matters of Religion, as we may gather from the Title given to *Noah* by the Apostle St. *Peter*, who styles him *a Preacher of Righteousness*, 2 Pet. 2. 5. because he publickly inform'd the World concerning their Duty, and reprov'd them for their Disobedience, and warned them of future Judgment, and earnestly exhorted them to Repentance and a godly Life, which are the main Parts of *Preaching*. Without Question *Abraham*, who so Religiously instructed his Sons and his Family, as we are assured by the Sacred History, was a great and forward Instructer of others. And the like may be said of the Eminent Persons in that Dispensation, the Fathers and Masters of Families were the *Priests* and *Religious Officers*, and they were the publick *Teachers* likewise.

But afterwards, when the *Judaical* Oeconomy was establish'd, this Office of publick Teaching was more signal and remarkable. *Aaron* the High-Priest was noted for this, as is implied in that *Elogium* which is given him, *Exod.* 4. 14. *He could speak well.* And this is included in what is said of *Moses*, that *he was mighty in Words*, Acts 7. 22. Which is the same that is said of our Saviour, that he was *a Prophet mighty in Word*, *Luke* 24. 19. which without Doubt hath respect to his Doctrine and Preaching. Accordingly we read, that *Moses* exercis'd this Talent, and *taught the* Israelites *the Statutes and Judgments of God, to do them, and that they might live*, Deut. 4. 1. He *taught* them, after he had *delivered* the Laws and Statutes to them, which shews that this *Teaching* is distinct from the *Delivery* of the Law, and that he made it his Work to explain the Law to them, and to exhort them to the Practice of it, and to excite them to Obedience by setting before

before them the happy State of those that conform themselves to the Divine Laws, which is intimated in those Word, *to do them*, and *that they may live*. And as for the Priests and Levites, it was their standing Office to teach the People, as is expresly said, *Lev.* 10. 11. *That you may teach the Children of* Israel *all the Statutes which the Lord hath spoken to them by the Hand of* Moses. And the People are commanded to *do according to all the Priests shall teach them*, *Deut.* 24. 8. We read that the Priests and Levites *taught in* Judah, *and went about thro' all the Cities of* Judah, *and taught the People*, 2 Chron. 17. 9. And in *v.* 7. 'tis said *the Princes did teach in the Cities of* Judah, that is, These were sent by good King *Jehosophat* with the foresaid Levites and Priests, to encourage and protect them in the teaching of the People. A very Noble Work, and worthy of a Pious King. We are acquainted from *Mal.* 2. 7. that 'twas a Divine Appointment and Constitution, that *the Priests Lips should keep knowledge, and that the People should seek the Law at his Mouth.*

This Office, which had been neglected in the Time of the Captivity and Dispersion, was restored by *Ezra*, *Neh.* 8. 1, 2, *&c.* But especially that is observable which is said in *ver.* 8. namely, that at a solemn Meeting to Worship God, *Ezra* and others Priests, *read in the Book, in the Law of God, distinctly, and gave the Sense, and caus'd them to understand the Reading*; that is, they expounded the Place which they read, and shew'd the true Meaning and Scope of it, as we now take a Text, and preach upon it. And this was the constant Practice afterwards in the *Jewish* Church. Reading the Law preceded the Interpreting and Explaining of it; which was done by the *Priests*, who are styled *Lawyers* and *Scribes* in the *New Testament*, because they writ and expounded the Law to the People. These are said to *preach Moses*, *Acts* 15. 21. after their *Reading* him in the Synagogues; which is confirm'd from *Acts* 13. 14, 15 where we find, that Reading preceded Preaching, and consequently was different from it, the contrary to which some have attempted to prove from the former Text, imagining that *Preaching* is there explain'd by *Reading*, but the latter Text clearly confutes that vain Surmise.

It is true, there were others besides Priests that sometimes stood up in the Synagogues, and preached to the People, whence 'tis recorded in *Luke* 4. 16. and in that fore-mention'd Place, *Acts* 13. 14. that Christ and the Apostles did so, who were not *Jewish* Priests. But they were taken for *Prophetical Men*, and on that Account were admitted to speak publickly in the Congregations, for always among the *Jews*, the *Prophets*, tho' not of the Sacerdotal Order, had leave to be publick Teachers of the People. But this was an *Extraordinary* Thing, and therefore ought not to be alledg'd at present, for I'm speaking of the ordinary and stated Course of the *Jewish* Church, wherein there was appointed by God a *Set Order* of Men to teach and instruct the People when they were solemnly met together to Worship the most High. And I have prov'd, that not only the publick Reading of the Scriptures, but the Expounding of them, and making Exhortations from them was the Work and Office of the Priests and *Levites*. This is in Prosecution of the first Thing I undertook, namely, to shew, that Preaching, or publick Instructing the People, is warranted by the *Patriarchal* and *Jewish* Dispensations, and even by the express Command and Institution of God in the latter.

Secondly, This Way of Teaching the People is further justified and establish'd by the *Evangelical* Dispensation, and therein by Christ and his Apostles. He sent these forth *to Preach to the lost Sheep of the House of* Israel, *Mal.* 10. 6, 7. And afterwards, he made Preaching a Divine Ordinance, by that Commission which he gave to his Apostles, and at the same Time to all his Ministers *to the end of the World*, *Go and teach all Nations*, Mat. 28. 19. *Go preach the Gospel to every Creature*, Mark 16. 15. Whilst he was on Earth, he shew'd his Approbation of this Evangelical Office by his own Example and Practice, *Mat.* 4. 17. *Jesus began to Preach, and to say, Repent*, that is, he began his Preaching with the Doctrine of *Repentance*, and he proceeded in preaching of all Moral Doctrines, and adding to them the more Spiritual and Sublime Principles and Duties which the *Christian* Dispensation requires of us, as we find in those his excellent Sermons on the Mount, and else-where. He solemnly rebuked all Vice, and exposed the Vileness and Turpitude of it, and took all Occasions to set forth

the Excellency and Worth of Religion and Holiness, and obeying the Divine Commands. He frequently preached by Similitudes and Parables, a Way that was suitable to that People and Country. But his most usual Way of Preaching was by convincing his Auditors, who generally were *Jews*, out of the Scriptures of the *Old Testament*, the Truth and Authority of which they acknowledg'd, and therefore he often quotes and argues these, irrefragably proving thence, that the *Jewish* Oeconomy was to cease, and that the Law was to give Way to the Gospel, and that by his Coming the Scripture Prophecies were fulfill'd, and that he was the true *Messias*. When he preached in the Synagogues of the *Jews* (as he was wont to do) he conform'd to their Way, that is, first he read a Portion of Scripture, and then he expounded and applied it, *Luke* 4. 17, 21. herein acquainting us what is the true Way of Preaching, namely, that the Ministers of the Gospel are to explain and lay open the true Meaning of the Word of God, and to make Application of it to those they discourse to.

And not only our Saviour, but his Apostles, settled this Office in the Church, by their approving of it, yea by enjoining it, and also by their Example. When St. *Paul* puts that Question, *How shall they hear without a Preacher?* Rom. 10. 14. he manifestly warrants the Function, yea and argues of the absolute Necessity of it in the Church. Which he doth likewise in 1 *Cor.* 1. 21. *It pleased God by the Foolishness of Preaching to save them that believe*, that is, God saw it meet to appoint Preaching, (as *foolish* as Worldly Men account it) to be the ordinary Instrument of Faith and Salvation. Thence there is a positive Injunction, 2 *Tim.* 4. 2. *Preach the Word.* And the Apostle in this Place enlarges upon it, setting forth the several Parts of a Preacher's Office, and the manner of discharging it, *Be instant, in Season and out of Season*, &c.

To which let us add the *Practice* of the Apostles, which is a farther Justification of this Office; and it may be observ'd, that they imitated their Master in the way of discharging it, for as he began his Sermons with *Repentance*, so they at their first going out, *preached that Men should Repent*, *Mark* 6. 12. And as he preached from a Text of *Isaiah*, so the Apostle *Peter* preached from a Text of *Joel*, *Acts* 2. 16, *&c.* And at another Time from a Place in *Deuteronomy*, *Acts* 10. 34, *&c.* So *Philip* the Evangelist *began at the Scripture* (namely, *Isa.* 53. 7) *and preached Jesus* unto the *Ethiopian* Eunuch, *Acts* 8. 35. And so 'tis probable that other Apostles used to propound a Portion of Scripture, and thence to fetch the Argument of their Sermons and Discourses. (Which was the Way of Preaching among the *Essenes*, as * *Philo* testifies.) And as our Saviour convinc'd his Auditors out of the Writings of the *Old Testament*, so the Apostles were wont to follow him in this: Thus when St. *Paul* preached at *Thessalonica* to the *Jews*, *he, as his manner was, reason'd with them out of the Scriptures, opening and alledging* out of these Writings, *that Christ must needs have suffer'd*, &c. *Acts* 17. 1, 2, &c. So *Apollos mightily convinced the* Jews, *shewing by the Scriptures that Jesus was Christ*, *Acts* 18. 28. And thus, and by other Parts of the Preaching Office, they brought over People to the Christian Faith, and to a Religious and Godly Life, and confirm'd and establish'd them in both.

* *Quod omnis Liber, probus.*

Thirdly, this Way of publick Instructing the Flock, is commended to us by the Example of the Ministers of Christ in the next succeeding Ages after the Apostles. In Imitation of Christ and them, the Christian Pastors publickly preached to the People. Which is thus expressed by *Tertullian*, * *By our Sermons we nourish Mens Faith, we raise their Hope, we settle their Confidence, and we strengthen and keep intire our Discipline, by inculcating the Laws and Commands of Christ.* And from an eminent Passage in *Justin Martyr*, who gives an Account to the *Roman* Emperor of their publick Way of Worship on the Lord's Day, we are inform'd that they preach'd on the Scriptures and Lessons read at that Time in the Christian Assemblies. † *After the Reader*, saith he, *hath done his Office, the chief Minister makes a Sermon or Exhortation to stir the People up to the imitating of those excellent Things which they had heard read to them.* And generally it was thus in the Primitive Times, their Discourses to the People (which were called

* *Certe fidem sanctis vocibus pascimus, spem erigimus, fiduciam figimus, Disciplinam præceptorum nihilominus inculcationibus densamus.* Apologet. cap. 39.

† Περιεσὼς διαλόγυ τὴν ἀναγνωσθεῖσαν πρόκλησιν τῆς τῶν καλῶν τούτων μιμήσεως ποιεῖται. Apol. 2. *ad* Antonin. Pium.

call'd * *Sermons*, because *spoken* and pronounc'd to the People; and † *Homilies*, because they were generally plain and *familiar*) were for the most part an Exposition of some Select Part of Scripture, which was read in the Assemblies, with an Exhortation joyn'd to it, as appears from several of St. *Chrysostom*'s *Homilies* to the People of *Antioch*. This is, as he expresses it, ‖ Μίαν ῥῆσιν ἐκ τῶν ἀναγνωσθέντων παραλίβωμεν, to propound or commend to the Auditory a certain Passage or Sentence, out of what was read that Day in the Congregation. This was practised by other Fathers; some peculiar Passage of Scripture was descanted upon by them, and it was most commonly chosen out of the Chapter that was read in the Assembly at that Time.

* *Solebant per Sermones id agere, quod proferuntur in populis, quos Graeci ὁμιλίας vocant:* Augustin. Procem. *Enarrat. in* Psal. cxviii.

† Ὁμιλεῖν, & Ὁμιλία, were the Words to signify *Popular Discourses* made by Preachers; of which, see the Instances taken out of Councils and Fathers by *Du Fresne*, in his *Glossary*.

‖ Homil. 16. *ad Popul.* Antioch.

But besides this, they preach'd on whole Chapters, or large Portions of them; and sometimes proceeded in Order through a whole Book, and insisted on the several Parts of it at diverse Times, as we see in *Chrysostom*'s *Homilies*, or *Expositions* on the Book of *Genesis*, on the *Psalms*, and on St. *Matthew*; all which were Discourses to the People. And *Origen* and *Basil*, and other Fathers did the like.

Sometimes they preached without a Chapter or Text, only exhorting the People to some religious and vertuous Practice; or declaiming against some Vice, or discoursing upon some emergent Occasion. Of which sort are some of the Sermons of *Chrysostom*, *Ambrose*, *Augustine*, *Chrysologus*, and *Gregory the Great*. Sometimes they made Choice of a particular Subject or Point of Divinity to discourse of. At other Times they were more General, and insisted on the Truth or Reasonableness of Christianity, against Jews or Pagans; and many of these Discourses were studied and elaborate. But generally their Preaching was Popular, Easy, and Extemporary. But though the Ancient Manner of Preaching was thus different and various, yet it was agreed by all, that Preaching was an indispensible Office and Imployment in the Church, and was constantly to be kept up in all the Christian Congregations.

Accordingly they were followed by the Ages afterwards, but especially in this Thing, That it was usual to preach on the Places of Scripture which were read to the People as *proper Lessons* for the Day. But now came *Postills* into Use, which were a Descant or Comment on the *Gospels* and *Epistles*: they began in *Charles the Great*'s Time, and by his Order, about the Middle of the Ninth Century; and they continued a long time, even 'till the Reformation, yea, some time after it, for they were used by *Lutherans* as well as *Papists*. But when the *Reformation* got farther Footing, these *Postillary* Discourses were found to be flat and insipid, and not serviceable to stir up People to their Duty. Thence God rais'd up several eminent Men to instruct the People in a more profitable Way. And as the *Reformation* increas'd, and the Churches of Christ were inlighten'd, and Ministers were endow'd with Gifts, Preaching was daily improved; and then it was generally thought fit to single out one or two Verses only as a Text for a Sermon, which they first expounded, and then enlarg'd upon by Topicks from Reason and Scripture, and lastly Applied. And this Skill hath increased every Day more and more, especially in our *own Church* and *Nation*. It were immodest to say much of our selves; wherefore let other Countries speak in Commendation of those Discourses, which are thought so worthy by Foreigners, that this one Thing alone hath induced Thousands to travel hither, and to learn our Language, that they may have the Benefit of the *Sermons* publish'd by English Divines. In brief, the Ministers of the Reformed Churches have attain'd to an useful Way of Teaching the People, and such as is conformable to the Preaching of Christ and the Apostles, and the Ancient Fathers, who grounded all their Discourses on the Scriptures. And this Way of Teaching in the Church, is grounded it self on them, as being a Divine Ordinance and Institution.

Fourthly and Lastly, I am to assign the *Reasonableness* and *Necessity* of this Institution. This Office was at first appointed for the Informing of the World, and the Conversion of Sinners. It was designed to make Men Wiser and Better. Particularly in the Times of the Gospel, it was intended to bring

Men into the Fold of Christ the Great Shepherd of Souls; and to build up the Church in the Holy Christian Faith. It is true, Preaching was in some respect *Peculiar* in the Apostles Times; it was an extraordinary Thing as practis'd by them; they did it by immediate Inspiration. It was a miraculous Gift to expound the Scriptures, especially the first Christians being generally unlearned and simple Persons. But as to the *Main*, Preaching is the same since that it was then; that is, It is appointed to advance and promote the Gospel. As by Preaching the Church was at first made and gather'd, so now by this it is propagated, kept up, and maintained. This was the Design, and this was the Effect of Preaching in the Apostles Days. And it is so still, and therefore is as Necessary as it was then. Preaching of the Gospel is still the Instrument made use of by God to convert and to confirm Men. It is serviceable to make them good Christians, and also to establish them in Christianity. This in General.

But the Particular Benefits of this Evangelical Office are these: Hereby the Blind and Ignorant are inlighten'd and instructed in the Doctrine of the Gospel, and the Way of Salvation. Which is a necessary Work, because the Religion we profess is a *reasonable Service*, and is founded on Knowledge and Understanding, and is governed by Right Principles; and therefore the Minds of People are to be furnish'd with Light and Knowledge. Hereby the Erroneous and Deluded are convinc'd of their Mistakes, and cured of their former Mis-apprehensions of Things, and are brought into the Way of Truth. Hereby weak and tender Consciences are strengthned and supported, and their Scruples are fully satisfied. Hereby the Mournful and Disconsolate receive Refreshment, and serve their Maker and Redeemer with Alacrity and Chearfulness. Hereby the Prophane are brought off from their wicked Course, and abandon Satan to serve the Living God. Hereby the Heedless and Inconsiderate are put in mind of their Duties, and are affectionately excited to it. Hereby the Drowzy and Forgetful are rouz'd and alarm'd, and effectually brought to attend to their greatest Interest and Concern.

In short, the Case generally with us is this, We sin not so much out of *Ignorance* as Inconsideration and Forgetfulness; wherefore we have Need of a Remembrancer and a Monitor, and one that will be a continual Director to us. For every Man will not, or cannot apply the Rule, but they let it lie by them as useless. So that it is requisite, that one be ready to lay the Rule right, to hold the Glass before Mens Faces, to admonish them of their Duty, and to direct them to it. This Monitor, this Remembrancer, this Director is the *Preacher*. The Life of Godliness is to be promoted for ever to the World's End by this Sacred Method. This is the true Ministry of Grace and Salvation; and this is the Great Machine, the Useful and Powerful Engine for the demolishing of Satan's Kingdom. Whence it follows, That the publick Preaching of the Word is a Necessary Institution of Christ in the Church, and that there cannot be a Church without it. So much concerning this Divine Ordinance and Office: Of the *Particular Nature* of which, and *how it is to be performed with good Success*, I have treated in another Place; and therefore I am excused from saying any thing of it here.

Of HEARING.

AND if *Preaching* be an Ordinance of Divine Institution, then *Hearing* is so too. For there is a mutual Relation between these Two; and if it be the Ministers Office to preach, the People are certainly obliged to give Ear to what is preach'd to them. Wherefore this is a publick Duty, and can't be dispenc'd with. We may observe that the *Hearing of the Word* is supposed as necessary in the Parable of the *Sower*, *Mat.* 13. 19, *&c.* And in that cautionary Precept, *Take heed what ye hear*, *Mark* 4. 34. and *how ye hear*, *Luke* 8. 18. 'tis implied, that *Hearing* is our Duty. But it is not only implied, but positively commanded, as in *James* 1. 19. *Let every Man be swift to hear*, namely, the Word of God, call'd in the foregoing Verse, *The Word of Truth*, and in the following

lowing one, *The ingrafted Word, which is able to save our Souls.* Which shews that the *Hearing* spoken of in that Place hath respect to *Preaching the Word*; and here is an absolute Injunction for the Practice of it. So that no more need be said to prove that this is a publick Act of Worship, and authorized by Christ and his Apostles.

And the Practice of all the Churches of Christ in succeeding Ages gives Testimony to this. None were excluded from receiving Instruction in the publick Assemblies in the primitive Times. Jews, Pagans, Hereticks, Schismaticks, Excommunicated Persons, had a Place allotted them, where they could hear the Scripture read, and the Sermon preach'd and the Psalms sung, as *Cyprian* and other ancient Writers of the Church inform us. It was established by an ancient *Council, That no Person whatsoever should be debarred from Hearing. And indeed such Persons as are before-named have more Need of Hearing than others. Wherefore since none are excluded from Hearing, let us not debarr our selves, but make Conscience of giving Ear to the Instructions and Exhortations of the faithful Ministers of Christ.

* *Concil. Carthagin. 4tum.* Can. 84.

And this we shall do, if we consider these Three Things: 1. That this Ordinance is the appointed Means of Divine *Knowledge*. 2. It is the usual Instrument of begetting *Faith* and all *other Graces*. 3. 'Tis the ordinary Means of *Salvation*.

First, The Divine Goodness was pleased to ordain Hearing of the Word preached, as the Great Chanel to convey Spiritual *Knowledge*. By Nature we are ignorant of the great Mysteries of Christianity; Reason, which dictates to us other Things, fails us here. If Men could have Argued themselves into the Doctrines of the Gospel, the Learned Philosophers who lived in our Saviour's Time and afterwards, would have readily turned Christians; but we find that some of them were the fiercest Opposers of it. Which is a plain Sign that Christianity, and the Truths and Doctrines of it, are exalted above the utmost Dictates and Improvements of Reason. Whence it follows, that the Notices of these Things must be derived to us by some other Way; and what is that but Revelation? Namely, The Discovery of God's Will in the Holy Scriptures. And the Knowledge of this must be imparted to us by *Hearing*. On which Account *this* is often urged and inculcated by *Christ* and his *Apostles*.

And truly there is as much Reason to urge and press it *now*; for this is a standing Ordinance in the Church, and this is still to be made use of as the appointed Chanel for the Conveying of Knowledge to us. And those ought to be the more attentive to this who observe what a Scarcity of Divine Knowledge there is among the Generality of People. Many that are knowing in other Matters, and are shrewd Dealers in the World, yet are very ignorant in the Things which concern the Kingdom of God. Speak to them of Faith, Justification, Regeneration, and the other great Points of Christianity, they are Strangers to what you say; you discourse to them in an unknown Language: In the greatest Cities, in the most populous and frequented Towns, you shall meet with great Numbers so ignorant that they cannot give any tolerable Account of the plainest and most obvious Matters in Religion. They are not able to speak five Words of Sense on any Principle or Head of Christianity; they have not a true Notion of one Point of Divinity. They are blinded and hood-wink'd, and they love to be so. It is in some measure thus, I am afraid, in every Place. Too many of the meaner and inferior People live in gross Ignorance; and some of the other Sort, I fear, are not so well stock'd with Knowledge as they ought to be. But certainly the Want of this Knowledge in Divine Matters is a Thing very unworthy of those who are of a Christian Church, and it ought to be blamed and sharply reproved by the Ministers of the Gospel. This is a Thing no ways sufferable in a Place where Christianity is own'd and profess'd. This Darkness is intolerable where the Gospel shines; it is a shameful and inexcusable Crime.

Secondly,

Secondly, *Faith* is to accompany Knowledge, and this likewise is conveyed to us by *Hearing*. To prove which I need only mention *Rom.* 10. 14. *How shall they believe in him, of whom they have not heard?* And that which we read in *v.* 17. *Faith comes by Hearing.* Faith is a comprehensive Grace, and there are several Acts and Parts of it; but all of them are owing to our Attention to the Word of God. That we assent unto the Truths of the Gospel, is to be attributed to this. That we approve of those Truths, and are thence incited to practise them, is to be ascribed to this: That we arrive to a firm Reliance on these Divine Truths, but especially that we place all our Confidence in the Merits of Christ Jesus for the purchasing of Life and Salvation for us; this also is the happy Result and Effect of our receiving and imbracing the Word of God. The first Acts of Saving Faith, and those that are consequent, and are of an higher Nature, are all wrought in us by this Means. This First generates in our Minds a Belief of the Gospel, and then establishes it, and brings it to Perfection. For where Faith is, there is the Root of all other Graces and Divine Accomplishments whatsoever; and in a short time they will spring forth, and exert themselves in Acts of Holiness and Piety. For as this lays the Foundation, so likewise it finishes the Superstructure, which is Obedience and a Godly Life.

Lastly, *Hearing* is the appointed Means of *Salvation.* And we cannot in an ordinary and usual Way expect this latter without the former, because we find it to be the settled Constitution of the Gospel, that Conversion and Repentance, and consequently the Saving of our Souls depend upon our diligent Attending on the Word of God. So that this, together with what hath been said, gives us in short a compleat Account of the Excellency and Necessity of *Hearing*, and lets us know that it is an Evangelical Institution. The *Manner* of performing it, so as it may prove Effectual to us, is discoursed of in another Place by itself, to which I remit the Reader.

Of Singing *of* PSALMS.

Singing of Psalms is another Sacred Ordinance, and may justly be reckoned among the solemn Acts of Religious Worship. I will shew that it was so first in the *Jewish* Church; secondly in the *Christian*, in the Times of our Saviour and his Apostles; thirdly, in the *Ages following*; and fourthly, I will assign the *Manner* and *Qualifications* of this sacred Part of Worship. And fifthly, I will attempt to set forth briefly the *Excellency* and *Benefits* of it.

As to the first Particular, it is very manifest that this was an ancient way of Divine Worship. It was us'd in *Moses*'s Time, *Exod.* 15. 1. *Then sang* Moses *and the Children of* Israel *this Song unto the Lord*, &c. And in the Days of the *Judges*, witness the Divine Song of *Deborah* and *Barak*, Judg. 5. 1. And in *Samuel's* Time, 1 *Sam.* 18. 6, 7. as that triumphal Hymn testifies. Especially in the Reign of King *David* Singing became a Divine Performance, and was frequently used in the Service of God, and by that King's Order and Command, 1 *Chron.* 6. 31, 32. For he himself was a great Poet, and indited several Odes and Songs, several Hymns and Psalms, with variety of Verse, on sundry Divine Subjects, so that Poetry was honour'd and ennobled, and Verse sanctified by his employing them to religious and sacred Purposes. And being *Musical*, as well as *Poetical*, he enjoyned skilfull Musicians to fit musical Notes to his Composures. Thence he directed the Fifty First Psalm *to the chief Musician*, to set that penitential Song to a mournful Tune. And other Psalms have the like Direction, that is, to some Master of Musick; as *Asaph*, or *Heman*, or *Ethan*, or *Jeduthun*, who were musical Composers at that Time. And such was his Delight, and such his excellent Skill in the Divine Art of Singing, that he merited the Title of *the Sweet Singer of* Israel, 2 *Sam.* 23. 1. In King *Solomon*'s Time this Holy Exercise was continued, 2 *Chron.* 5. 13. and in King *Jehosophat*'s Reign, 2 *Chron.* 20. 21, 22. and in King *Hezekiah*'s, 2 *Chron.* 29. 28, 30. And after the Return from the Captivity, this Service was restored, *Ezr.* 3. 10, 11. *Neh.* 12. 42. and so it continued to be a part of the Religious Worship among the *Jews* as long as that Church lasted.

Now,

Now, the constant Practice of praising God by Singing of Psalms, or Hymns among the most religious People of God, from *Moses*'s Time to the end of the Judaical Dispensation, argues that this Way of Worship is a Divine Ordinance! Especially if we consider that this manner of praising God, tho' it was practis'd by *Moses* and by the Jews, yet was not a *Mosaical* or *Legal* Service, and did not belong to the *Ceremonial*, but the *Moral Law* : For singing of Psalms, or Songs of Praise to God is a part of Natural Religion. And we know that the Israelites perform'd this Duty, upon their Deliverance and safe Coming out from the Red Sea, before the Law and Jewish Ceremonies were Extant. If we consider this, I say, we cannot but look upon the Universal Practice of so many Religious Persons, for so many Centuries of Years, as an ample Attestation of the Natural Equity and Reasonableness of worshipping the most High in this manner.

Secondly, This was made a Part of Divine Worship by *Christ* and his *Apostles*. Our Blessed Master himself *sang a Hymn* with his Disciples after the receiving of the Sacrament, *Mat.* 26. 30. And it is probable it was one of those Psalms which the *Jews* used to sing at and after the Passover, as the 113 *Psalm*, and the five next. Thus singing of Psalms or Hymns is constituted a Part of Worship under the Gospel by *Christ's Example*. As also by the Example of the *Apostles*, as *Paul* and *Silas*, who *sang Praises unto God* in the Prison, *Acts* 16. 25. by the same Token that the Earth danced to their Musick, as we read in the next Verse. The former of these Holy Men professes that he will *sing with the Spirit, and he will sing with the Understanding also*, as well as he will *pray with the Spirit and with the Understanding*, 1 Cor. 14. 15. It is very observable that he joins *Singing* with *Praying*, and thereby lets us know that these Performances themselves (abstracting from the Extraordinary Spirit they were done by in those Times) are equally of Divine Institution, and (as the Context there shews us) are not only the private Duties of Christians, but are solemn Church-Offices and Exercises: For from the Directions which the Apostle gives about the Performance of them in publick, we gather that they are both of them publick Ordinances.

It is true, the Apostle here speaks of Praying and Singing by the immediate Help of the Spirit; for at that Time the Saints of *Corinth* had so much of an extraordinary Spirit, that they could endite Psalms extempore. *When they came together, every one of them had a Psalm*, v. 26. that is, they were able to compose a Psalm by the special Gift of the Spirit. It was usual to utter extemporary Hymns without any Numbers and Measures, such as the Songs of *Moses* and *Deborah* in the *Old Testament*, and of *Zachary* and *Simeon*, and *Anna* in the *New*. But tho' this immediate Gift of Divine Afflation be now ceas'd, yet the Duty it self of Singing of Psalms is still Obligatory in the Christian Church; as well as *Praying* now continues a necessary Office among Christians, tho' the performing of it by immediate and extraordinary Assistance of the Spirit hath long since had its period.

And thus we are to understand, *Eph.* 5. 18, 19. and *Col.* 3. 16. where St *Paul* prescribes the religious Exercise of Singing as the Concern of all Christians. He bids the Christians use *Psalms and Hymns and Spiritual Songs, singing and making Melody in their Hearts to the Lord.* Where *Psalms* is a general Term of great Latitude, and is a Word in common for all those Songs which contain in them the Praise of God, and set forth in general his Sacred Attributes or Perfections, and in any other way express Devotion, or contribute to Piety and Holiness. Such were the Psalms of *David*, wherein God is extolled and magnified, and where likewise there are Penitential Confessions, and Devout Prayers and Supplications, and Commemorations of the Divine Mercies, and Pathetick Exhortations to a Holy Life. After *Psalms* the Apostle adds *Hymns*, as a * *more complete Thing*, saith one of the Fathers, because they are of a singular and peculiar Strain, and God is prais'd from the Consideration of his Greatness and Majesty, his Power and Glory. *Spiritual Songs* or *Odes* seem to exceed the two former, not only because they are done with more Art, and consist of due Measures, but because the peculiar subject of them is the Goodness and Benignity of God. Or more exactly thus, The others set forth the Divine Excellencies and Perfections consider'd in themselves and in their Nature, but the latter are a displaying of his Excellencies as they respect *us*, and as *we* have a par-

* Ὡς τελειότερόν τι πρᾶγμα. *Theophylact. in* Col. 3. 16.

a particular Share in them. And these Composures are styled *Spiritual*, because they are not only endited by the Help of the Holy Spirit, but they flow from a Spiritual and Heavenly Frame of Mind, and are sung with great Emotion of Spirit. These are the Three kinds of Religious *Singing*, which the Apostle commends to the *Corinthian* Believers, or rather which he commands them to make use of: And thence I inferr that singing of Psalms and Hymns, and spiritual Songs is an Evangelical Duty. And the same may be inferr'd and prov'd from that Apostolical Canon and Precept, *Jam.* 5. 13. *If any be merry*, (that is, be disposed to shew his Religious Mirth and Gladness) *let him sing Psalms.* And this shews that this is a Way of Worship, not calculated for the *Jews* alone, and to be used only under the Mosaical Pedagogy, but that it is part of Divine Service under the Gospel.

Thirdly, Among the *Primitive Christians*, in the Ages *after* Christ and his Apostles, this was own'd to be a solemn act of Worship; and they continually exercis'd themselves in it, both privately and publickly. *Pliny*, in an *Epistle* of his to *Trajan* the Emperor, testifies thus of the Christians, (and he had it from their own Mouths) That they * *met together before Day at some solemn and appointed Times to sing Hymns and Psalms unto Christ, as their God.* And some think that *Carmen secum invicem dicere* denotes their singing in Parts, and answering one another: And thence, and from some other Passages in ancient Writers, *Alternate Singing*, or singing by Turns, is thought to have been practised in the Church in the Two First Centuries. But I believe, upon Examination, it will be found, that this *Antiphonal* Singing was not so ancient in the Worship of God, but that the first authentick Notice we have of it, is in the Fourth Century, namely, in the Church of *Antioch*. This we may see confirm'd by *Theodoret*, in the 2d Book, and 24th Chaper of his *Ecclesiastial History*: And from *Antioch* it spread into other Churches, as that Historian observes; and St. *Ambrose*, at *Milan*, was the first that brought it into the *Latin* Churches.

But as for the plain singing of *Psalms*, it was in all Christian Churches from beginning, and is taken notice of by the Primitive Writers. * *Justin Martyr* testifies, That this was used in his Time, and he gives us a short Encomium of Singing in the Church. † *Clement* of *Alexandria* reports concerning his Times, That the Christians used this religious Exercise, not only publickly but privately, that is, they sung *Psalms* at their Meals, before and after their Meat and Drink. *Tertullian*, who was Contemporary with the foresaid Writer, when he describes the *Dominica Solennia*, the solemn Exercises on the Lord's Day || mentions singing of *Psalms*. And in another Place he acquaints us, * that this was part of the Publick Worship, and that the Primitive Christians sung *Psalms* taken out of the *Bible*, and also others of their own composing. We are told by † *Origen*, That the singing of *Psalms* was an act of Publick Devotion: The Morning and Evening *Hymns* are mentioned by St. *Jerom*, in his Comment on the 64th *Psalm*. We learn from || *Eusebius*, That the Ancient Christians composed *Psalms* and *Hymns* in Honour of God and our Saviour, and sung them. *Constantine the Great* was Eminent for this, as the same Author tells us in the *Life* of that Excellent Prince. And *Theodosius*, the Emperor, (as *Nicephorus* relates in his *Ecclesiastical History*) used to be the first in the Congregation that sung the Sacred *Hymns* of the Church. *Socrates*, the Historian, testifies, That singing was the Practice of the Church of *Alexandria*. In short, he that consults the Records of ancient Christianity will find that *Psalmody* was almost the whole Religious Employment of Devout People in publick and private, in the solemn Assemblies, and in their Families. *Gregory Nazianzen* commends his Sister *Gorgonia*, in the *Funeral Oration* which he made upon her, for her * *well-composed Tone in singing the Psalms.* And even the Men of Trade and Business scarcely let an Hour pass without singing in their Shops, nor the Countrymen in the Fields; yea, when they were at their Meals and Refreshments they did the same. From the whole it appears, That to *sing Psalms*, is not only an Institution of Christ and the Apostles, but was esteem'd a part of the Worship of God in the best and succeeding Ages of Christianity.

Fourthly, I am to speak of the *Manner* and *Qualifications* of this part of Worship. And these are briefly comprised in that Direction given by the Apostle,

* — *Quòd soliti essent stato die ante lucem convenire, carmenque Christo quasi Deo dicere secum invicem.*

* *Resp.* 107 *ad Orthodox.*

† *Strom. l.* 7. *Pædag. l.* 2. *c.* 14.

|| *De Animâ, cap.* 3.

* *Provocatur in medium Deo canere.* Apol. *cap.* 30.

† *De Oratione.*

|| *Hist. Eccles.* l. 2. c. 17. & l. 5. c. 28.

* Ψαλμωδίας πάνυ ἔμμελον.

Apostle, that we are to *sing and make Melody in our Hearts to the Lord*, or, as he words it in *Col.* 3. 16. *with Grace in our Hearts to the Lord*. In which Direction are assign'd the true *End*, and the true *Principle* of performing this Evangelical Duty. The true End is briefly expressed in saying, It must be done *to the Lord*, that is, to his Glory and Honour. And thence perhaps it is, that the *Psalmist* calls his Tongue *his Glory*, *Psal.* 30. 12. because this by speaking and singing, God's Praises sets forth his Glory, for which this Member was design'd. And with the true End, to which this second Performance must tend, there is to be joyn'd the true Principle, from which it ought to flow, and that is the Heart; which signifies, that this Religious Exercise must be discharg'd by us with a holy and religious Frame of Mind, with cordial Affections, and holy Zeal and Fervor. This is *singing and making Melody in our Hearts*, this is *singing with Grace in our Hearts*. And here indeed is the Life of all Devotion, here is the chief Scene of Christianity. It concerns us then chiefly to see that our Hearts be sincere and upright, and that whatever we do in Religion, be done with Simplicity and pure Intention of Mind. Outward Addresses, bodily Exercise, and the external shew of Religion are of no value, without this real tender of our Hearts and Affections unto God. When the Apostle exhorts us to *present our Bodies a living and acceptable Sacrifice to God*, and styles it a *Rational Service*, he can't be thought to intend *only* the offer of our *Bodily Service*, for that is far from deserving the Title of a *Rational Worship*, which necessarily requires the Assistance of the Understanding, and must flow from the inmost Faculties of the Soul. And because we are apt in most of our Duties, and in this particularly which we are speaking of, to mind the external Performance more than the inward Disposition of our Minds, therefore the Apostle particularly insists on this latter, and bids us, when we sing *Psalms* and *Hymns* to God, take care that our *Hearts* keep consort with our Voices.

But here when we are speaking of the *Manner* of performing this part of Divine Worship, that is, singing unto God with our Voice, tuned by our Hearts, it may be demanded whether it be lawful, and becoming Christian Worshippers to sing with the Assistance of any Instrument of Musick, as an *Organ*, or the like, in the Publick Service of God, now under the Gospel. As for the *Jews*, it can't be denied that *Instrumental Musick* was used in the Temple, in singing *David's Psalms*: But this commenc'd at first from the Musical Genius of that King, who was skillful both in *Vocal* and *Instrumental Musick*; and he composed *Songs* and *Psalms* to be sung and play'd in the Publick Worship of God: And we do not read, that this was disapproved of by God. Hence this was continued in the Publick Service of the Jews, and Singers were kept in pay by Godly Kings. But the Question is, Whether this be as lawful and commendable *now*, as it was *then*. The Answer to this in the Negative seems to be most justifiable, that is, that tho' Musical Organs, and other Instruments were used by the *Jewish* Church, and tho' this was not properly and strictly a *Jewish* Rite or Ceremony, that is, it had nothing in it that was *Typical* or *Figurative*, yet it is not agreeable to the *Christian* Service and Worship, and therefore is to be laid aside under the Evangelical Ministry.

That it may not be thought that this is only my private Opinion, I will produce the Testimony and Suffrage of the ancient Writers of the Church, and of other Eminent Divines since.

For tho' perhaps it may be gather'd from * some Authors, that in some few Churches the ancient Christians sung the Psalms with this sort of Musick, and tho' *Clement* of *Alexandria* † seems to favour this Way of Service, and tho' St. *Ambrose* both approved of it, and practis'd it, yet the Generality of the Ancient, Learned, and Pious Fathers, shew'd their dislike of it. Thus *Justin Martyr*, or whosoever was the Author of the *Questions and Answers to the Orthodox*, is against Musical Instruments in the Church. He holds, that to Sing with these, as under the *Old Testament*, is ‖ *fit for Children*, that is, weak and ignorant Persons, and not for the Manly Worshippers under the Gospel. *The use of them*, saith he, *is not receiv'd in the Churches, but* * *a simple and plain Way of Singing is retain'd*. And then he proceeds to the Commendation of this sort of Singing. From some Passages in the great *Athanasius*'s Writings, it appears, that he thought the other Way of Singing was vain and unlawful in the Christian Worship.

* *Euseb. Eccl. Hist.* l. 2. c. 7. *Isidor. Pelus.* l. 1. *Epist.* 90.
† *Pædagog.* l. 2. c. 4.
‖ Νηπιοις ἁρμόδιον.
* Τὴν λιτοτητα τῶ ᾄσματος ἀπλῶς. *Quæst.* 107.

St. * *Chrysostome* thought so, as his Words plainly testify, for he absolutely condemns this Mode of Chaunting the Psalms. St. *Augustine*, who had seem'd at one Time to own the Cathedral Service, afterwards in his † *Confessions* retracted it, and own'd his Mistake and Folly, and he inveighs with some Warmth against that Method of Singing. St. *Jerome* was no Friend to this Artificial Singing, in his Commentary on *Eph.* 5. 19. The same is dislik'd by *Theodoret* on the 32d, and 150th Psalms, where he declares that *Organs*, and such like Musical Instruments, are not convenient for *Christian* Worship, tho' they were for the *Jews*: and this sort of gaudy Worship is disapproved of by || *Isidore* of *Pelusium*.

And as for *Clement* of *Alexandria*, who was first mention'd, and is thought by some to approve of Musical Instruments in Divine Service, yet if we compare the Passage referred to, with what he saith in some other Places, and particularly his *Protreptick*, we may inferr, that they mistake his Words who think they favour Organs; for he rather disparages and rejects them. Yea indeed, if we consider that this Writer flourish'd at the beginning of the Third Century, we cannot but think it was too early Time of Day to set up *Organs*, it being in the Season of *Persecution*, and especially before there were *Churches* erected. It was a long Time after this that Musical Instruments were used in the publick Assemblies of Christians; for *Platina* tells us in the Life of Pope *Vitalian*, that he was the first that brought that Musick into the Church; namely, in the Year of our Lord 657. But it is of later Date according to || *Bellarmine*, and was not in use till the beginning of the Ninth Century.

And then, and afterwards it was dislik'd by most Men of Sobriety and Religion. The famous * *Thomas Aquinas* is positive against it in Divine Service: And so is the great *Erasmus* in his Commentary on *1 Cor.* 14. 19. And † *Cajetan*, another professed Papist, and a Cardinal, tells us, that 'Organs were not used 'in the Church in the Time of *Aquinas*; neither are they, saith he, at this 'Day used before the Pope. And indeed Musical Instruments are not to be 'allow'd in the Offices and Devotions of the Church, which were design'd for 'the conveying of inward Divine Grace; but they are the rather to be disal-'low'd of and laid aside, because that Divine Internal Grace is more excel-'lent than any human Discipline and Art. If an eminent Doctor of the *Roman Church* speaks thus, and if the *Pope* himself hath no Organs in his Chapel (as || another Cardinal likewise acquaints us) why should any professing *Protestantism* stand up stiffly for Instrumental Musick in Churches, and think that Devotion flat and dead, which is not quicken'd with the Sound of Organs? I might mention *Our Own Church*'s dislike of Organick Musick in the Service of God, which we may see in the *Second Homily, Of the Place and Time of Prayer*. And hear what a * Learned Prelate of our own saith, *The Use of Musical Instruments may add some little Advantage to Singing, but they are more apt to change Religion into Air and Fancies, and take off some of its Simplicity, and are not so fitted for Edification.* Thus we have the deliberate Judgment of Ancients and Moderns; they censure this sort of Musick in Churches, but approve of the old *Primitive* Way of Religious Singing. We read how *this* was instituted and performed in the Days of our Saviour and his Apostles, and how the next Ages of Christians practis'd it, that is, in a plain and simple manner, not attended with the Noise of Instruments, or corrupted by Lightness and Vanity. This plain Way of Praising God with our Voices by Psalm-Singing, is that Religious Exercise which I have been treating of in this Discourse, and which I have justly asserted to be an Evangelical Ordinance.

Before I pass to the last Head, let me mention these following Rules: 1. Let the Psalm which is to be sung, be put into Meter, and let it be sung in a plain Tune. 2. Take care *what* Psalms be sung, that is, such as are well and fitly Translated, such as are most pertinent to the Occasion, if there be any particular one; such as all the Congregation may generally join in, as to the Matter and Subject. 3. Sing so much of a Psalm as makes up the entire Sense; whereas 'tis too common to leave off, and render the Sense imperfect. Lastly, It would conduce much to Edification, and the advancing of the Divine Glory, if, besides *David*'s Psalms, there were other special Psalms and Hymns compos'd on the great Subjects of Christianity, namely Christ's Redemption, and his other marvellous Undertakings, and on the Lord's Supper, to be sung at the celebrating of that Holy Feast. I conceive that

* *In* Psal. 144 & 150.
† Lib. 10. Cap. 33.
|| *Epist.* 176, 364, 457.
|| *De bonis operib.* l. 1. c. 17.
* *In* 22 *qu.* 91. Art. 4. 2. 2. Concl. 4.
† *Ad* Tho. Aquin. *Sum. qu.* 91. *Art.* 2.
|| Bona *de divinâ Psalmodiâ* cap. 17.
* Bishop Taylor's Duct. Dubit. p. 670.

that the Practice of these Rules would make this part of Divine Worship very edifying and Useful.

Fifthly, I am to shew the *Excellency* of this Religious Performance. And that 1. With Regard to God. 2. To our selves. 3. To our Brethren.

First, it is serviceable to *set forth the Honour of the Almighty.* Not that his Essential Honour can be increased, but by this Means it is manifested; and we with exalted Voices display the Excellency and Glory of the Blessed Trinity. And indeed it is fit we should sing to him who gave us our Voices, and who made the Musick and Harmony of this great World. This is the Exercise of Angels, and the Employment of Heaven, *Isai.* 6. 3, *Lake* 2. 13. We do but Tune our Tongues here, till we come to the Eternal Quire, to the Celestial Consort of Cherubims and Seraphims. "The liveliest Emblem of Heaven "that I know upon Earth, saith a * Devout Man, is when the People of God, "in the deep Sense of his Excellency and Bounty, from Hearts abounding with "Love and Joy, do join together both in Heart and Voice, in the chearful and "melodious Singing of his Praises. Therefore I have Reason to assert, that the Singing of Psalms is a Signal Act of Worship, whereby God is extoll'd and magnify'd.

* *Mr.* Baxter's Saints Rest, *Part* 4. *Chap.* 5.

Secondly, With respect to *our selves*, this Exercise is very beneficial. For the *Singing* of Religious Songs or Psalms, conduces much toward the imprinting them in our Minds, and fixing them on our *Memories.* For which Reason, as a Great Man tells us, † the Ancients, who were unskill'd in Letters, sung even their Laws, that they might not forget them.

† Πεῖν ἐπῳδὰς καὶ ᾄσματα, ἥδιον τοὺς νόμους ὅπως μὴ ἐπιλάθωνται, Aristot. Problem.

This also is to be said, That Vocal Musick, or Singing, is naturally || *Delectable*, and there are very few that have an Aversion to it, and those are Persons of the worst Temper generally. Wherefore, as a Primitive Writer hath well said on this Occasion. * [If Songs, and Singing them delight the Ear, then the hearing and singing of God's Praises should be a delightful Entertainment. And this must be true Pleasure indeed, seeing it is the Attendant of Vertue.] Wherefore it is manifest, that the Natural Pleasure which goes along with this Religious Exercise, is very advantageous to Piety, and of great Service and Use in the Worship of God.

|| *Thence perhaps that small Difference between* ᾄδω cano, *and* ἄδω placeo.

* *Si voluptas est audire cantus & carmina, Dei laudes canere & audire jucundum sit. Hæc est voluptas vera, quæ comes & socia virtutis est.* Lactant. Instit. l. 6. c. 21.

And so it must be, if we consider likewise, that Singing doth wonderfully move and ravish the Affections, and thereby stirs up and heightens Devotion. St. *Augustine* tells us in his *Confessions* to God, that whilst he bore a part in the Hymns and Anthems sung in the Church of *Milan*, he was melted into penitential † Tears, and was vehemently moved and transported with those pious Strains. And for this Cause he commends Singing in the Church, || that by the delight of the Ear the dull and weak Mind may be raised to a fervency of Devotion. The Praises of God in our Mouths, as they should spring from the Heart, so they are means to help and quicken the pious Sense that should lodge there. They are serviceable to raise our Spirits, to elevate our Thoughts, to inflame our Desire and Love of God, strongly to promote our Devotion, and to lift us up from Earth to Heaven.

† *Quantum flevi in hymnis & canticis tuis, suave sonantis Ecclesiæ tuæ vocibus commotus acriter?* —— Confes. l. 9. c. 6.

|| *Ut per oblectamenta aurium infirmior animus in affectum pietatis assurgat.* Ibid.

Thirdly, *Psalmody* is useful not only to our selves, but on the same account to our *Brethren.* Which is the Apostle's meaning in *Col.* 3. 16. *Teaching and admonishing one another in Psalms and Hymns and Spiritual Songs.* There is a *Teaching* and *Admonishing* in this Religious Exercise, that is, by it we build up one another in our most Holy Faith, we inspire the Sense of Religion into each other, we kindle in one anothers Breasts a Love of Goodness and Holiness, we reciprocally enliven and actuate our Zeal, and we effectually stir up one another to Glorifie God.

These are the great Benefits of this Sacred Institution. And we may see them further display'd throughout the whole *Epistle* of *Athanasius* to *Marcellinus.* And there is a large Encomium on Psalm-Singing in *Basil the Great's* first *Homily on the Psalms.* And the Excellency and Usefulness of it is admirably set forth by St. *Chrysostom*, in his 28th. *Homily* on the *Epistle to the Romans*, and in other Places of

of his Works. To which I referr the Learned Reader. But as to others, what I have suggested under this Head is sufficient, I think, to create in them an high Esteem of this Part of Worship, and to cause them to employ themselves in it, both in publick and private.

Of taking CARE *of the* POOR.

TAking *Care of the Poor*, or *Publick Almsgiving* is another *Institution* or *Ordinance* of the Christian Church. To which Purpose the Office of *Deacons* (which I spoke of before) was brought into the primitive Church. Some of the Brethren being then in Need, these Officers were chosen on purpose to collect Relief for them, and to distribute it among them. And in Imitation of this primitive Institution, there must be Care taken for the poor afflicted Members of the Church in all Ages.

But it will be said, the Times are now different from what they were in the *Apostles* Days; there is not that Persecution, and consequently not those Wants and Streights which were then. And besides, the Case is alter'd on this Account, that Provision is made in every Parish for the Poor; therefore there is no need of *Deacons* to take care of them; it is not necessary that any Ecclesiastical Person should be appointed for this Work, for publick Authority and the Laws have provided for all Indigent Persons, without any such special Function in the Church.

There seems to be something in such Suggestions as these, but if we examine them, there will be found nothing of weight in them. That this is not a Temporary Institution that I'm speaking of is plain from this, that there was not only a particular *Office* (as we have heard) settled for the executing of it, but we are inform'd that afterwards in the Christian Churches this Office was kept up, and there was a constant Collection for Relief of the Poor, and there is a positive Injunction for it. *Upon the first Day of the Week let every one of you lay by him in Store, as God hath prospered him*, 1 Cor. 16. 2. On the first Day of the Week, the Lord's Day, was the Lord's Supper celebrated, *John* 20. 19, 26. — *Acts* 20. 7. And *Alms* went along with the *Lord's Supper*, as a constant Attendant of that Sacred Ordinance. And this was in Use afterwards in the Primitive Church, as *Justin Martyr* in his *Apology* testifies. He tells us that those who were able and wealthy, contributed to the Relief of the poor Brethren, and this they duly did on the Lord's Day after their publick Worship. Saint *Chrysostom* in his *Sermon* of *Alms* tells us that this was the received Practice. *Cyprian* mentions it as a Custom in the Primitive Church, in his Discourse of *Works and Alms*. It is urged by *Leo* in one of his Sermons as an Apostolical Institution. Thus it was settled in the Church as an Evangelical Office; and we read of it frequently in St. *Paul*'s Epistles, where sometimes it is call'd *Remembring the Poor*, Gal. 2. 10. and at other times *Ministring to the Saints*, Rom. 15. 25. 2 Cor. 9. 1. *Contribution for the poor Saints*, Rom. 15. 26. *Collection for the Saints*, 1 Cor. 16. 1. And it is not to be question'd that for the solemn managing of this the *Deacons* Office was retained and continued in the Christian Churches.

But at this Day this Office seems to be perverted: It is not the same in some Churches that it was at first. We give the Title of *Deacons*, to some Ecclesiasticks, but they are not Stewards for the Poor, they do not take care of the Sick and Weak, according to the primitive Constitution in the Christian Church.

And whereas it was said that the Poor are provided for by the Parish-Officers, this cannot reasonably be thought to null the *Deacon*'s Office, and to supersede the *Contribution* I'm speaking of. For this must never Cease in the Church, because it is design'd for such as are *Church-Members*, and are known to be Pious and Holy Christians. We are to know then that these are more especially to be provided for than others, for there is a Peculiar Command for this, *Gal.* 6. 10. *Let us do good, especially unto them who are of the Household of Faith.* These are to be relieved when they are in Necessity, in a *Church-way*, and not in the common one. This Contribution was intended to be an Act of *Piety* as

as well as *Charity*. Wherefore, tho' there are by the Law of the Land Church-wardens and Overseers, that are obliged to take care of the Poor, yet the Church should not lay aside her *particular Offerings*; for those of the *Houshold of Faith* are to be relieved under another Consideration than the rest are. The Parish-Collection for the Poor is a Tax to which we are compell'd, and we must pay it whether we will or no, but this other is a Voluntary Contribution. The one is a relieving of Persons whether good or bad, without any difference, but the other is design'd to supply the Wants of those that are known to be Good and Holy. The one is a Politick, Civil, and Secular Act, but the other is purely Ecclesiastical and Spiritual, and is a direct act of Religion; it hath respect only to those of a Christian Communion as Members of Christ and of his Church. Of this sort were those Religious *Widows* (whose Qualifications are set down in 2 *Tim.* 5. 9, &c.) it appears that these poor aged Women were maintain'd by the Church. Which further confirms what I have said concerning the *Church-Charity*, as distinct from the other. And this is that *Love to the Brethren* which the Apostolical Writings so often inculcate and Command. When *such* Persons are in Distress, and labour under Sickness or Poverty, we are to supply their Wants on the Account of their being Fellow-Members of Christ, and joining in the same Holy Communion. This is a standing Institution of the Christian Church.

Of FASTING.

THERE are diverse Kinds of *Fasting*, which we see are common in the World. The *Sick* fast because they nauseate Meat: the *Poor*, because they have it not sometimes; the *Glutton*, that he may come with the sharper Appetite, and fall on with the greater Gust and Pleasure. The Man of *Business* sometimes abstains, because he is not at Leisure to take his Repast. The *Sordid Miser* fasts because he would spare his Money. There is likewise a *Medical* Fasting, which is for Health, or to prevent a Disease. There is a *Civil* or *Political* Fast, which is imposed by Authority for politick Ends: Thus some of the old Sumptuary Laws among the Romans enjoin'd a Restraint as to this Matter. And among our selves the Prohibition concerning eating of Flesh in *Lent* was a mere Civil Constitution according to an Act of Parliament in Queen *Elizabeth*'s Reign. Lastly, there is a *Religious* Fast, or a Fast on the Account of Religion. This is Fourfold.

First, The *Jewish* or *Mosaic* Abstinence, which was of God's own Ordering and Appointing. He was pleas'd to command that People to refrain from some Meats, which were reckon'd impure, not so much by Nature as by certain Signification. It seemed good to the Divine Will, that these should represent and shadow out some Moral Impurity. But this Abstinence ended as soon as the Gospel took place in the World; and the Reason was, because this Restraint was proper to the *Jews* only, and their Dispensation.

Secondly, There is a *Heathenish* Fasting, which hath some Appearance of Religion or Superstition rather. The Gentiles fasted in Honour of their Gods sometimes, and 'tis observable that these Times of Abstinence were usually Forerunners of, and Preparations to very jolly Feasting, and more than ordinary Mirth. The *Athenians* had their Νηφάλια, as * *Plutarch* testifies. The *Egyptians* abstain'd from Fish, on a superstitious Account, as † *Herodotus* relates. The *Pythagoreans* were averse to Flesh; and as they never sacrific'd Animals, so they never eat of them. One reason of which was their Belief of the Transmigration of Humane Souls into Brutes. *Apollonius Tyanæus* was a great Practiser of this sort of Religion; and they tell us he could hold out many Days without feeding. An abstaining from some sorts of Food did generally prevail in the Pagan World. It reached as far as our old *Britains*, who, as a * Good Author tells us, would not taste of Hares, Hens and Geese.

* Sympos. *l.* 8. *qu.* 8.
† *In* Euterpe.

Thirdly, There was an Abstinence used by some *Hereticks* of old, which had some Shew and Pretence of Religion. Thus the *Ebionites* and the *Gnosticks* would by no Means taste of the Flesh of any Animal whatsoever, and would drink no

* Cæsar *de Bello* Gallico. *l.* 5.

no Wine. The *Marcionites* and *Montanists* used great Abstinence, and were severe and rigorous in their Fastings. And the *Manichees* held Flesh and some other sorts of Meat impure and unclean in their own Nature, and they gain'd several Proselytes to them. The Apostle foretold there should be this sort of Men, 1 *Tim.* 4. 3. and he reckons their Opinions among the *Doctrines of Devils*, which shews that their abstaining from certain Meats was not *Judaical* (for then he would not have used that harsh Language) but from another Principle, to wit, their placing great Religion and Perfection in such Abstinence, whilest in the mean time it tended to something which was very Irreligious and Impious.

Fourthly, There is the *Popish* Fasting, which carries with it a Shew of Sanctity and Religions Austerity. But, if we consider it well, we shall find it to be a fond and superstitious Practice, and no Ways conducing to true Piety. It nourishes the Opinion of Merit, he being accounted among the Generality of them the Holiest Man, and the most Deserving Catholick who fasts oftnest and longest: And yet the usual Fasts of the Church of *Rome* are but a Mockery; for they are only an abstaining from that Food which is forbidden by their Church, and that is Flesh. They may on a Fast-Day eat * plentifully of any other Food, that is not prohibited. Especially as to Fish, they have a great and comfortable Indulgence. So it is, that this sort of Meat above all others is highly prized by the Roman Catholicks; and well it may, seeing they can cram down as much as they please of this, and yet not violate their Fast.

* *Quamvis aliquis multùm excedat, non solvit jejunium. Card.* Tolet. *Instruct. Sacerdot.* l. 6.

But there seems to be yet more in it than this, their preferring of this Species of Edibles to all others, had, if one may conjecture, its Original from this; namely, that the Apostles were *Fishermen*, and particularly St. *Peter* was such, from whom the Popes derive their Authority. And we read in the Evangelical Writings, that they not only *catch'd Fish*, (it being their Employment and Trade,) but generally *made it their common Food*, as Christ himself likewise did. And so the Christians of the next Age, that were of that Country, used themselves to this Diet especially, the *Lakes* and *Rivers* of that Country affording this kind of Sustenance in great Plenty, when that of another kind was hard to come by. And 'tis likely that afterwards, by a fond and superstitious Imitation, this sort of Food grew into Credit, and at last was thought to be Sacred: And Fish was allowed to be eaten, when all Flesh was counted prophane, that is, on a Fast-Day. But this is a gross perverting of the Nature of a *Fast*, for the mere changing of Diet, especially if it be not for a more mortifying Sort (which Fish of the best kind cannot be thought to be) is but a pretending to Fast; no real and proper one.

Again, The Papists reckon not eating of the best and choicest Fruits and Sweetmeats a breaking of their Fast, but devour them with great Freedom. Also, they hold that drinking of Wine is no Violation of a Fast. A Popish Fasting consists only in Abstinence from Meat (and that Meat is Flesh only) not from Drink. Which is still a farther perverting and abusing of the Nature of a *Fast*, which is an abstaining from all sorts of Meat and drink, and all Delicacies whatsoever. Thus the primitive Fasts were kept; the first Christians observ'd a Total Abstinence; they had not learnt to indulge Plenty of Wine, and Fish, and Fruits and other Dainties on their Days of Fasting. But this the *Papists* generally do, and defend their Practice as laudable. As they mix Delicacies with some of their Fasts (if they may be call'd Fasts) so others of their Fasts (like the *Pagan* ones I spoke of before) are the constant Forerunners of some exorbitant Jollity and extravagant Mirth. They Fast, that they may Feast; they mortifie themselves, or rather make some shew of it, that they may presently after glut themselves with carnal Pleasures and Sports. Thus the austere Melancholy of *Ash-Wednesday* is succeeded by the whole Time of *Lent*, the Season pretended to be set apart by them for Mortification, and yet in some Popish Countries it is that part of the Year which is devoted wholly to Folly and Madness.

Fifthly, There is the *Hypocrites* Fast, which may be numbred among those that are seemingly Religious. Thus King *Ahab* caus'd a Fast to be proclaimed,

1 *Kings*

1 *Kings* 21. 12. to palliate his wicked Purposes, and withal to render them Effectual. Abstinence was to make way for his gorging himself with *Naboth*'s Vineyard. And afterwards, when *Elijah* denounced Judgments against this *Ahab*, we read that he fasted and humbled himself, 1 *Kings* 21. 27. but as we may gather from the History of that King, this was but a false and hypocritical Devotion. It is recorded of the *Pharisees*, that they made it part of their Religion to *appear to Men to fast*, Mat. 6. 16. to make a Shew of this Exercise, that thereby they might gain the Repute of sober Men, and be applauded for their Temperance; or (which is worse) that they might by this Means be able to compass their base Designs and wicked Projects. They abstained from Flesh, to devour Widows Houses, and to satiate themselves with the Calamities of others. They drank no Wine, but were drunk with Passion, and intoxicated with Pride. And ever since, among Persons of all Denominations and Parties, there have been some that have hypocritically observ'd this solemn Exercise of Religion, and have made it serviceable to evil Designs and Purposes; thereby dissembling with Men, and even mocking God himself.

Sixthly and Lastly, To come home to our present Business, that is *the truly Religious, Devout and Pious Fasting*, which is instituted for the Honour and Glory of God, and the real Advancement of Religion and Holiness. This is a solemn and voluntary Abstinence from Meat and Drink, and all Pleasures of Life, for a certain space of Time, which is set apart to be spent in Prayer and Humiliation. Or, in case of *Necessity*, if the Constitution of a Mans Body be such that he can't forbear a Meal, without great Injury to his Health, he is however to be very sparing in his ordinary Food for that time, which is a kind of Abstinence. But it is the *Total Abstaining* for a certain Season which is the true and proper Fasting; and of this I intend to speak. This Religious Fasting is according to the Prescription and Pattern which we have in the Scriptures, and it is of it self serviceable to excellent Ends and Purposes. Wherefore these Two Things I will insist upon: 1. I will shew that the Duty of Religious Fasting is *prescribed us both in the Old and New Testament*. 2. I will shew what are those *Ends* and *Purposes* for which this Religious Exercise was designed.

I begin with the First of these; This Religious Exercise of Fasting, whether publickly or privately, is commended to us in the Writings of the *Old* and *New Testament*. In the former of these there are eminent Instances of private Fasts kept by Holy and Religious Men; as *David*, who being reproved by *Nathan*, *afflicted himself, and besought God for the Life of his Child with Fasting*, 2 *Sam.* 12. 16, 17. and *Nehemiah*, who when he was acquainted with the Condition of the Church, and the particular Circumstances of *Jerusalem*'s Distress and Misery, betook himself to Fasting, *Neh.* 1. 4. and *Daniel*, who when he had read in *Jeremiah*'s Prophecy concerning the Seventy Years Captivity, and the approaching Issue of it, join'd Fasting with his Prayer and Confession, *Dan.* 9. 3, *&c* and the like Practice of the same Person is to be seen in; *Dan* 10. 2, 3.

There are likewise Examples of publick Fasting in the Writings of the *Old Testament*. The *Jews* kept an Anniversary Fast, which was by God's own Command annexed to the Feast of Expiation. Mr. *Mede* hath observed out of *Jer.* 36. 9. *Zach.* 7. 3.—8. 19. that a Publick Fast was kept by the *Israelites* on the 4th, 5th, and 10th Months, even till *Zachary*'s Time, in remembrance of the Destruction of *Jerusalem*, which *Nebuchadnezzar* besieged in the 10th Month, took in the 4th, and burnt down in the 5th. And besides these Ordinary and Anniversary Fasts, there were others that were Occasional and Extraordinary, that is, when publick Calamities were sent by God. When *Samuel*, (who was then Judge in *Israel*) call'd that People together, to testifie their Repentance for their Sins, it was done by Fasting, 1 *Sam.* 7. 6. When Tydings were brought of the Overthrow of the *Israelites* by the *Amalekites*, they solemnly mourned in this manner, 2 *Sam.* 1. 12. When the *Ammonites* and *Moabites* came against *Judah* in Battle, the first thing done by *Jehosaphat* was proclaiming a General Fast, 2 *Chron.* 20. 1, *&c.* *Ezra* proclaim'd a Religious Fast, *Ezra* 8. 21. And so did *Nehemiah*, the solemn manner of which, with the large Confession of Sins is set down, *Neh.* 9. The *Jews* betook themselves

selves to this Religious Exercise, on Occasion of the important Suit to King *Ahasuerus* which *Esther* was putting up then for them. 'Tis said, *they did neither eat nor drink three Days, night or day, Esther* 4. 16. There are other Examples of this pious Usage and Practice in *Jeremiah's* Time, and in the Days of *Joel*, of which I shall have occasion to speak particularly afterwards, and therefore I dismiss them at present.

I proceed to the *New Testament*, where we read that *Anna the Prophetess serv'd God with Fasting*, as well as *Prayers*, *Luke* 2. 37. But the Gospel, as well as the Law, justifies this Religious Practice; Christ as well as *Moses*; the Apostles as well as Prophets, approve of it; the Christians under the Evangelical Dispensation, no less than the Devout Men under the *Jewish Oeconomy*, commend this to us. The Forerunner of Jesus Christ, *John the Baptist*, was a Man of great and singular Abstinence, which is signify'd in these Words, *he came neither eating Bread, nor drinking Wine, Luke* 7. 33. He was so abstemious and mortify'd a Person, that his whole Life was but one Fast, saith St. *Basil*. Our Saviour himself, before he entered upon his glorious Ministry and Office, prepared himself by Fasting, *Matt.* 4. 2. And afterwards we read, that he frequently retired from Company, and used to be alone for a considerable Time, which without doubt was a Time of Fasting. And he approves of this Discipline in others, for he gives this Direction concerning private Fasts (and of them it is that I'm now speaking) *Mal.* 16. 16, 17. *When ye fast, be not as Hypocrites, of a sad Countenance; but when thou fastest, anoint thy head, and wash thy face, that thou appear not unto Men to fast.* Our Saviour here supposes that Fasting is a Duty which all Men are concern'd in, and therefore he tells how they must behave themselves, they must shun all occasion and shew of Vain-Glory, they must not affect mortify'd Looks, or a neglected and sordid Garb; they must not by such studied Badges as these acquaint People that they keep a Fast on such a Day. They ought rather to keep this secret, to avoid Ostentation: Which shews that these Words of our Saviour are meant concerning private, not publick Fasting, for this latter cannot be kept secret, but must be known. And we ought at such solemn Times to lay aside all Gaiety, and give some Testimony of our Sorrow and Repentance, even in our Countenances and in our Attire. Of the other Fasting we have an Instance in *Cornelius*, a devout Man, a Proselyte, who is noted for this, *Acts* 10. 30. Concerning this the Apostle gives direction in 1 *Cor.* 7. 5. where he would have those that are in the Conjugal State, at certain Seasons, *give themselves to* (or according to the * *Greek, be at leisure for*) *Fasting and Prayers*, 1 *Cor.* 7. 5. In another Place he tells the *Corinthians* that *he had approved himself as the Minister of God in Fasting*, as well as in other Things, 2 *Cor.* 6. 9. for here, I conceive, may be meant voluntary Abstinence, as well as that which was forced, by reason of his Want and Poverty sometimes. And it is probable he means this, (no less than other Acts of Mortification) when he saith, *He keeps under his Body, and brings it into subjection*, 1 Cor. 9. *l. v.*

* Σχολάζητε.

Then for *Publick Fasts*, if by them we mean National ones, it is true we have no Example of them in the *New Testament*. Nor can it be expected that any such thing should be, because the Christian Religion was not at that time National, and therefore there could not be an Universal Fast observed. But if by *Publick Fasts* we understand the Joint Performance of this Religious Exercise by several of the Faithful met together, then the Writings of the *New Testament* afford us Instances of it. We read that *the Disciples of* John *fasted often*, Luke 5. 33. which it is likely is spoken of them not as particular separate Persons, but as gathered together, and united in one Body or Assembly. They were wont, at certain Times, to join together in Prayer, (and accordingly their Master gave them Directions for that Duty, *Luke* 11. 1.) and in Fasting and Humiliation. And afterwards the Christian Churches often met for this purpose; as when *Paul* and *Barnabas* were chosen to go to the *Gentiles*, and in order to that to be Ordained, the Church appointed a Fast, *Acts* 13. 3. So at the Ordination of Elders, *Acts* 14. 23. and upon all solemn Accounts generally this was their Practice. And this is what our Blessed Saviour himself foretold, and at the same time enjoyn'd, (for 'tis a Precept as well as a Prediction) when he said, *Then shall they fast in those days*, Mark 2. 15. *then*, after

after my Departure, my Disciples and Followers will be more exposed to Trouble and Danger, and therefore at that Time it will be their Concern by Fasting and Prayer to obtain the Divine Help and Assistance. Thus both the private and publick Discharge of this Duty is authorized by the Holy Scripture, whether you respect its Precepts or Examples. And I might have observed, That an Injunction is included in those Words, *This Kind goeth not out but by Prayer and Fasting*, Matth. 17. 21. This supposes Fasting, as well as Prayer, to be made use of in our Saviour's Time, on great and important Occasions.

Whence, and from what hath been said before, we may gather what Credit is to be given to that * *Socinian* Writer who peremptorily asserts, That Christ hath given us no Precept or Example of Fasting. It is true, neither the *Old Testament* nor the *New* assign the particular Days and Times when we are now to be imployed in this Exercise of Religion; but yet they expressly specify on what particular Occasion this Duty was, and is to be performed: of which I will give a particular Account anon. And this is certain, That the appointing of Set Days for publick Fasting is very accountable and reasonable, that so this, as well as publick Praying, may be the Joint-Act of the Church, and thereby Humiliation may be the better promoted. Thus it was in the primitive Churches, particular Days of publick Fasting were appointed by them on Occasion of Persecution, Pestilence, War, and the like Calamities, as † *Tertullian* testifies. The same doth * *Cyprian*. And *Justin Martyr*, in his *Apology* to the Emperour, wherein he gives him an Account of the Manner of Worship among the Christians, tells him, That they used *Solemn Fasting* and *Publick Repentance* in the Face of the Congregatian. In short, in the Exercise of Fasting we follow the Example of the Church of God, whether under the Legal Dispensation, or that of the Gospel in the Apostles Days, or in the Times that immediately succeeded them. And as it becomes our indispensible Duty, by reason of the *Divine Command* and *Primitive Pattern*, so it is no less in regard of the Nature and Quality of this Religious Performance; which, in it self, tends to the promoting of Holiness, both in publick and private.

* Slichting. *Comment. in* Col. 2. 23.

† *De Jejunio.* Apol. cap. 4.

* Epist. 8.

And so I pass to the Second Thing I undertook; namely, To shew what are those excellent *Ends* and *Uses* for which this Religious Exercise was appointed. It was intended, First, to be a Check to our extravagant Lusts and Affections. Secondly, To be a Help to true Repentance. Thirdly, To fit us for the performing of the chief Acts of Devotion. And, Fourthly, To be serviceable towards the preventing or averting of Judgments, and procuring of Blessings.

First, I say, This sacred Discipline of Fasting was designed to be a powerful Check to our exorbitant Affections and Appetites. When we Religiously fast, we do it to mortify the Body, to take away the Fuel of Lust, and to allay and abate the carnal Appetites. Some wild and savage Beasts are by Degrees tamed and brought under by Hunger and Stripes. In subduing of our unruly Affections, we must use the like Method; we must chastize our selves with great Severity, and mortify our extravagant and brutish Desires by Bodily Abstinence, and as it were starve our Lusts. Especially some Evil Inclinations, as Lewdness and Wantonness, Sensuality and Intemperance, are to be suppressed in this manner. *This Kind goeth not out* but by this Way. This is the best and most successful Exorcism we can use for the ejecting of these Diabolical Lusts. For this is the proper Design and End of Christian Fasting, to subdue the sensual Desires, and to make them truckle to the Commands of Reason and Religion. Abstinence was the first Precept given to Man in his Innocent State; and by the Violation of it, Sin and Misery entered into the World. Wherefore ever since, Abstinence hath been prescribed to suppress Sin and Vice, and to weaken the Power of the Flesh. Hence it is that Fasting hath been a Part of Religion among all sober People, and hath been esteem'd a Curb and Restraint to evil Motions and vicious Inclinations. Especially the *Pythagorean* Philosophers had a very great Opinion of this Exercise on this very Account. They aim'd at the *Purgation of the Soul* by their abstaining, saith *Hieroclei*. And another eminent Man among them, held, That Abstinence conduces to

our being separated from Sense and Passion, that it promotes Chastity and Purity, and makes us like the Deity. * Internal Goodness, *saith he*, which is our resembling of God, is increas'd by Bodily Castigation and Abstinence.

* Αὐξει γὰρ τὴν τῶν σωμάτων ἀσκησις καὶ ἐγκράτεια τὸ ἐντὸς ἀγαθὸν, τοῦτέστιν ἡ πρὸς Θεὸν ὁμοίωσις. Porphyr. *de Abstinen.*

Secondly, Another great *End* and *Advantage* of Fasting is to promote true Repentance for our Sins. And it is serviceable to this first as it is a Help to godly Sorrow. Observe, that the Question was of *Fasting*, in *Mat.* 9. 14. but the Answer is of *Mourning*, *ver.* 15. to shew, That one cannot be without the other, and that one advances the other. Hence Fasting is call'd in Scripture The *afflicting of the Soul*, because it sets forward the Penitential Mourning of the Soul, whereby it afflicts it self. Of which I will produce a remarkable and famous Precedent. When *Samuel* was Judge in *Israel*, and saw that that People had contracted great Pollutions by their wicked Practices, and especially by their Idolatry, he summon'd them to appear at *Mizpeh*, there to make a publick Confession of their great and manifold Transgressions against God, and especially to renounce the Service of their Idols; and this he ordered to be done on a solemn Day of Fasting. The Words are very observable, 1 *Sam.* 7. 6. *They gathered together in* Mizpeh, *and drew Water, and poured it out before the Lord, and fasted on that Day.* Which is said to express in a mystical and hyperbolical Manner their great and plentiful *Mourning*; their Effusion of Tears on that Occasion, was like pouring out of Water. We find that *Ezra* and *Nehemiah* appointed Days of Fasting after their Return from the Captivity, to lament the Crimes they were guilty of after that Return. Which shews what is the Design and Purpose of a Church-Fast: It is to bewail the Sins of the People, especially when those Sins are become Common and Universal: This is to be done, though there be no open and manifest Expressions of God's Anger and Displeasure towards the Church or Nation; for Sin it self is the worst of Judgments.

Again, Fasting is exceeding serviceable to Repentance as 'tis a Help to Humiliation, and a Debasing of our selves. By denying our selves the Bodily Refreshment which we were wont to have, we testify our Dejection of Soul. By humbling and afflicting our Outward Man, we express, and at the same time promote our spiritual and inward Submission of Heart. By our Forbearance of the Use of God's Creatures, we profess our selves unworthy of them, and of all the good Things of this Life. We do, in Effect, acknowledge, that we deserve not to have our Lives sustained. I will add likewise, That Religious Abstinence carries in it some *Revenge*, which is part of Repentance, 2 *Cor.* 7. 11. By depriving our Bodies of their Refreshments we inflict a Punishment on them; we do as it were take Revenge on our selves for our former Miscarriages, especially those which relate to Eating and Drinking. By substracting our Food, we chastize our Flesh, which hath been so offensive and faulty. By abstaining from the Delights and Pleasures of the World, we shew how displeased we are with our selves for our abusing those Injoyments and Comforts which have been vouchsafed to us by the liberal Hand of our Maker. Thus Religious Fasting becomes Punitive, and is a kind of pious vindictive Act upon our selves.

Thirdly, It conduces much to the acceptable Performance of the chief Parts of Devotion, and all the other Offices of Religion. It must be acknowledg'd, that this is a Help to *Prayer*; whence it was that *David* fasted, to beg his Child's Life, 2 *Sam.* 12. 16. The Original gives it us thus; *He besought God for the Child, and fasted a Fast*; that is, He was very strict and severe in keeping his Fast, that it might be the greater Furtherance to the Ardency of his Prayers, that he might seek God with the greater Vigour. So *Jehosaphat*, *Ezra*, *Nehemiah*, *Esther*, and others recorded in the *Old Testament*, *call'd upon God* with *Fasting*. Likewise in the *New Testament*, Fasting was joyn'd with Prayers, that these latter might be the more vehement and fervent, and consequently the more effectual. It is likely that the *Jews* Custom of not eating any thing on their Great Days of Devotion before the Sixth Hour, that is, 'till their Morning Sacrifice and Prayers were finished, was originally grounded on this; for they abstain'd

abstain'd from Meat and Drink that they might be the more attentive at their Service, and that they might *pray* with the greater Earnestness and Vigour. For Abstinence advances this spiritual Ardour and Vehemency, and gives a greater Livelinesſ and Activity to the Soul.

Further, Religious Abstinence doth not only fit us for Prayer, and seeking God's Face, but for *Hearing his Word* with Reverence and Attention, and for meditating upon it. Accordingly, when *Nehemiah* appointed a Fast, he took Care that they should on that Day *read in the Book of the Law of God, Chap.* 9. *Ver.* 3. which was accompanied always with an Exposition, and that with an Exhortation. For now this was seasonable, now it would make Impression on their Minds, when they came fasting to it. So it is observable, that *Jeremiah* ordered *Baruch* to read his Prophecy to the People *upon the Fasting Day, Jer.* 36. 6. for at such a Time he knew it would be most proper; his Threatnings of Judgment against that People would have some Influence upon them. Now being undisturbed with the Fumes of the Body, being sequestred from the Delights and Entertainments of the Flesh, their Thoughts were composed, their Minds fixed, and their Hearts intire. Now they were in a Posture fit to hear God speak to them; Now they were prepared to receive the Word and Will of the Most High, and to make it Matter of their serious Meditation. Thus Abstinence is useful to us in these Duties of Religion.

And so in other Religious Performances, I might shew the Advantage of Holy Abstinence, as in Deeds of *Charity* and *Relieving the Poor.* It was at the Time when *Cornelius* was solemnly fasting, that his *Alms* (as well as his Prayers) *were had in Remembrance in the Sight of God,* Acts 10. 30, 31. These Three should go together, Fasting, and Prayer, and Alms-giving, and they promote and forward one another. I have shew'd already, that Prayer is help'd by Abstinence, and it is as certain, that Charity and Bounty are advanc'd by it; for the Religious Forbearance of Food is to make us sensible of Want and Hunger, and thereby to cause us to sympathize with the Wants and Necessities of our Brethren, and to refresh them with Food and other Necessaries of this Life. By voluntary denying our selves for a Time the Comforts of Meat and Drink, we are stirr'd up to pity the Condition of those who fast out of Necessity and Want. And what we omit to lay out upon our selves and others in Bodily Food and Refreshments, we bestow on the Poor. Thus Abstinence is the Nurse of Charity.

The like may be said of other Vertues and Graces; they are nourish'd by this religious Discipline. Whilst the Body is pinch'd, our Souls receive Benefit; our spiritual Desires and Appetites are sharpen'd and quickned by the not gratifying of our corporal Appetites. We are made fit to serve God, and to attend to our Duty, and we are capacitated and qualified for the Meditation of Heavenly Things. Fasting is singularly useful and advantageous to Religion and Devotion, to Godlinesſ and a Holy Life. It mightily disposes us to these, when it is rightly used; and it helps us to act them with the greatest Vigour and Concernednesſ. We cannot doubt then that such Abstinence is according to the Prescription of the Great Physician, and that it is for the Health of our Souls; that is, Both for the Restoring and Continuing of it.

Fourthly, As it is thus serviceable to us in assisting us in the Exercising of those Graces, and performing those Duties which are required of us, so it is as useful for the *preventing* and *removing of Judgments,* and the *procuring of Blessings.* First, It is of great Use to prevent Judgments and Calamities. When a black and heavy Cloud hangs over a Church or Nation, this is of great Efficacy to disperse it, and to dissolve it. Thus when the Decree was gone forth for the Destruction of the Jews, in King *Ahasuerus*'s Reign, they in every Province betook themselves to this Expedient: *There was great Mourning and Fasting among them,* Esther 4. 3. And the very Pagan *Ninevites,* when the Prophet *Jonas* came among them, and threatned Destruction to their City, thought this the only Remedy in such a Case. The Proclamation for the Fast ran thus: *Let neither Man nor Beast taste any thing; let them not feed, nor drink Water,* Jon. 3. 7. They caused the very Brutes (whom they had some ways made instrumental in their Sins) to fast as well as themselves. And we know

what was the happy Effect of this universal and strict Abstinence. And in other Instances we might shew, That when National Judgments were fear'd and expected, though not yet inflicted, this solemn Exercise which I am now speaking of was made use of. When it was *a Day of Trouble* among the Jews, that is, (as 'tis explain'd in that Place, *Isaiah* 22. 5, 6.) when the Invasion of *Judæa* by Foreigners was threatned; *in that Day did the Lord God of Hosts call to Weeping and to Mourning*: And *eating Flesh* and *drinking Wine* were forbidden, *Ver.* 12, 13. When this People were in great Fear of an approaching Scarcity and Famine, they were seasonably advised by the Prophet *Joel*, *To sanctify a Fast, and to turn unto God with all their Hearts, and with Fasting and with Weeping, and with Mourning*, Joel 2. 12, 14. This, they thought, was the best Way to prevent those Calamities which hung over their Heads, and which they justly fear'd would fall upon them. This was the surest Course that was to be taken to avert imminent and impendent Dangers.

Secondly, It is of as great Use to *remove* Judgments, when they are actually broken out upon a Nation. When Pestilence, or Famine, or Dearth, or War, or such like Calamities are sent by God to punish and chastize a People, then the solemn Duty of Fasting and Humiliation becomes proper and seasonable; that by that Means we may make our selves sensible of those terrible Judgments that we lie under, that we may lay our Sins to Heart, which are the Procurers of those Judgments, and that we may earnestly deprecate God's Wrath, and joyn together in our fervent Supplications for a merciful Deliverance from those Evils; which we know hath been granted upon using such a Method as this. In the Civil Wars between the *Benjamites* and *Israelites*, the latter having been very unsuccessful in their martial Undertakings against the former, thereupon kept a general solemn Fast, *Judges* 20. 26. *All the People came up to the House of God, and fasted that Day untill Even.* That is, 'till the Exercises of Religion which accompanied the Fast were over: and we read in that Chapter what was the welcome Success of that religious Abstinence. And in several other Instances, (some of which have been before mention'd) the Removal of Judgments and Calamities hath been the happy Issue of publick Humiliation and Fasting; this being one of the Means appointed for that Purpose.

Thirdly and Lastly, This Exercise of Religion being performed aright, is conducive to the *obtaining of all Benefits and Blessings* which the Community, or our selves in particular, stand in need of. We read how *Ezra* proclaimed a Fast for God's Blessing on the Undertakers of the *Rebuilding of Jerusalem*, for the obtaining of his particular Direction and Assistance in so difficult an Enterprize, and we find that it proved successful. And many of the Instances already mentioned are reducible also to this Head; for together with the *Preventing* and *Removing* of Judgments, there was an *actual Collation of Mercies*. And in the *New Testament* no less than in the *Old*, we may observe that this was the End and Design of Fasting, to obtain Favours and Blessings from Heaven. Especially in all arduous Matters and of very great Importance, both Christ and his Apostles fasted before they set about them. Thus our Saviour's long Fasting in the Wilderness was a Preparation to his Undertaking the Ministerial Office, and doing all those great and wonderful Things which the Evangelists relate concerning him. And in the *Acts* of the *Apostles* we are told that those excellent Persons entered into their Ministry, and began their great Undertakings with Holy Abstinence. And afterwards, in all Ages it was the constant Practice of the Church of Christ, when any special Favour and choice Blessing was to be obtain'd, to betake themselves to Fasting and Praying; and they found the real Benefit and Advantage of it.

Thus I have shewed what are the special *Ends* of this solemn Way of humbling our selves. Or, which is the same Thing, I have shew'd from Scripture what is the peculiar *Use* and *Advantage* of this Part of our Holy Religion.

And now in the Close of all, We ought to make these so many Grounds and Reasons of our practising this Duty. But let us take care to do it as we should; that is, Sincerely and Faithfully, and not in an Hypocritical manner. Our People, though they have sometimes heretofore cried up Fasting and Fast-Days, are

are generally very ill Obſervers of them of late. We ſaw how a Monthly Faſt-Day in the Time of our Firſt War with *France*, was ſpent for the moſt part in Idleneſs and Sport, and therefore at laſt was wholly laid aſide, by the Advice (as it is ſaid) of a Churchman of the firſt Figure. So it is, moſt of our Faſts are meer Mockery. In ſome Places which I could name, our Faſt-Nights are uſually great Eating-Nights. Hence we derive our Neglect of the *Occaſional* Faſts of the Church, on extraordinary Accounts, and True Faſting is become a great Rarity, although we pretend to Faſting. This is very odd, and I may ſay ridiculous too, becauſe we blame the Papiſts for their Mock-Abſtinence, and their Sham-faſts, and we our ſelves are guilty of the like.

Again, Let us beware of a fond and ſuperſtitious Conceit of the Virtue of bare Faſting; which too much prevails among the *Roman* Catholicks. They ſeem to place Religion and Holineſs in meer Faſting, yea, in bare denying themſelves ſome ſorts of Food. This is a plain perverting the Notion of religious Abſtinence, the true Praiſe and Worth of which conſiſts not in depriving our ſelves of Meat and Drink, or in the Diſtinction of Meats, but in its being a Help to Mortification and Piety. The Food we refrain from is not impure, but therefore we abſtain from it, becauſe we are impure and defiled; and have need of cleanſing and purging by religious Abſtinence. *The Kingdom of God is not Meat and Drink*, Rom. 14. 10. that is, True Religion conſiſts not in uſing or forbearing Meats and Drinks; but yet Faſting is helpful to true Piety and Religion. God is not pleaſed with an empty Belly, as in it ſelf conſidered; but ſo far only it is acceptable to him as it is ſerviceable to the emptying our Souls of our Sins and Luſts, that they may be repleniſhed with the Spirit of God. Faſting in it ſelf is not Religious, but as it is in order to greater Things, Prayer and Humiliation, but eſpecially a Godly Life. *Turning unto the Lord* is joyned with *Faſting*, *Joel* 2. 12, 13.

And the 58th Chapter of *Iſaiah* will acquaint us what kind of Faſt it is that is acceptable to God; namely, Such as produces Repentance and a Reformation of Manners. We read there that the Jews took it ill that that ſolemn Performance of theirs was not rewarded with a Bleſſing and Succeſs. *Wherefore have we faſted*, ſay they, *and thou ſeeſt not? Wherefore have we afflicted our Soul, and thou takeſt no Knowledge?* Yes, ye Hypocritical *Iſraelites*, ye ſhall be acquainted with the Reaſon of it, *Behold, in the Day of your Faſt, ye find Pleaſure, and exact all your Labour:* You are carrying on Deſigns for your ſenſual Delights and worldly Profit, when you pretend to keep a Day of Faſting. *Behold, ye faſt for Strife and Debate, and to ſmite with the Fiſt of Wickedneſs:* Whilſt you make a Shew of Humbling your ſelves before God, you foſter Pride and Contentions, Injuſtice and Oppreſſion. *Is this ſuch a Faſt as I have choſen?* or, *Is it only for a Man to bow down his Head as a Bull-ruſh, and to ſpread Sackcloth and Aſhes under him? Wilt thou call this a Faſt, and an acceptable Day to the Lord? Is not this the Faſt that I have choſen, To looſe the Bands of Wickedneſs, to undo the heavy Burdens, and to let the Oppreſſed go free? Is it not to deal thy Bread to the Hungry, and to bring the Poor that are caſt out, to thy Houſe; when thou ſeeſt the Naked, that thou cover him, and that thou hide not thy ſelf from thy own Fleſh?* that is thy Fellow-Creatures. This, this is the Faſting that is pleaſing to God, as is evident from the following Words, *Then ſhall thy Light break forth as the Morning, and thy Health ſhall ſpring forth ſpeedily.* Which Words, and thoſe that immediately follow, import, the extraordinary Bleſſing of God upon them.

But as for the common Practice of Faſting, though it makes an outward Shew, and pleaſes Hypocrites, yet it is of no Eſteem in the Account of Heaven. *Meat commendeth us not to God*, ſaith the Apoſtle: *for neither if we eat, are we the better; neither if we eat not, are we the worſe.* Which is ſpoken of *Difference of Meats*, but may as truly be ſaid of *abſtaining from them.* It carries no real and inward Worth along with it: It is a Relative Duty, and muſt be conſidered in Religion as it hath a Reſpect to ſomething elſe. This *Bodily Exerciſe profiteth little*; nay, not at all, if it be not deſigned for ſome noble End; and that chiefly is Repentance and Renovation of Life. Wherefore when we faſt, and do not reform our Lives, we pervert the great End of Faſting, and diſſemble with God and Men. We ſee then what is our Duty; let us ſet about the conſcientious

Practice

Practice of it, not fansying it to be an indifferent Thing; such as is left to our Liberty to be done, or not done. No: We are oblig'd to it, and we can no Ways exempt our selves from the Observation of it, both as it is a private and a publick Duty, in which latter Capacity I have chiefly consider'd it, because it came to be discours'd of as it is a Church Ordinance.

An APPENDIX *Concerning the* LENT-FAST.

WHAT I have to say of this Fast, I will comprise in these following Propositions.

PROP. I. Nothing is clearer from the *Ancient Writers* of the Church than this, that they appointed and kept several Fasts, and particularly they used to keep an *Annual Fast*, and this Fast was before *Easter*. Some of the * Fathers understood that Text, *Then shall they fast in those Days*, Luke 5. 35. concerning this particular Time of Fasting, (tho' 'tis questionable whether it could be fairly and appositely applyed to this) and some of them thought they were obliged to keep a Fast at the Time of Christ's Passion, and until his Resurrection, by Vertue of these Words: But this Text was impertinently applyed by them, for according to those and the preceding Words, *the Days will come when the Bridegroom shall be taken away from them*, the Christians should fast always, and there should be no Feast Days (yet these are as many as the other) for the Time of the Bridegroom's Absence is till the Last Day. The Ecclesiastical Writers speak of other Set Fasts too, which were ordained and approved of by Councils and Synods. The Days on which the *Greek* Church used Abstinence and met together to pray were *Wednesday* and *Friday*, as is attested by * *Tertullian*, who writ in the latter End of the second *Century*, and the beginning of *the* Third, and by † *Clement* of *Alexandria*, who was Contemporary with *Tertullian*. The Reason they assigned why they kept these Days more solemnly than the rest, was because on the former of them *Judas* bargain'd with the chief Priests to betray Christ, and on the latter Christ was crucified. But the Days of more than usual Abstinence and Praying in the *Latin Church* were *Friday* and *Saturday*, because on part of the former, and on the whole latter Day the Apostles mourned for the Loss of their Lord, whilest he lay in the Grave. We follow the *Latin* Church, in the Observation of these Days; tho' in compliance with the *Greek* one we use the *Litany* on *Wednesday*. The Use and the Alteration of these Days are according to the Churches Pleasure. There are other Fasts, as the *Ember Weeks*, or the *Fasts of the Four Seasons of the Year*; but these are not of so great Antiquity as those before mentioned, especially the *Antepaschal Fast*; for it is undeniably certain (if Historical Relation may be credited) that about that Time the Churches of old did solemnly and religiously devote themselves to Abstinence.

* Tertullian, Epiphanius, Ambrose, &c.

* *De Jejunio*, cap. 2, 3.

† *Strom.* lib. 7.

PROP. II. The Ground and Occasion of keeping this *Antepaschal Fast* is differently represented. Some of the Fathers held that it was in *Remembrance* of Christ's Forty Days Fast. But this seems not to be a sufficient Foundation for the Observance of *Lent*, because (as I shall shew under the next Proposition) this Number of Days was never strictly observed. Others say it is in *Imitation* of our Saviour's Fasting Forty Days. Christ was an *Example* to us in this Religious Exercise, say some of the ancient Writers. But there seems to be no Reason for this Assertion; because Christ's Fasting Forty Days (as well as *Moses*'s and *Elias*'s) was *Miraculous*, and therefore is not to be *imitated* by us in the same manner. Wherefore some think that our Saviour's Example of Fasting so long a time doth not oblige the Christian Churches to a Forty Days Fast; which, if true, consequently *Lent* is not to be observ'd with Respect to those Days. There are others that give this Account of it; namely, that in the first Ages they were wont to administer the Sacrament of Baptism at *Easter*, this being the solemn time appointed for that Purpose, and, in order to this, publick Fasting was used as a Preparative to it. But what is that to us, and to others

others who have lived many Ages since, who have no such Custom (and no Occasion for it) as the deferring of Baptism till *Easter*?

Other Ancients, with whom agree some modern Writers, think *Lent* was design'd to be a *Memorial of Christ's Sufferings*. This Time was well chosen, say they, for none could be better set apart for this Sacred Exercise than that wherein the Passion and Death of Christ are remembred and celebrated. But tho' this seems to be pious and well-meant, yet there is no Accuracy at all in it, for if Christ's Death is to be commemorated at a certain Time, it should answer to the Time when he was put to Death, and not be so many Days before it. There are some likewise of the Fathers and Ecclesiastical Writers, that think this long Time of Abstinence hath a respect to the *Lord's-Supper*, and was appointed as a Fore-runner and Introduction to that solemn Act of Worship. As the *Jews* had their Days of *Preparation* before the *Passover*, so it is meet that Christians should fit and prepare themselves for that Sacrament, which was typified by the Passover, by a more than ordinary Abstinence. But tho' this looks like a very Religious Account of *Lent*, yet if we examine it, it hath no ground to support it, for we ought to prepare our selves for the receiving of this Sacrament at other Times as well as this, and our Preparation should be as solemn. Whence it would follow, that there must be more *Lents* than one in the Year, which I suppose will not be admitted.

I might mention the *Politick* Reasons for the observing of this Time, it being the Time of the Breed and Increase of Cattle; and so the Fasting now will cause Plenty afterwards. Some give a *Physical* Reason, namely, that at this Time of the Year the Body abounds with Blood, and is in a more than ordinary Fermentation, and consequently Fevers and Calentures, and such like Distempers are avoided by a spare Diet. But not to enquire at present into the Truth and Reality of these Pretences, it is sufficient to say, that these were invented *since* the first Observance of *Lent*, and therefore they cannot be reckoned among the Reasons and Grounds of it. I grant that some of the ancient Fathers speak very highly of the Fast before *Easter*, and call it an *Apostolical* Institution, but we know what they mean by *Apostolical*: They commonly use that Epithet instead of *Ecclesiastical*, and so their meaning is, that this Fast was observ'd by the *Churches* generally, but they do not tell us what Authority there was for it. The *Lent*-Fast was but of private Institution, if we may credit *Irenæus*, who, according to what * *Eusebius* reports of him, hath delivered, that this is a Custom that was introduc'd by some simple Men, and grounded on private Observation. Thus we see the Foundation of this Fast is differently laid, and the Ground and Rise of it are disputable.

* Eccl. Hist. l. 5. c. 23.

PROP. III. The *Extent* and the *Manner* of keeping this Fast were different, and undetermin'd in the Christian Churches heretofore. There was a Difference as to the Number of the Weeks and Days of Fasting; for tho' 'tis recorded universally of the First Ages, that they religiously observed a Fast before the Feast of *Easter*, yet it was not *Quadragesimal*, but a Fast of One or Two, and sometimes Three or Four Weeks. In the Three First Centuries there is no mention of the Forty Days of *Lent-Fast*, but the enlarging it to such an extent was an after-practice. Thus the Ecclesiastical Historian, who flourish'd about the middle of the Fifth Century, tells us, † That *the Christians that dwelt at* Rome *fasted Three Weeks before* Easter, *besides the* Sabbath *and the* Sunday: *but those in* Illyrium, *and all* Greece, *and* Alexandria *fasted six Weeks before* Easter. And yet he informs us, that ‖ tho' the Churches differ'd in several Places about the Number of the Days, yet they all call'd that Fast *a Forty Days Fast*. And so *Quadragesima* is us'd in good Authors to signifie a set Time of Fasting, but less than Forty Days. And there was a Difference heretofore in keeping of *Lent*, not only as to the length of Time, but as to the Food they abstain'd from; for some refrain'd from such a sort of Edibles, and others from another. And lastly, Tho' the Fast before *Easter* was early observ'd in the Church, yet it was left free, and not impos'd either as to Time, that is, so many Days, or the kind of Food. The *Fathers* clear this sufficiently. * We read that *Montanus* was the first that impos'd the Law of Fasting. † *Telesphorus* did first prescribe it to the Clergy in the second Century. And the Observation of the Fast of *Lent*, was not inforc'd till the Days of *Gregory* the Seventh, call'd

† Socrat. Eccl. Hist. l. 5. c. 19.
‖ Περὶ τοῦ ἀριθμοῦ τῶν ἡμερῶν διαφωνοῦντες πεντηκοστὴν ὀνομάζουσι. c. 21.
* Sozomen. Eccl. Hist. l. 1. c. 11.
† Euseb. Eccl. Hist. l. 5. c. 16.

call'd *Hildebrand*, about the Year of our Lord 1070. The first *Lent* kept in *England*, was in the Year 842, after the *Saxons* were converted, in the Time of the Heptarchy.

PROP. IV. We can only inferr from the whole, that Fasting is a Religious Exercise, that was approv'd of and practis'd by the Christians of old, but that we are not tied up *by what they did*, to any particular set Time of Fasting. For we see that they differ'd among themselves, and therefore the Variety of their Observations in those Times, can't authorize or justify a fix'd and unalterable Observation now. If a Church thinks fit (as ours doth) it may set apart some select Days for Fasting; and the Time immediately foregoing Christ's Passion, may be lawfully chosen, and used with Devotion; but then we must lay aside all that is Superstitious in it, and all that is Popish. That is, we must not think that this Time *in it self* is more Sacred than any other, and that there is any particular Obligation upon us from Christ or his Apostles to observe this Season more than any other. For St. *Augustine* told us long ago, That * he found it no where determined by any Injunction from our Saviour, or his Apostles, on what Days we should fast, or not fast.

* *Quibus diebus non oporteat jejunare, & quibus oporteat, præcepto Domini vel Apostolorum nondum invenio definitum.* Epist. 86. *ad* Casalanum.

And further, we must remember, that the Ancient and Primitive Way of Fasting was to abstain from *all sort of Food* a whole Day, till the Evening. But to make Distinction of Meats, and particularly to abstain from Flesh on certain Days (which is the Practice of the Church of *Rome*, and in which they place a great deal of Religion) is gross Superstition. It was not *the Church*, but *the State* that heretofore among us enjoin'd Distinction of Food, that is, commanded eating of Fish in *Lent*, and on other Fast-Days, not on a Religious but a *Politick* Account only, for the promoting of the Fishing Trade, and to preserve the breed of young Cattle. But there is a *Statute* of the Fifth of Queen *Elizabeth*, that makes it punishable to say, that *Lent* is kept thus on a Religious Account. If we pretend to keep this Time Holy in this manner, that is, in abstaining from Flesh only, we deceive our selves and others, for such observing it is but a Mockery, it being not a *Fast*, but only a *Change of Diet*.

And lastly, They are Superstitious and vain Observers of *Lent*, who deny themselves the tasting of Flesh all that Season, but take no care to retrench themselves as to their Fleshly Lusts and Sensual Appetites. At *Rome* in the solemn Time of *Lent*, when the *Shambles* are shut, the *Stews* are open. You have no Entrance into a Butcher's Shop, but you may be admitted into a *Brothel* House. Yea indeed, among the *Roman* Catholicks, *Lent* is their Time of extravagant Mirth and Jollity, above all others through the whole Year. How this is consistent with Fasting and Mortification, which they pretend is the Work of *Lent*, is somewhat hard to tell. There are others among the Papists, and some among our selves, who undertake to live strictly and devoutly at this Time, but their Behaviour is loose and irreligious all the Year besides. This likewise is downright Mockery; and therefore let us be careful to avoid it. We should be asham'd to be of the Number of the *Lenten Saints*, who make this Season monopolize all their Devotion and Mortification. We should be devout and religious, not only at this Time, set apart by the Church for Repentance, but in the whole Course of our Lives, by a constant abstaining from all known Vice, and by continually exercising our selves unto Godliness.

Of Publick THANKSGIVING *and* FESTIVALS.

AS *Fasting* being used in a Religious Manner, becomes a Spiritual Duty, so *Feasting*, join'd with *Thanksgiving*, is for the same Reason a Duty of Religion. A chearful Use of God's Creatures, of Meat and Drink, is design'd to excite our Thankfulness and Rejoicing; and it is also a proper Way to express them. For as *Fasting* is useful for furthering of Humiliation, and testifying of our Sorrow: So *Feasting*, or a more liberal Use of the Creatures, is to signifie

signifie and promote our Thanksgiving and Rejoicing. And accordingly this hath been the pious Usage and Practice of the Faithful, both under the *Jewish* and *Christian* Dispensation. By God's particular Command, Religion and Rejoicing, Sacrifice and Feasting went together. And not only fixed and stated Festivals, but Occasional Ones were in use among the Devout Servants of God. An Instance of which we have in *Neh.* 8. 10. *Go your way, eat the fat, and drink the sweet; for this day is holy unto the Lord.* And another more famous in *Esther* 9. 22. which was the *Feast of Purim*, occasioned by the unexpected and marvellous Deliverance of the *Jews* in King *Ahasuerus*'s Reign, and in Memory of the Deliverance from that bloody Massacre which *Haman* by Lot had contrived and design'd against the *Jews*.

The publick and solemn Duty of *Thanksgiving* and *Feasting* was not neglected by our Saviour himself. We particularly read, that he observed Yearly the great *Feast of the Passover*, and that he celebrated that other Anniversary *Festival of Tabernacles*, *John* 7. 37, 38, which makes it probable that he was present at the other Feasts, and solemn Rejoycings of the *Jews*, which were appointed by the Law, for the Remembrance of some great Benefits vouchsafed to them. Yea; he was pleas'd to keep the *Feast of the Dedication*, John 10. 22. Tho' not of Divine Appointment, but instituted by *Judas Maccabæus*, in Remembrance of the repairing the Temple and the Altar, 1 *Mac.* 4. 59. This Apocryphal Feast, which owed its rise to the sole Authority of the *Jewish* Governours, was not neglected by our Lord, it being appointed on purpose to praise God for his Mercy to that Nation. In the *Apostle*'s Times there were Religious Feasts, usually call'd *Love-Feasts*, 1 *Cor.* 11. *Jude* v. 12. Which were afterwards kept up, as *Tertullian* and other Primitive Writers testifie, to be Entertainments of Christians, and for the maintaining of mutual Friendship, and that they might rejoice together at the Remembrance of the Divine Goodness to them. And there were occasional Feastings and Days of Rejoicing in those Primitive Ages, purposely appointed and celebrated to call to mind the signal Favours and Deliverances granted by God to the Church and Community, and to return solemn Thanks for them. And, ever since, Days of *Publick Thanksgiving* have been set apart by the Church, on solemn Occasions. For as *Publick Fasts and Days of Humiliation* are lawfully appointed by Christian Magistrates, and Ecclesiastical Governors, so set Times of *Feasting and Thanksgivings* are with the same Reason enjoin'd.

Having said this, and what went before, for establishing the Lawfulness and Authority of this Institution, I will now distinctly treat of these two Things, First, Of the Nature of the publick and solemn Duty of Thanksgiving. Secondly, Particularly, of the Festivals or Days set apart for Thanksgiving by our Church: Where I will first *enumerate the several Festivals* which we observe, and at the same Time explain the Nature of them: Secondly, I will shew the *Reasonableness* of our observing them: Thirdly, I will assign the *true manner* of doing it.

First, I am to give an Account of the *Nature* of that *publick and solemn Thanksgiving*, which is practis'd in the Christian Church upon solemn Occasions. For it is *Thanksgiving* that constitutes the Essentials of a *Christian Festival* or *Holy-Day*: Feasting is only a Concomitant. Of Thanksgiving then, or solemn Praising the Name of God in a Religious and Devout Manner, after we have receiv'd Blessings and Mercies from him, I will now speak, and display the true Nature and Quality of this solemn Duty. The full extent of which is compris'd in these ensuing Particulars: 1. An *Oral Acknowledgment* of the Divine Favours and Blessings. 2. A serious *weighing and considering* of them. 3. An using the best Methods to fix them on our *Memories*, and to render those Mercies *Visible and Perspicuous*. 4. A hearty and affectionate *Resenting* of these Mercies. Fifthly and Lastly, A making some proportional *Returns* in our Lives and Actions.

First, I say, This solemn Office of Religion doth in the *proper and strictest* Sense, consist in *Words*; 'tis an *Oral and Verbal Acknowledgment* of the Mercies of God. The Tongue is to be the Organ of his Praise, the great Instrument for the setting forth of his Glory, *Heb.* 13. 15. *By him therefore let us offer the Sacrifice of Praise to God continually, that is, the Fruit of our Lips, giving Thanks to his Name*, or (as 'tis in the *Greek*) *Confessing to his Name*. To *Praise* then, or *Give Thanks*, in the first and most obvious Signification, is to *Confess* and *Acknowledge* with our Lips the Mercies and Favours bestow'd on us, or any Ways relating to us.

us. Thus are we to publish and proclaim the Divine Bounty and Grace, and thereby to excite others to set forth God's Excellencies and Perfections, and to join with us in glorifying him. And I might observe, that not only in *That* fore-mention'd Place to the *Hebrews*, but frequently in the Book of *Psalms*, and in other Places of Scripture, *Thanksgiving* is call'd *Confession*; it being indeed a direct Confessing and Acknowledging of God's Greatness, Goodness, Mercy, Justice, Wisdom, and all his other Attributes, which are discover'd in those Spiritual and Temporal Benefits which are conferr'd on us. And this Profession and Acknowledgment with the Tongue must be heard in the publick Assemblies of the Faithful, according to that of the holy *Psalmist*, in *Psal.* 107. 31, 32. *Oh that Men would praise*, &c. *Let them exalt him in the Congregation of the People, and praise him in the Assembly of the Elders.* Conformable to this is that Eucharistick Song of the most devout Man, in *Psal.* 116. 17, 18. *I will offer to thee the Sacrifice of Thanksgiving, and will call on the Name of the Lord. I will pay my Vows now unto the Lord in the Presence of all his People; in the Courts of the Lord's House, in the midst of thee*, O Jerusalem: *Praise ye the Lord.* And in a Rapture of Zeal he cries out to have the Sanctuary Doors open'd, that he may enter in, and openly and audibly Acknowledge God's Goodness, and set forth his Praise, *Psal.* 118. 19, 20. *Open to me the Gates of Righteousness*, i. e. the Tabernacle Doors, as most Expositors conclude: *Open to me these Gates, and I will go into them, and I will praise the Lord. This is the Gate of the Lord, into which the Righteous shall enter. I will praise Thee, for Thou hast heard me, and art become my Salvation.*

Secondly, The true and right Praising of God with Thanksgiving, requires that we seriously *weigh and consider* the Mercies and Favours which we have received; we must take a full View of them, we must observe them narrowly. The want of this is check'd by the Prophet *Jeremy*, in *Jer.* 2. 6, 7. *Neither, said they, where is the Lord that brought us out of* Egypt, *that led us through the Wilderness, through a Land of Desarts, and brought us into a plentiful Country, to eat the Fruit thereof and the Fatness thereof. This* is objected to them, *This* they are charg'd with, that they *said not*, Where is the Lord that did these great Things for us? They *said not, i. e.* they *Consider'd not*, they weigh'd not this Mercy. They *look'd not back* to the extraordinary Providence of God in delivering and rescuing them. *This* was *their Fault*, let it not be *Ours*, but let us seriously ponder, and throughly consider every Circumstance of the Divine Blessings we share in. We are to reflect on them, not only in *General and in the Gross*, but to descend to every *Particular*; go Step by Step, and distinctly mark all the Footsteps of the Almighty in the different Paths and Tracks of his Providence towards us and towards others.

Here I will shew how this is exemplify'd in the 107th. *Psalm*, where the Holy Man gives an Invitation to several sorts of Persons to take notice of, and thankfuly acknowledge the particular Kinds of Mercies vouchsafed to them. The first Rank of Men that the *Psalmist* calls upon to return Thanks to God, are those that have been carried *Captive* into a strange Country, and there have endured Hunger and Want of Harbour, but at Length, thro' the Divine Goodness have been brought Home safe to their desired Habitation. More generally the *Psalmist* intends all such as have been depriv'd of the Necessaries of Life, and yet upon their earnest Prayers and Addresses have found Relief, and have had their Wants supplied. This you have set down from the first to the eighth Verse, and then the *Psalmist* concludes, that this is matter of Praise and Thanksgiving, *O that Men would praise the Lord for his Goodness, and for his wonderful Works to the Children of Men!* The second sort of Persons that are to return Thanks, are those that are *Confined* and *Imprison'd*, and in daily Expectation of Death, but upon their Humiliation and Repentance have been deliver'd and set free. This is fully enlarg'd upon from the 8th. to the 15th. Verse, and is farther matter of Praise and Thanksgiving, *O that Men would praise the Lord*, &c. The third sort of Men that are to acknowledge the Divine Bounty, are those that have been *sick* and *diseased*, and brought so low by Bodily Weakness, that their Strength was almost exhausted, but afterwards have experienc'd the Mercy of God in the Recovery of their Health and Strength. This is insisted upon by the *Psalmist*, from the 15th. to the 21st. Verse, with his former Epiphonema and devout Conclusion, *O that Men would*, &c. The fourth Rank of Persons that are to pay

pay their grateful Acknowledgments, are *Mariners* and *Seamen*, and such as Trafick in that rough Element, and there meet with violent Storms and Tempests; and other Difficulties, but thro' the Mercy of the Great God are deliver'd from their Dangers, and are safely brought to the Haven that they so passionately wish'd for. This being another Instance of the Divine Goodness, requires Praise and Thanksgiving. *O that Men*, &c. The *Psalmist* adds the Mercy of God in bestowing *Plenty*, *Wealth* and *Fruitful* Seasons upon those Nations and People, which were afflicted with Barrenness, Drought, Penury and Want. Thus *particular* and *express* is this Devout Man in setting forth the Praises of God: This I reckon as a part of *Thanksgiving*, and it will effectually promote a farther Thankfulness in us, and will be Instrumental to work in our Souls a just Resentment of the Mercies conferr'd upon us.

Thirdly, This publick Thanksgiving I'm speaking of, implies a *fixt Remembrance* of God's Benefits, according to that of the *Psalmist*, *Psal.* 103. 3. [Bless the Lord, O my Soul, and *forget not* all his Benefits], but preserve and treasure them up in thy *Memory* To this end we find in the *Old Testament*, that it hath been usual for God's Servants (and sometimes it hath been from God's particular Injunction himself) to set up some visible Monument to remind them of the singular Blessings conferr'd by the bountiful Hand of God. Thus they erected Stones, and built Altars, to be Memorials of the Mercies they receiv'd And sometimes they used to fix particular *Names* on Places to preserve the Memory of them, as we may inform our selves from *Gen.* 16. 14. 2 *Chron.* 26. 26. and several other Texts of Scripture. For by this Means, not only *Themselves*, but *others* afterwards might recall the Mercies to mind, *Posterity* might be taught to praise God, *Future* Ages might be made mindful of their Duty. It is too evident that we are too prone to forget the Mercies of Heaven; we hardly take the Impressions, and we soon lose them. Wherefore it is requisite we should make Provision against our Forgetfulness, and use the best Arts and Methods we can of fixing the Divine Favours on our Hearts.

Fourthly, As the *Tongue* is requir'd to set forth the Praises of God (as was shew'd in the first Particular), and as our *Understandings and Minds* are also to be concern'd in this Duty, *viz.* by considering and weighing the Divine Mercies; and as the *Memory* also is to be call'd in to assist in this solemn Affair, so I must add in the next Place, that the *Affections* are to bear a part in this Duty. The *Tongue* and the *Brain* are insignificant without the *Heart*, i. e. a warm and lively Resentment of the Blessings we are made Partakers of. There must be an *Affectionate Relish* of the Mercies that are bestow'd upon us. This I take to be the true meaning of the devout *Psalmist*'s Words, in *Psal.* 103. 1, 2. *Bless the Lord, O my Soul, and all that is within me bless his Holy Name. Bless the Lord, O my Soul, and forget not all his Benefits*; and he *concludes* that *Psalm* in the same Language, *Bless the Lord, O my Soul.* Yea, he *Begins* the next *Psalm* in the same Style, *Bless the Lord, O my Soul*, and he makes it the Close of that very *Psalm*. To the same Purpose he saith, (*Psalm* 108. 1) *O God, my Heart is fixed, I will sing and give Praise.* As much as to say, That the *Soul* and the *Heart* ought to be particularly concern'd in the Duty of *Praise and Thanksgiving*. Accordingly we hear him speaking thus in *Psalm* 138. 1. *I will Praise thee with my whole Heart.* It is the *Inward Rejoicing* which commends the *Outward* one. If the *Affections* be not moved and enliven'd on such an Occasion, the external Behaviour is of little Worth and Value. But yet it is *necessary* that the *Outward Carriage and Deportment* testifie the Reality of those intrinsick Motions of the Heart; and *that* leads me to the Consideration of the *next* Act of true Thankfulness and Rejoicing.

Fifthly then, and Lastly, To praise God for his Mercies, is to make some *Returns* in our Lives and Actions, in our Behaviour both towards God and Man. For tho' God's Mercies admit of no real *Requital* and *Recompence*, yet there are certain *Conditions* requir'd of those Persons who are made Partakers of the Divine Favours and Kindnesses. Something must be done, *not* to *recompence* God, but to shew our *real Thankfulness*; and nothing can do it more than a Holy Life, and a Religious Discharge of our Duty. Particularly, God's Kindness to us

ought to stir up our Charity to our Brethren. As we have received, so we should shew Mercy; following the Pattern of those religious and thankful Jews, who kept their Day of Thanksgiving, *by sending Portions unto them for whom nothing was prepared*, Nehem. 8. 10. And again, It is remarkable how they observ'd their Festival in *Esther* 9. 22. *They sent Portions one to another, and Gifts to the Poor and Needy.* They declared that God had been gracious to them, by their being Beneficial and Liberal to those that were in Want. And our Rejoycing on solemn Times of Thanksgiving should be express'd the same Way.

Especially, we ought to shew our Thankfulness for the eminent Blessings of our Lives by a speedy Renouncing of our most beloved Vices; for we should do something signal for Him, who hath done so much for us. It ought to be remembred, that Praise is not comely in the Mouth of a *Sinner*; nor is it *possible* indeed that a Sinner, yet remaining in his Sins, and disregarding the Pardon of Heaven, should perform this solemn Office of Religion. For Praise or Thanksgiving is the Product of *Joy* and *Gladness*; of a serene and chearful Spirit. Now, there being no Peace to the Wicked, it follows, that they can experience no true and real Joy. How can they in good Earnest ingage in this Exercise, whilst their Consciences proclaim them aloud to be God's Enemies, and that they are liable to all sorts of Curses and Judgments, and Hell it self awaits their Arrival there? how *can* they, I say, as the Case thus stands, discharge this Office of Religion? *Psal.* 50. 23. *He that offereth Praise, glorifieth Me; and to him that ordereth his Conversation aright, will I shew the Salvation of God.* Observe how those two are coupled together, *offering Praise, and ordering their Conversation aright.* These, whom the Psalmist hath thus joyned together, let no Man put asunder. Let a *Holy Life* be always an Ingredient of our *Thankfulness.*

The dividing of these is thus blamed by the Prophet *Zachary*, *Chap.* 7. *Ver.* 6, 7. *When ye did eat, and when ye did drink*, (*i. e.* When ye kept Festivals) *did ye not eat for your selves, and drink for your selves*, not regarding me, nor giving Thanks to me? But *should ye not* rather *hear the Words which the Lord hath cried by the former Prophets?* that is, Should you not have hearkned to your Duty, and done it, and not have rested in the formal Performance of Thanksgiving? This will signify nothing if you refuse to listen to the Voice of God's Messengers, who call upon you to leave your evil Ways, and turn unto the Lord, and obey his Holy Laws. And this they had learnt before from the Prophet *Isaiah*, *Chap.* 5. *Ver.* 21, &c. *I hate, I despise your Feast-Days, and I will not smell in your solemn Assemblies: though ye offer me Burnt-Offerings and Meat-Offerings, I will not accept them; neither will I regard the Peace-Offerings of your fat Beasts. Take thou away from me the Noise of thy Songs.— But let Judgment run down as Waters, and Righteousness as a mighty Stream.* This was the only Expedient they could use to make all their Thanksgivings and Oblations acceptable to God. But on the contrary,

There is not a greater Absurdity than *this*, (and it is the more deplorable because it is so common and prevailing) That Men content themselves with a Verbal Acknowledging of God's Mercies: They own the Favours they have received, and, perhaps, they *publickly* do it (as on solemn Festivals and Times of Joy); but they are not careful to proceed any further; *i. e.* To *Holy Purposes and Resolves of Living well*, and devoting themselves to God's Service, and to a Life of actual Holiness. *Here* then is the great Proof and Testimony of our *Thankfulness to God*, that we obey His Commands, and submit to His Holy Appointment, and conform our Lives to His just and righteous Laws. And thus I have briefly and plainly shew'd what is the True Nature of *praising of God* and *Thanksgiving.*

I will as briefly shew the *Reasonableness* of this religious Performance. First, Natural Light and Reason dictate this; yea, We may see a Resemblance of Gratitude in brute Beasts: *The Ox knoweth his Owner, and the Ass his Master's Crib.* They are respectful and obsequious, in their Kind, to their Masters and Feeders. Wherefore we shew ourselves worse than Beasts and irrational Animals, if we neglect this Duty. And if we speak of Men, those that had only the Light of Nature to conduct them, have paid Respect and Thanks to such

such as were Beneficial to them, and they have honoured the Memory of those that were publick Benefactors to Mankind. We are told, That the ancient *Persians* might have brought their * *Action* against an *Ungrateful Person*. And the same we read of the † *Athenians*; they might have an Action of Ingratitude against those who were Unthankful to the Persons who had deserved well of them. Much more were they forward to shew their *grateful* Sense and Acknowledgments of the Favours they received from their *Deities*. They sacrificed to them, and had solemn Hymns and Sonnets sung by their Priests. There was one that offered a *Hecatomb* for the Discovery of a single Demonstration in the Mathematicks. That they might not shew themselves Ungrateful, they built Altars even to *Unknown Gods*. Such was that at *Athens* which we read of in the *Acts of the Apostles*: It was erected to be a Monument of Praise and Thankfulness to some Divine Benefactor who was not particularly known to them. It is evident then that we are worse than *Heathens*, if we neglect this Religious Duty. The common Light of Reason and Discourse hath discovered this to the Generality of Mankind, That whatsoever good Thing they receive, is derived to them from Above, on which is founded the Duty of *Prayer*. And on the same Bottom is built that other of *Thanksgiving*; for if we have a Hand to receive the Bounty of Heaven, 'tis fit we should have Mouths to acknowledge it, and Hearts to resent it with Thankfulness.

* Xenophon. *Institut.* Cyr. Lib. 1.

† Ἔξεστι ἀχαριστίας δικάζεσθαι κατὰ τοὺς εὐεργέτας μὴ ἀντευποιούντας. Lucian.

Secondly, This is the positive Institution and Command of the Almighty. We cannot but observe, that immediately after the Creating of the World, and the Making of Man, God instituted and set apart a Day for the publick and solemn Performance of the great Office of Thanksgiving. Praise is the proper Work of that Day. We lay aside our ordinary Imployment and Business, that we may the more intirely devote our selves to the celebrating the Praises of the Most High. And since Christ is risen from the Dead, and hath conquered Death, and completed our Redemption, the Day is justly chang'd, and that which succeeds in its Room is most signally become a Day of *Thanksgiving*. How frequently are we call'd upon to perform this necessary Office and Exercise of Religion? *Offer unto God Thanksgiving*, Psal. 50. 14. *Let us come before his Presence with Thanksgiving*, Psal. 95. 2. *Serve the Lord with Gladness, come before his Presence with Singing*, Psal. 100. 2. *Enter into his Gates with Thanksgiving, and into his Courts with Praise; be thankful unto him, and bless his Name*, Ver. 4. This was that which our Saviour required of the Person whom he had mercifully dispossess'd of a Legion of Devils, *Shew how great Things God hath done for thee*, *Luke* 8. 39. and to this End Christ would not suffer him to stay with him, but commanded him forthwith to repair home, and acquaint his Family with what had happen'd, and to proclaim so great a Mercy to all the Neighbourhood. The Apostolical Injunctions for *Thanksgiving* are many; among the rest there are these; *Eph.* 5. 19, 20. *Phil.* 4. 4, 6. 1 *Thess.* 5. 18.

Thirdly, This is one great End and Design of God's conferring his Favours on us. The Psalmist rehearses the particular Instances of God's Mercy towards him, and then adds, *To the end that my Glory may sing Praise unto thee*, Psal. 30. 12. Accordingly he speaks thus in another place, *Save us, O Lord our God, to give Thanks unto thy Holy Name, and to triumph in thy Praise*, Psalm 106. 47. So again, *Bring my Soul out of Prison, that I may praise thy Name*, Psalm 15. And from God himself we are taught what is his Intention in shewing Kindness to us, *I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me*, Psalm 50. 15. So that to neglect to praise and glorify the Almighty for the Blessings he bestows upon us, is directly to frustrate his Design, to contradict and disappoint his End and Purpose, as much as in us lies.

Fourthly, Let us remember what was the Noble Imployment we were first design'd and created for. The Eternal BEING who was from Everlasting Happy in Himself, was pleased to produce such Creatures as were capable of Understanding, admiring and extolling His Infinite Perfections, and displaying His transcendent Goodness and Bounty; and He gave them their Being and Subsistence for that very Purpose. He then that doth not laud and extoll the Merciful Lord, perverts the End of his *Creation*.

Fifthly,

Fifthly, More particularly Thanksgiving is the proper Duty of those that have been in Distress and Trouble, and are delivered from it. Thus after the Church had earnestly implor'd the Mercy of God, and Deliverance from those Calamities she lay under, solemnly promises to return Praises, and to pay the Tribute of Thanksgiving. *So we thy People and Sheep of thy Pasture, will give thee Thanks for ever; we will shew forth thy Praise to all Generations.* To this purpose is that of the Psalmist, *Psalm* 66. 13, 14. *I will go into thy House with Burnt-Offering, I will pay thee my Vows which my Lips have utter'd, and my Mouth hath spoken when I was in Trouble.* Whence it follows, that we mock God, and are false to our Vows and Promises, when we omit this Duty.

Sixthly, unless we shew our selves *Thankful* for the Blessings we have receiv'd, we can't expect the Continuance of them, but rather we may justly look for Divine Vengeance and a Curse. *Because they did not know*, i. e. thankfully acknowledge, *that I gave her Corn, and Wine, and Oil, therefore will I take away my Corn in the Time thereof, and my Wine in the Season thereof*, &c. *Hos.* 2. 8, 9. *The Earth which drinketh in the Rain*, saith the Author to the *Hebrews*, *that cometh oft upon it, and bringeth forth Herbs meet for them by whom it is dressed, receiveth Blessing from God: but that which beareth Thorns and Briars is rejected, and is near unto Cursing*, *Chap.* 6. *Ver.* 7, 8. The Application is easie; Unthankfulness and Unfruitfulness bring a Curse with them, and deprive us of our choicest Comforts; but on the contrary, by Gratitude and Obedience we procure the Continuance of them, and a Blessing with them. Generally it is an experienc'd Truth, That what Mercies are got by *Prayer*, are kept and perpetuated by *Praise* and *Thanksgiving*.

Seventhly, These are the Work of the Angels and Saints in Glory, and therefore that should commend it to us. By this Exercise of Religion we become near allyed to Cherubims and Seraphims, and to the Spirits of Just Men made perfect; for 'tis their continual Privilege and Honour to offer Praises to the Most High. *Prayer* is temporary, and is calculated for this Life only, which is a State of Indigency; but *Praises* shall last as long as Eternity it self. We antedate Heaven by this sacred Imployment; for *Hallelujah* is the Language of Angels, and the Work of the Blessed Spirits Above; as we learn from *Rev.* 7. 11, 12. and many other places.

Eighthly and Lastly, and which is the highest Thing I can say, This Act of Religion doth in a more signal manner advance God's Glory, which is the Chief Thing we are to be concern'd for. We have it from the Mouth of God Himself, *Whoso offereth Praise, glorifieth Me*, Psalm 50. 23. It is true, he that is a Petitioner and an humble Suppliant at the Throne of Grace, glorifies God; for by his praying to Him, he plainly acknowledges His Power and Goodness; that is, That He can, and that He will hear him: But he that offers Praise, in a more eminent manner advances God's Glory by magnifying those and all His other Attributes. The ten Lepers *lifted up their Voices, and said, Jesus, Master, have Mercy on us*, *Luke* 17. 13. There was their *Prayer*; but only one of these return'd with *Praises*, and he is said to *glorify God*, ver. 15. which is explain'd in the next Verse by *giving him Thanks*. Thus we see that by our grateful Returns of Praise for the Mercies and Blessings we are Sharers in, we do in a more transcendent and peculiar way bring Glory unto God.

I proceed to the Second Thing I undertook; namely, To treat distinctly of the Usage and Practice of *our own Church* as to its Festivals and publick Days of Rejoycing. These are of three sorts. 1. Some of them remind us of the Great and Meritorious Undertakings of our *Saviour*. 2. Others commemorate the Office of *Angels*. 3. There are certain Seasons of calling to mind the Lives and Sufferings of *Holy Men*. I do not pretend to assert or prove, That the Observation of these Days is of *Divine Right* and *Apostolical Institution* (as those other Things before treated of are); but my Design is to represent the Practice and Usage of our Church, and so far as it is Laudable to vindicate it, and freely to offer my Thoughts concerning the Celebration of those Days which are in use among us.

First, I say, There are some Days (and those are of the highest Rank and Quality) in which the Meritorious Undertakings of our Lord and Saviour, and

and the ſeveral Parts and Degrees of the Great Work of our Redemption are commemorated; for the Church hath ordain'd certain Anniverſary Days to celebrate the Myſteries and Actions relating to the Reſtauration of Mankind by Chriſt Jeſus. And *This* excellent Order ſhe obſerves in this Commemoration; *viz.* That thoſe Great Things are yearly celebrated at *that Seaſon* which anſwers to the Time when they were firſt done; for thereby the Repreſentation of them is more Genuine and Natural, more Expreſs and Lively, and conſequently it will be more effectually fixed on the Minds, and will more vigorouſly operate upon the Lives of Men. It is fitting and congruous that *Chriſt's Birth-Day* (to begin with that which is the Beginning and Riſe of our Happineſs) ſhould be kept with Joy and Thankſgiving. And becauſe this is the Leading Feſtival, I will be more Copious in this than on any of the reſt. For here I will undertake to give an Account of the Time of Chriſt's Nativity, ſo far as we are capable of ſearching into it, and knowing it. Here then, 1. I will very briefly give a *General Deſcription* of the Time of our Saviour's Incarnation. And, 2dly, I will inquire into the *Particular Seaſon* or preciſe Time of it.

Firſt, The more General and Indefinite Deſcription of the Time when Chriſt was born, is thus prophetically expreſs'd in *Gen.* 49. 10. *The Scepter ſhall not depart from Judah, nor a Lawgiver from between his Feet, 'till Shiloh* (*i. e.* Chriſt) *come.* Therefore when the Scepter or Government actually departed from *Judah*, that was the Time when Chriſt came into the World. Now we are able to apply this; for when *Herod*, a Stranger and of another Nation, was made King and Governor of *Judæa*, and thereby the Scepter or Royal Power departed from *Judah*, our Lord appear'd upon Earth. Therefore 'tis particularly recorded (in the Narrative of our Saviour's Nativity), that he was *born in the Days of* Herod *the King*, Mat. 2. 1, 2. when that notable Prophecy of the Patriarch *Jacob* was fulfilled. So that already we ſee that the Inquiry into the *Time* of Chriſt's Nativity is of great Uſe; for it confirms our Faith againſt the Jews, who obſtinately deny that *Shiloh* the *Meſſias* is come, though they can't but acknowledge that the Scepter hath long ſince ceas'd from *Judah*, and that very ſignally and remarkably when *Herod*, an Alien, took the Royal Government upon him. *When this Fullneſs of Time was come, God ſent forth his Son, made of a Woman, made under the Law*, Gal. 4. 4. Where that *Fulneſs of Time* relates to the Accompliſhment of that and all the other Prophecies and Promiſes concerning Chriſt in the *Old Teſtament*. When theſe were *fulfill'd*, then He came. Another General Aſſignation of Time is in *Luke* 2. 1, 2. where we are told, That Chriſt was born in the Reign of *Cæſar Auguſtus*, and that Time of his Reign *when his Decree went out that all the World* (*i. e.* the *Roman* Empire, which reach'd to the greateſt part of the known World) *ſhould be tax'd*, Cyrenius *being at that Time Governour of* Syria. But we are not told here in what particular Year of that Emperour's Reign, or in what Year of *Cyrenius's* Preſidentſhip our Saviour was born; as we were not inform'd before in what Year of *Herod's* Reign this came to paſs. So that all this is no more than a *general* Account of Chriſt's Birth. Another Intimation of this Time we have in *Luke* 3. 1. compared with the 23d Verſe, where you will find the *Fifteenth Year of the Reign* of Tiberius, joyn'd with the *Thirtieth Year of Chriſt's Age*: But this likewiſe is no other than a large and general Hint at the Time of his appearing in the World: For the Fifteenth Year of *Tiberius* is not *neceſſarily* joyn'd with the Thirtieth of Chriſt's Age; ſeeing the *Thirtieth* is there propounded with a Latitude; for 'tis ſaid, That *Jeſus began to be about Thirty Years of Age*; not that he was Thirty Years of Age. So that all theſe Paſſages amount only to an indefinite and general Account of the Time of Chriſt's Birth, which was the Firſt Thing I deſign'd.

But, Secondly, I will inquire what cloſer and more particular Account may be given of it. And, truly, here is ſome Uncertainty, whether you conſider the *Year of the World*, or of the *Emperour* when Chriſt's Birth happen'd. As to the former, Chronologers are not agreed in their Verdict about it. Some of them, as the *Hebrew* Ones, compute the Year of Chriſt's Birth in 3760. *Scaliger*, *Calviſius*, and *Helvicus* affirm, that Chriſt was born in the Year of the World 3947. *Voſſius* the Elder places his Nativity in 3948; the *Vulgar Æra*

in 3949, *Gassendus* in 3950, *Sulpitius Severus* in 3954, *Petavius* in 3979, *Baronius* in 4002, *Usher* in the Year after, *Genebrand* in 4089, and some in 5199. But between the *Vulgar Æra* and that of Archbishop *Usher*, there seems to be the true placing of Christ's Nativity, and after all Disputes we may acquiesce there with the greatest Satisfaction that this Matter is capable of. And as for the Epocha of Christ's Nativity, which is according to the *Dionysian Æra*, (as 'tis call'd) it commenc'd late; being not extant 'till the Sixth Century after Christ: For before that Time they computed the Years *à Mundo Condito*, *ab Urbe Conditâ*, by *Olympiads*, by *Consuls*, by *Lustres*. But *Dionysius Exiguus*, a *Roman* Abbot or Monk, was the first that made use of the Birth of our Saviour as a standing *Æra*. This was imitated by Venerable *Bede* in the Seventh Century; but this Calculation of the Year of our Lord was not made a publick and generally receiv'd Epocha 'till *Charles the Great*'s Reign, in the Ninth Century; and ever since it hath been a fix'd Computation. It is true, the *Æra* of Christ's Nativity, which some of the Moderns, and several of the Ancient Writers of the Church have assign'd, doth not precisely agree with it, as we may find by comparing them. Christ was born Five Years before the *Vulgar Accompt*, saith a * late Writer. He was born Four Years before this *Æra*, say *Sulpitius Severus*, *Nicephorus Callistus*, *Cedrenus*. Three Years before it, say *Tertullian*, *Clement* of *Alexandria*, *Jerom*, *Chrysostom*. Christ's Birth was Two Years before it, say *Epiphanius*, *Eusebius*, *Orosius*, *Isidore* of *Sevil*. And others think that Christ's Nativity preceded that Computation but One Year. So that we see the Difference is but small between these Accompts.

* Natal. Alexand. *Histor. Ecclesiastic.* Sect. 1.

Then for the *Year of the Emperour* when Christ was born, *Sulpitius Severus* saith it was the 2[illegible]th of *Octavius Augustus*'s Reign; but *Eusebius* holds it was the 42d; and this latter is the most receiv'd Opinion. And the same Ecclesiastical Historian tells us, That Christ was born in the 34th Year of *Herod*'s Reign, which was Four Years before that King's Death. As for the Computation of our Saviour's Birth by *Olympiads* and *Consuls*, and *from the Building of the City of* Rome, there is some Difference also as to these; but *Calvisius* and *Helvicus* seem to come nearest to Truth, who agree, That Christ's Birth was *A. U. C.* 752, *Cornelius Lentulus* and *Valerius Messalinus* being *Consuls*. Christ was born in the Third Year of the 194th *Olympiad*, say some Chronologers; but according to the most common and received Computation, in the Fourth Year of the 194th *Olympiad*, and according to the *Vulgar Æra* of *Dionysius Exiguus*, in the 46th *Julian* Year.

But I pass from the *Year of Christ's Nativity*, to inquire into a more narrow Compass of Time; namely, What *Month of the Year* He was born in, and in what *Day of the Month*. It was heretofore believed, that Christ was born in *April* or *May*; and particularly the 20th of *May* was the Day of Christ's Nativity, as *Clement* of *Alexandria*, in the First Book of his *Stromata*, reports concerning some of the Ancients; and we find a late learned * Author inclining to this Opinion. It was thought by others, that Christ's *Birth* and *Baptism* happen'd on the same Day of the Week; namely, on the 6th of *January*. This (as *Epiphanius* tells us) was the Belief of the Christians of *Egypt* and *Ethiopia*; and for this Reason they remembred both on the same Day, that is, on the Day of † *Epiphany*, though with us and others, the *Coming of the Magi*, and the *Baptism of Christ*, are commemorated on that Day. ‖ *Cassianus* testifies this of the *Egyptians*: And of the *Greeks* and *Armenians* the same is said by * *Frisingensis*. These *Armenian* Christians fasted on the 25th of *December*, and the Epiphany-Day was their Christmas, on which they celebrated Christ's Incarnation; for they made one Festival of both, *i. e.* of Christ's Birth and Baptism.

* Dr. Alix Dissertat. *de* JESU CHRISTI *Anno & Mense Natali.*

† ἀπὸ τῆς τῶν μαθηλίων ἡμέρας, τουτέστιν, ἐπιφανίων, ἥτις συγχρόνως ἐστὶ Ἰανουαρίου μηνός. Epiphan. Hæres. 51.

‖ Collat. 10. cap. 2.

* Lib. 7. cap. 32.

There have been some since that have held, That Christ was born about the *Autumnal Equinox*, or about the End of *September*, which was about the *Feast of Tabernacles* among the *Jews*; and some Men of *Fancy* make use of that Place in *John* 1. 14. ἐσκήνωσεν, *He Tabernacled*, *He pitch'd his Tent* (whereas we translate it, He *dwelt* among us); they apply *That*, I say, to the Time of Christ's Coming,

Coming, which was about the Feast of Tabernacles, when the Fruits of the Country were lodged, and their Vintage over, and therefore the fittest Season (say they) for Christ's Birth, and the Reception of so great a Mercy. These and many such *slight* Arguments they have to prove, that our Saviour was born in *Autumn*. But some who are graver, and despise such sorry Proofs, yet think this to be the Season of our Lord's Birth. Our *Lightfoot* pitches upon *September*, and before him *Scaliger* and *Beroaldus* held, that the 24th. of that Month was the Day of our Saviour's Nativity. And the great *Selden* referrs Christ's Birth to the end of this Month, and pretends to evince it from the Ἐφημερία, *Luke* 1. 5. the *Order* or *Course of* Zacharias's exercising his Sacerdotal Function. But this is very nice and precarious, as any one may satisfy himself from the perusing that Learned Antiquary's Way of Arguing; for those Ἐφημερίαι, or *Courses* of the *Jewish* Priests, are differently determin'd by the Learned; and therefore great Uncertainty must arise thence, and consequently we cannot certainly find out the *Day* (no, nor scarce the *Month*) by the order and return of those *Temple-Courses*.

The most general and receiv'd Opinion is, that Christ first bless'd this visible World with his Appearance in the *Winter-Season*, and particularly in *December*, and upon the 25th. Day of that Month. Tho' 'tis true this was not presently consented to and embrac'd by all Christian Churches; for we learn from an * ancient Writer, whom I have before-nam'd, that there was in his Days no Universal Agreement about the Time of Christ's Nativity. Which Mr. *Selden* takes notice of in his *History of Tithes*, and saith, That until about Four Hundred Years after Christ the Day was not settled, but variously observed in the *Eastern* Churches. But we must know that it was otherwise in the *Western* or *Latin* Church, for they being of Opinion that Christ's Birth and Baptism did not fall on the same Day, did accordingly celebrate the Remembrance of them at two distinct Times, that is, the Birth of Christ on the 25th. of *December*, and his Baptism on the 6th. of *January*. But at last this Usage was taken up also by the *Eastern* or *Greek Church*, and the Festival of Christ's Nativity was removed from the 6th. of *January* to the 25th. of *December*. It was in St. *Chrysostom*'s Days that this Alteration was made, and it is expressly mention'd and recorded by him in his *Homily* † *for the Day*, that it was then not full Ten Years since that Change of the Day was appointed by the *Greek* Church. And in that *Homily* or *Oration* upon the first observing of this Day, he tells us, that they received it from the *Western* or *Roman* Church.

* Clem. Alex. Strom. lib. 1.

† Εἰς τὴν γενεθλ. ἡμέραν.

So that the summ is this, There was in those first Days of the Church a difference in observing *Christmas-Day*; the *Western* Church keeping it on the 25th. of *December*, and the *Eastern* on the 6th. of *January*; but the *Eastern* Church came over to the *Western* about the end of the Fourth Century, and kept the Memory of Christ's Birth on the 25th. of *December*. And, we can't but think that there was good Reason for this Change; for notwithstanding the other Usage had prevail'd a long Time among the Christian Churches in the *East*, yet they let it fall, and unanimously complied with those of the *West*. Wherefore there was without doubt some very considerable Ground for introducing this new Practice, and joining so readily with it. And indeed there was Reason to receive this as a choice Piece of Antiquity; for in the *Censual Tables* at *Rome* this *very Day* was recorded. By the *Censual Tables*, I mean the Registers of all Persons that were inroll'd by *Augustus*'s *Decree* (*Luke* 2. 11.); and these testifie the *Time* as well as the *Place* of Christ's Birth. And that *These* Records were not forged, but contain'd a certain Truth, we have the Suffrage of the most Pious and Learned Fathers. To these Rolls *Justin Martyr* appeals for the evidencing the Place and Time of Christ's Birth; and he doth it to the Emperor's of *Rome*, who could easily disprove him, if it had not been so. *Tertullian* referrs to these Archives at *Rome*, as a faithful Witness of Christ's Birth; and so doth St. *Chrysostom*. And truly this is the only way of Proof in Things of this Nature. Some quote the *Apostolical Canons* for the celebrating of Christ's Nativity on the 25th. of *December*, as also *Clement*'s *Constitutions*, but because these are thought by some to be Counterfeit, and of a far later Age than that of the Apostles, I will not urge them as Proofs in this matter. But I think I may with

some Assurance mention the *Annals at* Rome, wherein the Birth of Christ on this Day is expresly set down, and was alledg'd as Authentick by the ancient Writers of the Christian Church.

But some *Object* that *this* could not be the *Day*, because *December* could not be the *Month* in which Christ was born; for (say they) it is recorded, that at our Saviour's coming into the World *the Shepherds were abiding in the Field, keeping Watch over their Flock by Night*, Luke 2. 8. and thence they inferr, that Christ was not born at that Time of the Year when we celebrate his Nativity, because 'tis not usual for Shepherds to watch over their Flock in Winter-Nights, and when 'tis cold and frosty. But this *Objection* vanishes, when we consider these two Things; First, That there is a great Difference between the Situation of *Judæa*, and of these *Northern* Countries; for the former is included wholly in the same Climate in which *Fez* and *Morocco* are situate, where the Winter-Season is hotter than our *May* here in *England*; and yet *Judæa* in Heat exceeds *Fez* and *Morocco*, because it lies above Forty Degrees nearer *East* than they do. Seeing then the Temperature of the Month of *December* in the Land of *Canaan*, answers to *May* or *June* in *England*, we cannot think it unsafe for the hardy Shepherds to attend their Flocks by Night at that Time of the Year. Secondly, We are to consider, that in *Palestine* they used to watch over their Sheep all Night; yea, though they were shut up in their Folds, because those Countries were infested with Wolves. Which made it become necessary for the Shepherds to sit up all Night, especially at those Seasons of the Year when the Wolves were wont to be most ravenous, that the Sheep might be kept from being worried and devour'd.

Again, 'tis alledg'd, that this Time of the Year was unfit for the travelling of the *Jews* to the *Enrollment* or *Taxation* at *Bethlehem*, which is one of the Circumstances that accompanied the Birth of Christ; therefore 'tis unlikely that Christ was born in *December*. And yet * one that makes this Objection acknowledges, that the Virgin took her Journey with the young Child into *Egypt* about the 19th. of *November*, which was but the Month before; and it would take them up half the Week to go to *Egypt*. And this Writer holds, that at the same Time of the Year they return'd to *Jerusalem*, for they staid not above Four Days, and return'd in Four Days more. All this in the Month of *November*; and they presently took their Journey to *Jerusalem*, and were there by the third of that Month, to perform the Rites of Purification. There seems to be little Consistency in this with the foresaid *Objection*, therefore there is no need of answering it.

* Mr. Whiston's *Harmony of the* New Testament.

Having dismiss'd the *Objections*, I proceed to take notice, that some have been so Nice and Punctual as to fix not only the Day of the Month, but the *Day of the Week* when our Lord was born. It was on the first Day of the Week, saith *Durandus*; on the fourth Day, or *Wednesday*, saith *Cedrenus*: On *Saturday*-Night, saith *Baronius*. And he and Bishop *Montague* assign *what Watch of the Night* Christ was born in; which they pretend to know from *Wisd.* 18. 14, 15. Others fondly pitch upon other Days; but their Determinations are arbitrary, and they only give us to understand by them, that they have a desire to say something, tho' without any Ground. Wherefore I wave these Surmises, and only press that which we have some Ground to assert, that the 25*th. Day of* December is the Day on which our Saviour was born; or, at least, this is *as probable*, if not *more probable* than any other Assignation of Time; for, as this disagrees not with the Sacred History, so it is warranted by the Testimony of Ecclesiastical Writers, Fathers, and Historians, by the Practice of the ancientest Churches, and by the Observation of this Day through all or most Parts of *Christendom*, both by Papists and Protestants. So much for the Festival of *Christ's Nativity*, which is one of the chiefest Solemnities observed by our Church. As to the Nativity or Incarnation it self, and the Nature and Effects of it, which render it so great a Blessing to Mankind, and therefore worthy to be solemnly remember'd, I remit the Reader to what I have said on this Head under the *Third Article* of the *Creed*.

On

On this is attendant Christ's *Circumcision*; for he taking on him our Nature, came not to please himself, and indulge his Flesh, but to do his Father's Will, and to submit to all the Divine Commands, and to fulfil even the legal Sanctions; and accordingly submitted his tender Body to the Covenant of Circumcision. This was the *Entrance* into his *Sufferings*, and the *First-Fruits* (as it were) of his *Bloudy Passion*, and therefore not unfitly placed in the *Front* of our New-Year, *This* being the *Prime Festival* in the Calendar. That we may have a true Notion of the Nature of it, and that we may have a right Estimate of so important a Benefit, we must know first, that *Christ's Circumcision* was one remarkable Evidence of the Truth of his Human Nature. There could not be exhibited a more visible Testimony, and plainer Demonstration, that he had no Phantastick Body. Again, This was a signal Instance of his Obedience and dutiful Submission to the Law, under which he was born at that Time; for he being of the *Jewish* Nation, was necessarily on that Account concern'd in the Sacrament of Circumsion. But moreover, it was *Choice* in him, he being an extraordinary and Divine Person, and one that came with a design to put a Period to all the *Mosaic* Rites. His Circumcision was (as one saith) *omnium Cæremoniarum abscissio*, the cutting off and abolishing of all the Ceremonial Observances. He observ'd this Rite, to free us from the Observation of it. He willingly submitted his tender Body to the Covenant of Circumcision, that he might exempt and enfranchise us not only from that, but all other Legal Ceremonies. Blessed therefore be the Holy Babe Jesus, that he was pleased to condescend to so troublesome and painful an Usage. And may it teach *Us* to resign our selves wholly to the Commands of Christ, tho' they be never so severe and harsh, tho' they extend to the cutting off a Right-Hand, and pulling out a Right Eye, the abandoning of whatever is most dear and precious to us. Thus you see how this Memorial of Christ's *Circmucision* may be improved to very considerable Ends and Purposes; and this was the Reason, I suppose, of constituting this to be an annual Solemnity in the Church.

I proceed to the next Anniversary Memorial of Christ's Undertakings, which our Church observes, and that is of his *Cross and Passion*. And here she directs us to that Affection and Demeanour which is most proper and suitable to this Solemnity, namely, *Mourning and Fasting*. With *bitter Herbs* we must sit down to this Paschal Lamb, and with a profound Sorrow and Repentance call our *Sins* to Remembrance, which caused the Son of God to bleed, and which were of so heinous a Nature, that they could not be expiated but by the *Death* of Jesus. Where-ever the Name of Christ is made mention of, this solemn Time must not be forgot. Now we are to recount with Astonishment, the Painful, Ignominious, and Cursed Death which our Saviour underwent, with all the dreadful Prodigies that accompany'd it; more-especially how the Earth quak'd, and gave up some of its dead Bodies, how the Sun was miraculously eclips'd at this Time, the Eclipse happening at the *Opposition* of the Sun and Moon. Another prodigious Occurrence was, that at the very Time when the Priest was offering up the Evening-Sacrifice (which always was at the ninth Hour) the Veil of the Temple was rent in twain, so that the Priest could see into the Holy of Holies, which was impenetrable before. In brief, when Christ hung on the Cross, the whole Creation groan'd, the Universe suffer'd with him, not only the abashed Sun withdrew his Light, and the ponderous Earth was in a trembling Agony, but all the Parts of the World felt the Nails which pierced his Hands and Feet. Nothing in Heaven or Earth was free. When the *Maker of all Things* suffer'd, every Creature sympathized. But this Suffering being for our sake, it was the most glorious Thing that could have been; for hereby the Divine Philantrophy was fully manifested, the Divine Justice satisfied, and wretched Man reconciled to Heaven. Therefore on this Account the Day of *Christ's Passion* should rather be a day of Thanksgiving than a Time of Mourning; it bringing to our Remembrance the greatest Mercy and Blessing that could have been conferr'd upon us. For which Reason I reckon this Day among the *Festivals*.

Christ's Miraculous *Resurrection* comes next to be solemnized, that glorious Victory over Sin and Satan, over Death and Hell, and all the Infernal Powers. In Memory of so great a Benefit a Day hath been Annually set apart by devout

Christians in all Ages. Early Footsteps of this we find in the end of the Second Century, by the same Token that *Victor*, then Bishop of *Rome*, excommunicated the *Eastern* and *Southern* Bishops, for not observing this Day, after the manner of the *Western* Church, that is, at the same Time that they did. For those of *Asia* kept it on the 14th. Day of the Month, after the Vernal Equinox, whatever Day of the Week that happen'd to be; but those of *Rome* and the *Western* Parts kept it not on any 14th. Day of the Month, but on the Lord's-Day only. This caused great Quarrels, but the Controversie was ended at the first Council of *Nice*, where the *Western* Church got the better, and the Dissenters were styled *Quartodecimani*. It is certain, that *This* was so famous a Festival heretofore in the Church, that *Easter* began the Year in the Ecclesiastical Accounts. And *Still* upon *This* depend all other Moveable Feasts. And certainly it is a great Occasion of Joy and Thanksgiving, that the *Resurrection* of Christ furnishes us with, this being an Assurance to us, that all the Undertakings of Christ in his Life, and his Passion and Death themselves, were acceptable to God, and available to the Salvation of Mankind, for his overcoming of Death plainly shew'd, that he was a perfect Conqueror.

Here I might have Occasion to speak of the *Lord's-Day*, which is the proper Day of his *Resurrection*; but I reckon this above the *Ordinary Festivals* of the Church, it being of *Divine Institution*, and therefore I treat of it in another Place, *viz.* under the Fourth Commandment.

I pass to another solemn Season, that of our *Saviour's Ascension*, when he went up in Triumph to Heaven. For the Holy Records acquaint us, that Forty Days after his Resurrection he first ascended *Mount-Olivet*, and then from that Place took his Flight to Heaven, leaving behind him the Prints of his Feet on that Spot of Ground which he touch'd last; and, if you will credit * Ancient and Modern † Writers, they cannot be effaced. From thence, I say, he made his Passage through all the spacious Circles of the upper World, and hastned to the general Rendezvous of Glorified Spirits. Which proclaims aloud to us, that Immortality and Glory are the real Acquest of Christ's Undertakings, he giving an evident Proof of it in leaving this World, and going to take Possession of that endless Life and Happiness which he had purchased. This Triumph gives us Assurance of the foregoing Conquest and Victory. This then every Christian is obliged to commemorate with Thankfulness and Rejoicing, it being the happy Pledge of our future Ascending thither, where we shall for ever be with the Lord.

* Hieronym. *de Locis Hebraicis.* Sulpit. Sever. Hist. Sacr. lib. 2.

† Sandy's *Relations*, Book. 3.

Nor was Christ unmindful of his Church when he was taken from it; but to give her full Assurance of his being in a Place where he could Command, and from whence he was able to convey Blessings to her, he was pleas'd on the Day of *Pentecost*, which was Ten Days after his Ascension, to send, according to his Promise made before to the Apostles, *the Holy Ghost*, who appear'd in the Shape of Cloven Tongues, *i. e.* of Flames divided into the Shape of Tongues (being indeed the natural Figure of Flame, which is Pyramidical). By *This* was signified the Gift of Tongues, and other miraculous Gifts and Endowments, by vertue of which the Gospel was propagated, Christianity confirmed, and the Truth of whatever Christ had said or done irresistibly attested. On *Whitsunday* we call to mind this Descent of the Holy Spirit, whereby those extraordinary Gifts were distributed among the Apostles, and by whose Vertue and Operation the more ordinary Endowments and Graces of the Spirit are confer'd on the Members of the Christian Church; by which they are enabled to perform all the Offices of their Holy Religion in that Way and Manner which shall be most acceptable to God, most conducing to his Honour and Glory, and most serviceable to the Church's Edification, and the Benefit of every true Believer.

There are three other Festivals *in Remembrance of our Saviour*, which yet are not usually thought to be so; but the first of them is supposed to be in Honour of the *Wise Men that came from the* East to visit our Saviour; and the other two are generally deem'd to be in Remembaance of the *Virgin-Mary*. But this is a vulgar Mistake, for the *Epiphany* (which is the first of these Feasts) is dedicated to our Lord Christ, as the other Title given to it by our Church clearly shews; for she calls it *The Manifestation of Christ to the* Gentiles. So that it is evident that this Day is set apart to remember the gracious Dispensation of God the Father in

in sending his Son to be *a Light to lighten the Gentiles.* It is to make us sensible of that *Mystery* which the Apostle speaks of *Eph.* 3. *That the Gentiles should be Fellow-Heirs, and of the same Body, and Partake of the Promise in Christ by the Gospel;* and (as he saith afterwards) *that there should be preach'd among the Gentiles the unsearchable Riches of Christ.* This is Matter of Great Joy to the World, and to *Us* (who are of *Gentile* Race) in particular.

The Second Festival is commonly call'd *the Purification of the Virgin Mary,* and thence 'tis thought to be in Honour of her, but if we consult our Liturgy and the *Collect* and *Gospel* proper for that Day, we shall satisfie ourselves that it refers to our *Blessed Lord,* and the Reception which he found from *Simeon* and *Anna* in the Temple. Whence the Eastern Churches call'd this Festival ὑπαντὴν or ὑπαντήν, *the Feast of Meeting,* because those Venerable Persons did on that Day ὑπαντῆσαι, *meet* our Lord whilest he was presented in the Temple, and bore ample Testimony to him as a Saviour and Redeemer. It is not to be doubted then but that this Solemnity hath respect to Christ himself, and therefore our Church styles it *the Presentation of Christ in the Temple,* and mentions the other Title only as the Vulgar Denomination.

The Third Festival is that which is call'd *the Annunciation of the Virgin Mary,* and because her Name is made use of in the Title, therefore some have concluded that this Day was dedicated to her. But this is a groundless Inference; For here is Nothing else meant but the Annunciation or Declaration of the *approaching Birth of Christ* by the Message of an Angel. And there is no Notice at all taken of the *Blessed Virgin* in the Collect for the Day, no more than there is in the other Collect used on the forenamed Festival, commonly call'd the *Purification.* So that instead of two Days which some have thought our Church observes in Honour of the Blessed Virgin, there is not so much as one properly and directly kept; for both these Days of the *Presentation* and of the *Annunciation* belong to Christ. Not but that it is lawful and just to call to mind and mention the Blessed Virgin *Mary* with Praises and Thanksgiving to God. It was her own Prophecy concerning herself; that *All Generations should call her Blessed:* and this shall be and is fulfill'd whil'st we mention the Praises of that highly-favour'd Saint, whom God was pleased to make the happy Instrument and Channel to convey so great a Happiness to us. Let the fond Devotionists among the Papists cry up her *Assumption,* i. e. Believe that her Body as well as Soul was taken up into Heaven; whilst we in the mean Time reverence and respect her Memory without giving Credit to any such Fiction, and without incurring the Imputation of Superstition.

After these solemn Days in which the Benefits by *Christ* and the *Holy Spirit* are remembred, the next *Sunday* sums up our Belief in the Commemoration of the whole *Blessed Trinity. This* is a Mystery, which *we Christians,* and no other Persuasion of Men in the World besides, acknowledge and profess. We believe that there are three Persons subsisting in the Unity of the Godhead, and that these three are really distinguish'd from one another, and yet are equal in Glory and Power, and all other Divine Perfections and Excellencies. The *Unity in Trinity,* and the *Trinity in Unity* is to be worship'd, and therefore One Season is assign'd more-especially for that Worship and Adoration.

I come now to speak of the *second Kind* of Festivals which our Church solemnizes, and that relates wholly to the Ministry of *Angels,* and particularly to the Head and Chief of them, the *Archangel Michael,* who was the Tutelar Angel of the *Jewish* Church, *Dan.* 10. 13. and perhaps is so of the *Christian,* as may seem to be gather'd from *Dan.* 12. 1. The Angels, who are of a degree Superior to us, yet are our *Fellow-Servants and Brethren,* Rev. 19. 10. they are *ministring Spirits sent forth to minister for them who shall be Heirs of Salvatoon,* Heb. 1. 14. These glorious Heaven-born Spirits disdain not to quit their Cœlestial Mansions, whensoever they are to wait upon the Servants of God on Earth. They are the special Guardians of good Men, they *encamp round about them that fear the Lord,* Psal. 34. 7. They rescue them from imminent and impendent Dangers, and are constantly doing them kind Offices. They rejoice over Converts and Penitents, *Luke* 15. 7. and they convey the Souls of the Faithful to Heaven, *Luke* 16. 22. They were assistant at our Saviour's *Birth, Luke* 2. 13. They ministred to him in the *Wilderness,* Mat. 4. 11. They strengthn'd him in

his

his *Agony*, Luke 22. 43. they were Attendant at his *Resurrection and Ascension*, Acts 1. 11. and they shall accompany him when he comes to *Judgment*, *Mat.* 25. 31. These officious Services both to our Lord and to our selves, ought to be repay'd with some proportional Resentments; and therefore it was deem'd reasonable by our Church to praise God in a more particular and solemn Manner for the friendly Assistances of those Heavenly Messengers, and to make some Returns of Love, Respect, and Honour to them.

I proceed to the *Third and Last Sort* of Christian Festivals, wherein we preserve and extol the Memory of the Eminent Saints of God who are departed this Life. Among these *the Apostles* are the most Illustrious, as being Christ's intimate Friends and Favourites, his immediate Ministers of Religion, his Household Chaplains, as it it were. Yet they were not so kept at home, but that they were sent by our Saviour, when he was on Earth, into the several Quarters of *Judæa*, to preach the Gospel. And when he was leaving the World, he commission'd them to preach the Gospel afterwards to every Nation and foreign Part of the inhabited Earth, and therefore they were styled by *Tertullian*, *Destinati Nationibus Magistri*.

The two first Disciples or Apostles that came to Christ were two of St. *John* Baptist's Disciples, *John* 1. 35. 37. the first of them was *Andrew*, ver. 40. but the other's Name is not mention'd; it is likely it was *John*; for he uses to conceal his Name, when he speaks of himself. Then *Andrew* calls his Brother *Simon*, *ver.* 41. and tells him that he had found the Messias; whereupon *Simon* presently went with his Brother *Andrew* to the Place where Christ was, and became his Disciple, as well as *Andrew*.

Wherefore I begin the *Festivals of the Saints* with St. *Andrew*'s Day. And herein I follow the Example of our Church, which places St. *Andrew*'s Festival at the Head of all the rest, and assigns us the Reason of this Preference in the *Collect* for the Day; namely, *That Almighty God did give such Grace unto this St.* Andrew, *that he readily obey'd the Calling of Jesus Christ, and follow'd him without Delay*, that is, he was the first that follow'd Christ without any Delay or Dispute. This shews that he had a great and extraordinary Faith, and that he undervalu'd the World, and his own private and secular Interest, and was stirr'd up by a Divine Spirit to embrace the Doctrine of Jesus, and to adhere to his Discipline. This is all that is recorded of him, and it is enough; he was the first Disciple and Follower of our Saviour, and this makes him famous and renowned to all Ages: Most deservedly therefore is he placed before the other Apostles.

Next to him is St. *Peter*, for he was St. *Andrew*'s Brother and Fellow-fisherman, and was brought by him to Christ. But if we consult St. *Matthew*'s History, we shall find that they both return'd to their Calling again, till about a Year afterward when Christ call'd them entirely to follow him. And then he chose them to be *Apostles*; and we may observe that *Peter* was the first that was call'd to that Office. For tho' St. *Andrew* was before St. *Peter* in the *Discipleship* (as we said before) yet St. *Peter* was the first that was call'd to the *Apostleship*, as is clear from *Mat.* 4. 18. compar'd with *Joh.* 1. 35, *&c.* And accordingly we can't but take Notice that he is always plac'd by the Evangelists in the Front of the Catalogue of Apostles.

The *change of his Name*, or the Addition of a new Name to that of *Simon* is remarkable, and therefore I will give a brief Account of that. We are to know then that this was no unusual Thing; for we find in the Writings of the *Old Testament* that *New Names* were given to eminent Persons. With the change of their Conditions their Names were changed; thus *Abram* was call'd *Abraham*; *Sarai*, *Sarah*; *Jacob*, *Israel*. *Joshua*'s Name before was *Oshea*, but it was changed by *Moses*, Numb. 13. 16. the first Letter of the *Tetragammaton* being prefix'd to it: For so in some of the foregoing Instances, as *Abraham* and *Sarah*, we find that when God honours Persons in a signal manner, he adds Letters of his own Name to theirs. Upon *Gideon*'s being made Judge and Captain of *Israel*, his Name was chang'd into *Jerubbaal*, Judg. 6. 32.; *Solomon* was honour'd with the Name of *Jedidiah*, 2 Sam. 12. 25. with a Prospect of the Favour and Dignity he should receive from God.

And this Addition of another Name was frequent among other Nations, as in the Example of *Joseph*, who had a new Name given him by King *Pharaoh*, for

for he call'd him *Zaphnath-Paaneah*, Gen. 41. 45. And it is seen in the *Ptolomees* of *Egypt* afterwards, that when Princes came to the Throne and actual Possession of the Crown, they took up New Names. And as among the *Egyptians*, so among the *Chaldeans* this Usage prevail'd; for we read that the King of *Babylon* gave new Names to *Daniel* and his Three Companions after they were brought to Court, *Dan.* 1. 7. This also was the Custom of the *Persians*; for *Hadassah* had the Name of *Esther* given her by King *Ahasuerus*, after he married her, and advanced her to the Royal Dignity, *Esth.* 2. 7. So likewise in the *Cæsar's* of *Rome* it may be observ'd that a new Name was taken up with the Regal Power. And it is a Custom that prevails still in some Eastern Countries, that not only those who are advanc'd to a Crown, but others who are in a lower Degree preferr'd and dignify'd, and taken into a new sort of Employment, are honour'd with a Name that they had not before.

This gives us an Account of the New Name bestow'd by our Saviour on this Apostle, whom we are now speaking of, and on some others, as *James* and *John*; and this lets us see why the Names of some other Apostles, as *Barnabas* and *Paul*, were changed afterwards. This was according to the Usage that then obtain'd; namely, that Persons of Eminency, upon a considerable Change of their States and Conditions, chang'd their Names, and were adorn'd with new ones, and those most commonly of some peculiar Signification. Thus here our Apostle is dignified with the Denomination of *Peter*, which signifies a *Stone* or *Rock*, and it answers to the Chaldee or Syriac Name of *Cephas*; for *Cepha* in that Language is a *Stone* or *Rock*; and our Saviour gives the Reason why he fix'd this Name on this Apostle, *Mat.* 16. 18. *I say unto thee, thou art* Peter, *and on this Rock I will build my Church, and the Gates of Hell shall not prevail against it.* As much as to say, Thou art fitly call'd *Peter* (which signifies a *Rock* or *Stone*) and hast made good that Name by the Strength, Firmness, and Steadiness of thy Faith, evidenc'd in the open *Confession* of me, on which I will erect my Church, and it shall stand like an unshaken Rock in all Ages of the World; and all the Power and Policy of Satan and his Instruments shall never be able to undermine it. This then is an Honourable Name certainly; tho' they, who pretend to be St. *Peter's* Successors seem to be ashamed of it: For *Bocca di Porco* changed his Christian Name *Peter* when he was made *Pope*, and took on him that of *Sergius the Second*; and all that have succeeded him, have done so since; and if you consult the Catalogue of Popes, you will not find that there is any one of them that retains his *Christian Name*; nor is there one *Peter* among them all.

Having said this on Occasion of considering our Apostle's *Name*, the brief Character of him is comprised in these few Words, This is he that had *the Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven given to Him* by Christ, *so that whatsoever he should bind on Earth, should be bound in Heaven, and whatsoever he should loose on Earth, should be loosed in Heaven*, Mat. 16. 19. that is, He was to be an Eminent *Pastor* in Christ's Church, and a *Steward* of his House; for the Power of the *Keys* referrs to that *Office* particularly; he was by Vertue of his Ministerial Authority (which likewise is common to all the Evangelical Pastors, as is clear from *John* 20. 23.) to let in Persons, or shut them out of the Christian Church, as he saw Occasion; and his Sentence concerning the pardoning or not pardoning of the Guilty, according to the Rules and Directions of the Gospel, should be ratified and confirm'd by God. This is he that was always forward and resolute in his Master's Cause: He solely defended it against all Opposers, and in the most difficult Seasons shew'd his most ardent Love and Zeal for his Lord; and when he saw him at last beset by his implacable Foes with a Design to seize him and bereave him of his Life, he manfully drew his Sword, and did Execution with it; and would have done more if Christ had not rebated the Edge of his Zeal. And when afterwards, thro' humane Weakness and Cowardice, he deserted the Cause of Christ, he shew'd how sincere a Penitent he was, for at one Glance of his Master he melted into Tears, and went out and wept bitterly: No sooner was this *Rock smitten* but Waters gushed out, and that most profusely. After his Master's Death, he undauntedly asserted the same Cause, and was the *first* that preach'd the Gospel to the *Gentiles*; and maintain'd Converse with them for the winning them over to the Christian Faith. And afterwards

wards he was as Eminent for his preaching to the *Jews* and bringing them to the Acknowledgment of Christ and his Gospel. This was he, who by his pathetick and piercing Sermon converted 3000 of them. This was He, who was as famed for his Miracles as his Preaching, and whose very *Shadow* heal'd. This was He, who as *Eusebius* and others relate, disputed and grappled with *Simon* the Magician, who was honour'd as a God at *Rome*; but he wonderfully confounded him, and fetch'd him down out of the Air in the Sight of the People. In *Suetonius's Life of* Nero, This flying, vaulting Sorcerer, goes under the fabulous Name of *Icarus*. And if we may credit our *Learned Annotator*, *Michael* and the *Dragon* (mention'd in *Rev.* 12.) are St. *Peter* and *Simon Magus*. When this Eminent Saint was imprisoned by *Herod*, such was the Concern of Heaven for Him, that He was miraculously deliver'd by the Conduct of an Angel, the *Iron-Gate* opening to this *Claviger* of it's own Accord: But at last, after a Life of great Actions and as great Sufferings, he was for the sake of Christ and His Cause Crucified at *Rome* with his Head downwards, he being (as he said) unworthy to suffer as his Master. This is the worthy Saint, Apostle, and Martyr, whom our Church invites us to remember, and hath appointed a Festival for that Purpose.

On another solemn Day St. *John* is remembred, *that* Glorious Light and Ornament of Christianity, one of the Sons of *Zebedee*, and Brother to that *James* whom I shall next mention. He was beloved by his Master above all the other Apostles, and was his Intimate and Familiar, and from him derived, as from a never-failing Spring, all the Mysteries of Divinity, and thence was justly styled *the Divine*. He manfully confuted the Arch-hereticks of that Age *Ebion* and *Cerinthus*, and maintain'd the Godhead of Christ, maugre all their Sophistical Cavils. He only of all the Apostles was present at Christ's Crucifixion, and owned Him openly: And as he stood and beheld Christ's Passion when others fled, so (as a Reward of his singular Care) he escaped when others suffered Martyrdom, he only of all the Apostles being exempted from a Violent Death: Which yet his Persecutors attempted, but could not accomplish; *for* tho' they compell'd him to drink Poison, yet it prov'd not hurtful to him. And tho' he was by *Domitian's* Order cast into a Chaldron of Scalding Oil, yet he came out safe. After this Miraculous Deliverance, he was banish'd by *Domitian* into *Patmos*, an Isle in the *Lesser Asia*, and the Exile was design'd to be perpetual. But upon *Domitian's* Death he was released, and return'd to *Ephesus* under the Emperor *Nerva*, and govern'd the *Asian* Churches many Years, even till *Trajan's* time, and wrote the Gospel which bears his Name. He outlived all the Apostles, for he lived Ninety Nine Years, and died of Old Age in the 68th Year after Christ's Passion, as St. * *Jerom* informs us. After all I might add this, That this admirable Person, this youngest and oldest Apostle, this Prince of all the Apostles and Evangelists, this Disciple whom Jesus loved, and lay so *near Him*, hath the *next Place* but one to his Master in our Church's Kalendar: And why he had not the next of All, shall be suggested afterwards.

* *Catalog. Script. Eccles.*

There is a Day set apart by our Church for the remembring of the Apostle St. *James*, surnamed the *Greater*, the other Son of *Zebedee*, Brother to *John*, and bred up to Fishing with him, and call'd from that Trade to be Christ's Disciple. For as *Peter* and *Andrew* (*Brethren*) were Christ's first Disciples, so the next were *James* and *John*, who were *Brethren* likewise. There is not so much recorded by the Evangelical Writers concerning this Apostle *James*, as there is concerning the other, but there is enough to let us know that he was a Man of great Worth. His Character, as he was an Apostle, proves him to be such; and more particularly this is evinc'd from his being one of the three *Familiars* and *Confidents* which our Saviour was pleased to make choice of. He, as well as St. *Peter* and St. *John*, is mention'd with this signal Mark by the Evangelists. And more-especially our Saviour shew'd what a peculiar Kindness he had for him, when he took him with him into the Mount to behold his *Transfiguration*, Mat. 17. 2. Some have thought that this is that Rabbi *Jacob*, the Son of *Zebedee*, who is mention'd with Honour in the * Writings of the *Jews*, and was famous among them, and was exceedingly beloved and reverenc'd by them. This was he who was put to Death by *Herod*, Acts 12. 2. and had the Honour to be the first Martyr of all the *Apostles*.

* Bereshith Rabbah.

There

There is another *James*, or *Jacob*, whom our Church commemorates: For there were two Apostles of this Name; one before-mention'd, and this I'm now to speak of, who is commonly styled *James the Less*, and *James the Just*, and is reckon'd the first Bishop of *Jerusalem*. Yet many * Ancient and † Modern Writers hold, That *James*, who was Bishop of *Jerusalem*, was not one of the Twelve Apostles, but another *James*. There were Three *James*'s according to the *Greek Church*, *viz.* the two Apostles of that Name, and a third who was Bishop of *Jerusalem*; and they keep three distinct Days in Remembrance of them. But the *Western Church*, and several of the *Fathers*, together with great Numbers of late Writers, maintain, That *James*, who was Bishop of *Jerusalem*, was one of the Apostles, and there is very good Ground for it. For he is expressly call'd an *Apostle* in *Gal.* 1. 19. *Other of the Apostles saw I none, save* James *the Lord's Brother*. Where we may observe, that the Title of *Apostle* is not taken in a large Sense, as some pretend, but in a strict and proper one; because it is applied to *other Apostles* as well as St. *James*. And besides, in the Inscription of his *Epistle*, according to the best *Greek* Copies, he is called, *The Apostle* James. It is not to be doubted then, but that he was one of the Twelve Apostles, whatever Suggestions have been to the contrary. This *James* is distinguished from the other, by his being said to be the *Son of* Alpheus; whereas the other was the *Son of* Zebedee. And he is called the *Lord's Brother*, not because he was the Son of *Joseph*, who was afterwards Husband to the Virgin *Mary*; for the Son of *Alpheus* and the Son of *Joseph* are two distinct Persons: Nor is he call'd the *Lord's Brother* because he was the Son of the Virgin *Mary*, whom she had by *Joseph* after the Birth of Christ, as *Tertullian* and *Helvidius* imagin'd: But he had that Title, because he was *nearly related* to our Saviour; *Brethren* and *Kindred* being Terms convertible among the *Hebrews*: And I have in a Particular *Exercitation*, (to which I remit the Reader) shew'd the peculiar Relation which *James* had to our Saviour by the Virgin *Mary*'s Side.

* Eusebius, Hegesippus *mentioned by* Eusebius, Epiphanius, *the Author of the* Apostolical Constitutions, Gregory Nyssene, *St.* Jerome.

† Grotius, Hammond, Blondel, Salmasius.

This excellent Person was Resident at *Jerusalem*, and whilst the rest of the Apostles went and propagated the Gospel in other Parts of the World, he stay'd at home, and presided over the Church of *Jerusalem*, and therefore is by several of the Fathers call'd *Bishop* of that Place. There, it is probable, he wrote that excellent *Epistle* which bears his Name; the Design of which is to rectify the Apprehensions which some had of some certain Passages in St. *Paul*'s Epistles about *Faith*, as if it were to be separated from *Good Works*. But he removes that gross Mistake, by shewing, the absolute Necessity of Obedience and a Holy Life, and that the Truth of our Faith is to be demonstrated by these. And the rest of that Epistle is full of excellent Admonitions and Precepts, especially with relation to Sufferings and Persecution, which those he then wrote to labour'd under. He suffer'd himself in the Seventh Year of *Nero*'s Reign, being cast down from the Pinacle of the Temple, and then knock'd on the Head with a Fuller's Club, as * *Josephus* reports. And the same Author acquaints us, That this same *James* was of such *Sanctity* and *Fame* among the People, that it was thought that *Jerusalem* was destroy'd for his being put to Death. But we know that a *Greater* than *James* was there; the Effusion of whose innocent Bloud pull'd down that dreadful Ruin on the City.

* *Antiq.* lib. 20.

The Apostle *Philip* is commemorated at the same Time with this St. *James*, because they both suffer'd on the same Day, the Kalends of *May*. This *Philip* was of *Bethsaida*, the same Place that St. *Peter* and St. *Andrew* belong'd to; and it is to his everlasting Honour that he was one of the first Apostles that Christ chose, *John* 1. 43, 44. and he was not contented to be a Disciple himself without bringing another, namely, *Nathanael*, into that blessed Society, *Ver.* 45. Here I am to observe, that *Philip the Deacon* is remembred by our Church at the same time with *Philip the Apostle*; for we may take Notice, that the Gospel for that Day mentions *Philip* the *Apostle*, but the *Lesson* (out of *Acts* the 8th) is concerning *Philip* the *Deacon*. And indeed, in ancient Martyrologies it was usual to commemorate diverse of the same Name on one Day. Here we see the two

Philips are joyned with *Jacob* or *James*: And so this Festival solemnizes the Memory of a worthy Triumvirate of Saints.

On another Set Day, a Pair of Apostles, *Simon* and *Jude*, are call'd to mind and honour'd with a Festival. And our Church thought fit to *joyn these together in one Festival*, because they were *Brethren*. The former of these is distinguish'd from the other *Simon* by the Sirname of *Cananite*, *Mat.* 10. 4. which *Hebrew* Name answers to that which he hath from the *Greek*; namely, *Zelotes*, *Luke* 6. 15. for Καναίνης & Ζηλωτὴς are the same, as *Tabitha* and *Dorcas*, *Cephas* and *Peter*; they are only express'd in different Languages. He was the Brother of *James the Less*, who was the Brother of our Lord, and accordingly this *Simon* is call'd Christ's *Brother*, *Mark* 6. 3. St. *Jude* likewise had the same Relation to Him, as being His Cousin-German; for (as I observ'd before) near Kindred are call'd *Brethren* by the *Jews*, and by others too, as I have noted in another Place. This Apostle had four Names, not only that of *Jude* or *Judas*, (the same Name that the *Traitor* had; for the Names of the best and worst Men are sometimes the same; witness *Julian* the Apostate, and *Julian* a Saint and Martyr, whose Panegyrick was pronounced by *Chrysostom*, *Homil.* 47.) So *Lucian* was the Name of a Holy Martyr and of the great Scoffer) but he was call'd *Thaddeus* and *Lebbeus*, *Mat.* 10. 3. and *Barsabas*, *Acts* 15. 22. To the great Honour of this Apostle it must be remembred, that he was the Author of that *Epistle* which goes under his Name, and is inserted into the Canon of the *New Testament*. But though the inspired Records are very sparing in the Relation they make of this and the other Apostle before-mention'd, yet *Ecclesiastical History* will afford us several Particulars of their Holy Lives and indefatigable Zeal.

And thus the Apostle St. *Bartholomew*, though he seems to be *only Named* in the Gospels, and that is all, yet we shall find him represented in the Ecclesiastick History, as a faithfull Preacher and Publisher of the Gospel, and a patient Sufferer for it: For, after he had travelled to the remotest *Indies*, and left the Treasury of the Christian Faith amongst them, far more Rich and Precious than any to be found there, he went and proclaim'd the Tidings of Salvation to the stubborn *Armenians*, who rewarded his Good Will and Charity towards them, first with stoning him, and then with flaying him alive. And in many other Particulars Church-writers have exspatiated on the Life and Sufferings of this Holy Martyr. But is it so, that the Evangelical History is wholly silent concerning this Saint? As of *Methuselah* (that Long-liver before the Floud) 'tis only said, he lived so many Years, and died, so is there nothing extant concerning this Apostle in the Records of the Gospel, but that there was such a Person, and that he was of the Number of the Twelve Apostles? Is there not some Probability that St. *Bartholomew* is disguiz'd under some other Name in the Gospel-History, and particularly that of *Nathanael*, called *Nathanael of Cana in Galilee*? *John* 21. 2.

Yes, it seems probable, that *Bartholomew* and *Nathanael* are the same Person under different Names; for, first, several of the Apostles had two or more Names, and were commonly known by them, as *Peter* and *Jude* already named, and *Thomas*, *Matthew*, and *Mark*, whom I shall mention afterwards; and therefore, 'tis no Wonder, that this Apostle St. *Bartholomew*, that is, the *Son of Ptolomee*, is represented under a double Title. Again, it is probable and very agreeable to the Uniformity of the History, that *something* should be recorded of Him as well as of the other Apostles. Moreover, where is it more likely that any thing should be delivered concerning this Apostle, than in that part of the History which treats of the Calling of *Andrew* and *Peter*, and others, to be Apostles, as in *John* 1. 39, *&c.* where we read, That as *Andrew* brought *Simon*, so *Philip* brought *Nathanael* to Christ? Which sounds as if this *Nathanael* was one of Christ's *Apostles*, and that his Coming here to Christ as *such* is recorded by St. *John*. And what more worthy and excellent Character (and indeed more befitting an *Apostolical* Spirit) could he have appear'd in, than in that which our Saviour represents him in to us, *Ver.* 47? *Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no Guile.* Behold a true Believer, and know him by his Simplicity and Sincerity. And what he said afterwards to our Saviour, argues him to have been a divinely-inspired Apostle; *Thou art*, saith he, *the Son of God! Thou art the King of Israel!* ver. 49.

But

But since it is not certain that St. *Bartholomew* is meant by *Nathanael*, may I not ask this Question, Whether it were not better to celebrate only the Memories of those Apostles, of whose Holy Gifts and Graces the infallible Writings have given us sufficient Testimony? But as for those whose Lives are not known to us by any certain Records of Holy Scripture, and consequently whose Acts cannot be presented to be *prais'd* and *imitated* (which is the main Design of these Festivals, as we shall hear anon), I humbly conceive they are not so fitly commemorated by us on solemn Days; neither were they commemorated of Old by the primitive Church. If we look to the Practice of the Ancient Church, (from which Ours seems to take its Constitutions) I challenge any Man of Good Letters to shew me, that those obscure Apostles had any Days set apart to their Memories.

There is but little said of St. *Thomas*, who is sirnamed *Didymus*. Or rather, *Thomas* and *Didymus* are the same, the latter being the *Greek* Rendring of the former * *Hebrew* Name. And (to offer an useful Criticism on this Subject) I am persuaded that both these Names represent the known Failing of this Apostle, *viz.* His *Incredulity* and *Hesitancy*. He was truly Δίδυμος, *Geminus, Dubius*, being uncertain and wavering concerning Christ's Resurrection. But though there is but little said of this *Double*, this *Doubting Saint*, yet that which is recorded of him, runs very high in his Praise; namely, That after a short Incredulity he arrived to an absolute Assurance of the Sovereignty and Divinity of Christ, calling him *His Lord and his God*. But what is wanting in the *Evangelical History* may be supplied from that of the Church-writers, who give an Account of St. *Thomas* his Holy Adventures among the *Indians*, more authentick than those of *Xaverius*, who styles himself the *Apostle of the Indies*.

* *From* Taam, geminus fuit.

It is delightful to rehearse on the Feast of St. *Matthew*, sirnam'd *Levi*, how strangely and unexpectedly he was taken into the Apostleship. For he was a *Publican*, *i. e.* A Gatherer of the publick Taxes; (for though, 'tis true, that the *Publicans* were generally *Romans*, yet this was not always; *Matthew* and *Zaccheus* were *Jews*, as their Names, which are *Hebrew*, shew) and it was sufficiently infamous to be of this Imployment and Office. There was once a Statue erected * to an *Honest Publican*; but generally those of this Profession were scandalous for their Griping and Extorting; and *Publicans* are rank'd among *Thieves* and *Cut-throats* in the Jewish † *Talmud*. But our good *Matthew* quitted his gainful but infamous Office, and presently gave Ear to our Saviour's Call, and follow'd him. And that he might give some open Testimony of his Conversion, he willingly offer'd to make Restitution of any Goods that were ill got by him. Of a Publican he became a Preacher, and an Apostle, and an Evangelist; and he was the First Inspired Writer of the *New Testament*.

* *Bono quondam Telonario.* Sueton. *in* Vespasiano.

† *Nedarim.* c. 3.

There are *other Apostles*, yet un-mentioned; for though I have nam'd those that were chosen by Christ Himself when He was here on Earth, to be His Embassadors to the World, and to preach the Gospel to it, and to plant and govern Churches throughout the Universe; yet we are to know, that *after* Christ's Ascension, these *Holy Men* met together, and made choice of *Matthias* to supply the Room of the Apostle *Judas* (as we read in the *Acts of the Apostles*) but nothing more is said of him, and 'tis but lately that he was put into the Kalendar of our Church-Saints. Soon after, *Barnabas* and *Paul* were added to this Number, and by the immediate *Direction* of the Holy Ghost were made Extraordinary and Supernumerary Apostles, *Acts* 13. Of the *former* of these, it is said, that he accompanied St. *Paul* in his Travels and in the Ministry of the Gospel; but greater and more glorious Things are spoken of this latter.

Who then can sufficiently relate the Vertues and Excellencies of this Apostle St. *Paul*? Who, though *his Bodily Presence was weak*, (2 *Cor.* 10, 10.) he being a Person of an exceeding low Stature, as * St. *Chrysostom* and † *Nicephorus* describe him, and as some have thought is intimated by his Name *Paulus*, which is as much as *Parvus*; though, I say, he was thus (in another Sense than he said it of himself) *the least of the Apostles*, yet he was a very *Great* and *Eminent Person* both before and after his Conversion, If we look to his first Education, he was a strict *Pharisee*, a very Zealous Bigot for the Law, and being (as he saith himself)

* Tom. 6. Orat. 13.

† Lib. 2. cap. 27.

himself) *exceedingly mad against the Christians, he persecuted them even unto strange Cities.* But behold the strange and wonderful Conversion of this mad Persecutor by a miraculous Illumination from Heaven, even when he was on his Journey to *Damascus*, and in the Height of his Fury. Then it was, that he was dismounted by an Almighty Arm, and forced to submit to that JESUS whom he had persecuted. Thereupon he was made the Doctor and Apostle of the Gentiles, and was solemnly authoriz'd by a Vision to *Ananias*, and after that he was actually warranted by the Holy Ghost, and by Imposition of Hands. And now is *Saul* among the *Prophets*; the Persecutor it turn'd Preacher; the Zealous Informer, the fiery Apparitor, the impetuous and violent Opposer of Christianity is made an Apostle. This miraculous Change our Church takes Notice of; for whereas *other Saints Martyrdoms* only are used to be celebrated, the *Conversion* of this Saint is recommended to us, both for the Rareness of the Example, and for the unspeakable Joy which accrued to the Church by it.

Now our *Paul* is known hence-forward by no other Character than that of a painful Dispenser of the Gospel; a diligent Preacher in Season and out of Season; a zealous Minister of Jesus, and an intire Lover of Souls; the laborious Traveller that went from Place to Place planting and propagating the Gospel, a Particular of whose Journeys we have in the *Acts of the Apostles.* And * some Writers make him the Saint of this Island; for they tell us, that he (together with *Simon Zelotes*) preach'd the Gospel first in *Britain.* This is certain, that he was indefatigable in his Endeavours for promoting the Christian Faith, and vindicating the Truth of it against all its Adversaries. We find this Great Disputant often encountring the *Jews*, and confuting them out of the *Old Testament.* At other Times, we see him ingag'd with the *Philosophers*, whether *Stoicks* or *Epicureans.* And when these Opponents had not *Courage* and *Skill* enough to maintain a *Dispute* with our Apostle, they had *Malice* enough to *persecute* him. They posted him away to *Areopagus*, with a Design of an *Inquisition*, that being the Place of Judicature at *Athens.* There are many other Things very Memorable in the *Acts of the Apostles* concerning this Saint, *to* which I referr the Reader; for that History is most of it taken up with the Account of this Apostle's Life after his Conversion. But behold him generously despising the World, *ready to be offerr'd*, ambitious to pour forth his Blood as a Sacrifice to God, who call'd him to the Acknowledgment of the Gospel. And now he fell a Glorious Martyr in the Year of Christ 67, being beheaded at *Rome* in the 14th (which was the last) Year of *Nero's* Reign. I might add this (which St. *Jerom* relates in his *Catalogue* of *Ecclesiastical Writers*) that our Apostle and St. *Peter* suffer'd on the *same Day and Year.* Thus this blessed Pair of Apostles mingled their Bloods there together, and were Companions as well in Death as in the Cause of Christ. And therefore St. *Paul* is commemorated on the *Twenty Ninth* of *June*, when St. *Peter's* Memory is celebrated, as well as he is call'd to mind by our Church on the *Twenty Fifth* of *January*, which particularly takes Notice of his Conversion.

* Theodoret. *de Curand Grac. affect.* & Sophronius.

Thus we have the full Number of the Apostles, Fourteen in all, (not reckoning here the *Son of Perdition*, who is not to be number'd among the true Apostles) Eleven whereof were immediately chosen by Christ, and the Three others were chosen into the Sacred Society by those Apostles that were constituted by Christ Himself. Of these Apostles Two were also *Evangelists*, namely, St. *Matthew* and St. *John*, and therefore I have spoken of them already.

But besides these, there are two other *Evangelists*, *Mark* and *Luke*, whom likewise our Church remembers on Set Days. St. *Mark* (who also is called *John*, *Acts* 12. 25.—13. 5.) is well known by the excellent *Gospel* which he writ; and tho' he never was an Eye-Witness of Christ's Actions, yet, being the Disciple of St. *Peter*, he had an Opportunity to be well acquainted with the Evangelical History, which he hath faithfully committed unto Writing, and thereby hath purchased no mean Honour in the Church of God.

St. *Luke* is thought not unworthy of a solemn Remembrance: He was a Physician of *Antioch*, and by the Holy Ghost is signally styled the *beloved Physician*, *Col.* 4. 14. *Worshipping* of God, and *Healing* the Sick are express'd by the * same Word in the Greek. He was as eminent for his *Religion* as his *Medicks.*

* Θεραπεύειν.

And

And, by the bye, we may observe, That St. *Luke* uses the Style of his *Art*; as in *Luke* 9. 14. where the * Term that is used by Physicians in their Recipes to signify an *equal Distribution*, is so used by him. And in his Book of *the Acts of the Apostles*, I may say, *non discessit ab Arte suâ*, as the Orator saith in the like case: He uses a † *Medick* Word to express the Vehement and sharp Distemper of *Paul* and *Barnabas*. That which redounds to his perpetual Honour is, that he was St. *Paul*'s beloved Disciple, and his Companion in Travels and in Preaching, and that he was a worthy Penman of the Holy Ghost, which is referr'd to, when the Apostle saith of St. *Luke*, that *his Praise is in the Gospel throughout all the Churches*, 2 Cor. 8. 18.

* Ἀνά.

† παροξυσμός.

Besides the *Apostles* and *Evangelists*, our Church presents us with the Memorial of St. *Stephen*, a Deacon, a Man full of Faith, and of the Holy Ghost. When immediately after Christ's Ascension the Church was more grievously persecuted than before, the Malice and Cruelty of her Adversaries growing higher, we read that this excellent Person was set in the Front of the Battle, or rather that he led the Van in the Noble Army of Martyrs. For *this Reason* his Day of Commemoration is placed in our Calendar next to our *Saviour*'s, namely, because he was the Leader in this Holy Band, and the first Christian Martyr *after Christ's Ascension*, as St. *James* was the first *Apostle* that was martyr'd. Witnesses were suborned to testify, that this Holy Man had spoken Blasphemously against the Law and the Temple; whereupon he admirably pleaded his own Cause, and that of the Christian Religion, against all his Adversaries. And when he had done, he saw (as he was in the midst of the *Sanhedrim*, a Glorious Vision) Christ Jesus in Heaven, standing at the Right Hand of God. Hereupon he is incourag'd, and submits to the Fury of his Enemies, commending his Soul into God's Hands, and then he meekly kneeled down, and with a chearful and undaunted Spirit received that Shock of Stones, by which is raised a perpetual Monument to his Memory. And at the same Time he pray'd for his Murderers, that *God would not lay that Sin to their Charge*, Acts 7. ult. Verse.

There is *another Deacon* whom the Service of our Church takes notice of, *viz. Philip*, for *Philip* the *Apostle*, and *Philip* the *Deacon* are two different Persons. But, as I have observ'd before, they are commemorated together on the same Day. As for this latter, who is also call'd an *Evangelist*, *Acts* 21. 8. he is famed for his Preaching and doing Miracles in *Samaria*, as we are particularly inform'd in the *Acts of the Apostles*. Where likewise 'tis related how he was sent by an Angel to instruct, and then *to wash the* Ethiopian Eunuch, namely, in the Waters of Baptism; and his *Labour was not in vain* in the Lord, for he converted that great Man to the *Christian* Faith, who is said to have return'd into his own Country, and to have converted a great part of it, who ever since successively have profess'd the *Christian* Religion. Thus we see two of the *Seven Deacons* mention'd in the *New Testament* are taken notice of in our Church. But why are not the other Five, *viz. Nicanor*, *Parmenas*, *Timon*, *Prochorus*, and *Nicholas*? We may charitably believe they were all good Men and worthy Saints, for tho' the Sect of the *Nicholaitans* took their Name from one of them, yet it is asserted by very credible Authors, that he was not *himself* guilty of those Follies and Lewdnesses which are ascribed to *them*. What then is the Reason that these *other Deacons* are passed by in the Festivals of the Church? Was it not because they were more *obscure* than the rest, and the Scripture is silent as to their Actions? There can be no other Reason alledg'd. Which gives an Account of what I propounded before, that is, that those Persons only should be celebrated in the Church's solemn Devotions, whose Actions were Eminent and Exemplary, and outvied the rest of *Christian* Men, and which we know to have been such.

And now, after this Rehearsal of *Apostles*, *Evangelists*, and *Deacons*, I must (to compleat my Discourse on this Subject) look back to the *Fore-runner* of Christ, and of all these Worthies and Saints, that excellent Pattern of Mortification in himself, and therefore the fitter Preacher of Repentance to others, St. John *the Baptist*. He had his Name given him from Heaven, for this was part of the Angel's Message to *Zacharias*, *Thou shalt call his Name* John, *Luke* 1. 13. a Name that carries *Grace and Mercy* with it. It was therefore deservedly bestow'd upon him, who was bestow'd upon his Parents in their old Age, as a signal

signal Token of God's *Grace and Favour*, and who also was to Preach the Free and Unmerited Grace of God in Jesus Christ. This Harbinger of the *Messias* was foretold many Years before he arrived, *Mal.* 4. 5. *I will send you* Elijah *the Prophet*, i. e. as our Saviour himself expounds it, *John the Baptist*, who *was come, and had restored all Things*, Mat. 17. 11. that is, he preach'd Repentance, and reformed the *Jewish* People, and prepared them for receiving the Gospel. This great Restorer of Religion is said to be *Elias*, because he did Things so like that Zealous Prophet, and because (as the Angel fore-told, *Luke* 1. 17.) he *went before Christ in the Spirit and Power of* Elias, *to turn the Hearts of the Fathers to the Children, and the Disobedient to the Wisdom of the Just, to make ready a People prepared for the Lord.* This he signally performed, not only by his Preaching and Baptizing, and by bearing Testimony concerning Christ, but by his strict and severe Way of Living, and chiefly by this. For, tho' he did no Miracles, *Joh.* 10. 41. yet he was admired without them, and even taken for the *Messias*, *John* 1. 19. The Memory of *This Saint* is recommended to us by our Church in a Way *different* from all the rest, for whereas the Church generally mentions the *Lives*, and more-especially the *Deaths* of other Saints, she doth in an unusual manner take notice of the *wonderful Birth* of *This*; and there is a particular and peculiar Reason for it, because (as the Evangelist acquaints us) *he was fill'd with the Holy Ghost from his Mother's Womb.* But it is not to be denied that his *Life and Behaviour* also are call'd to mind in the Church's Service for that Day, and how he was imprison'd by *Herod*, because he had rebuked that great Man for his Incest, and how likewise to satisfie a lewd Woman's Fancy he was beheaded by him. This Person (I find) was so *eminent* for his Sanctity, that even * *Josephus the Jew*, in a just Sense of his Worth, hath left us a deserved Encomium of him. To conclude the Remembrance of this Saint, it is to be said to his peculiar Honour, that he was the *first Christian Martyr*, even in our Saviour's Time, (whereas *Stephen* and *James* were the first after his Ascension.)

* Antiq. l. 18. c. 16.

Unless you will reckon the *Innocent Babes* of *Bethlehem* (whose Memory likewise our Church hath honour'd with a Festival) as the *First Fruits of the Martyrs*, as St. *Augustine* calls them. And they were very *Plentiful First-Fruits*, if you will credit the *Greek Calendar*, and the *Liturgy* of the *Abyssines*, who tell us, that no less than Fourteen Thousand Infants and little Children were slaughter'd by *Herod* at *Bethlehem* and the adjacent Towns. We need not start the Poet's Question,

Crimine quo Parvi cædem potuêre mereri?

The Politick Cruelty of *Herod* could make them Criminals. But the overruling Providence of God did *out of the Mouths*, the gaping Mouths of *those Babes and Sucklings* Wounds, *ordain Strength*, and advance the Divine Glory.

And now I had thought I had clear'd the *Calendar*; but behold! there is still remaining a *Catholick Festival*, which comprehends *All the Saints* and Servants of the most High, that have departed this Life in his Faith and Fear. This Festival is a *General Muster of the whole Army of Martyrs*, of the glorious Company and goodly Fellowship of the *Prophets*, *Apostles*, and all Holy Men and Women who in the *several Ages* of the World have been of an exemplary Conversation, and have brought Religion into Credit thereby, and, whether by *Life* or *Death*, have asserted the Cause of Christ, and advanced the Honour of the Gospel and Christianity, and whose constant Care was, that their Lights should so shine before Men, that others seeing their good Works, might glorify their Father which is in Heaven. There are *some Christians*, who (as our Saviour hath express'd this matter) are like a *Candle in a Candlestick*: These give Light to one House perhaps, and a Family is better'd by them. But there are *others*, who are like *Lights set upon a Hill* (as Christ speaks in the same Place): These are they that give Light to a whole City, and influence by their more powerful Beams upon whole Provinces and Countries. These have warm'd and chear'd the World, and fill'd the Breasts of many with an Holy Ardour and Zeal for Christ, and at last have burnt out in the hottest Flames for the Cause of Jesus. How many Worthies have sealed the Truth with their Blood, and that none of the meanest? As often as we think of these brave Champions and Heroes, let us praise God, who inspired them with extraordinary Courage.

We

We see then our Duty before us, we are oblig'd to commemorate, in a solemn manner, Christ's Birth and Passion, and his other great and celebrated Actions and Undertakings for us, with the great Blessings which attend and follow them, and likewise Christ's Apostles, and all the Righteous Servants of God, who either by their Lives or Deaths advanc'd his Cause, and brought Glory to his Holy Name. And tho' we ought *Every Day* thankfully to remember these Inestimable Benefits, yet the appointing of *Special Times* is thought more to conduce to the right Performance of our Duty on this Occasion, that those Benefits may be the more deeply impress'd in our Minds and Memories.

Secondly then I am to shew the *Accountableness* of this Practice, and that First from the Example of the Primitive Churches. Secondly, From the Nature of the Thing it self: First, It is certain, that the Observation of such Times and Feasts is derived to us from the ancient Usages of the Church. And here I will speak first of the solemnizing of our Saviour's *Nativity*, and the other like Festivals which relate to him, and then concerning the Memorial of the Apostles and other Saints. A Day was kept of old in Commemoration of *Christ's Nativity*. *Theophilus* Bishop of *Casarea* in *Palestine*, who lived about the Times of *Commodus* and *Severus*, who were Emperors within less than 200 Years after Christ, makes mention of this Solemnity. And this is the first Time that we have notice of it from the Ancients. Afterwards, about the middle of the Third Century, mention is made of the celebrating this Day by the *Christians*, and that by a notable Token, for, when great Numbers of them were met together on this Day at *Nicomedia*, their Enemies set the House or Temple on Fire where they were assembled, and so they, together with the Fabrick, were consum'd in the Flames, as * *Nicephorus* relates, and tells us it was under the Tyrannical Reign of that Persecuting Emperor *Maximinus*. That the Day of Christ's Nativity was kept by the Antients, appears further from what *Athanasius* saith of the *Asiatick* and *Greek* Churches, and those of *Syria*, † *It is not lawful to fast on the Day of* Epiphany, *when the Lord was born in the Flesh*. And I have taken notice before, that *Epiphany* was the Term they used to express *Christ's Birth*.

* Lib. 7. c. 6.

† De Hæres. lib. 3.

Towards the latter end of the Fourth Century, *Basil* the Great hath an *Oration* or *Homily* || on *Christ's Nativity* in which he stirs up his Hearers to observe and celebrate with Joy and Thankfulness this solemn Feast. *Gregory Nazianzen* hath a Sermon or Oration on the Feast of our Saviour's Incarnation. *Now* (saith he) *the Theophany or the Nativity is celebrated. This is our Solemnity, this we keep in a Festival Manner this Day, namely, the Advent of God to Men*, &c. So he speaks in his 38th. *Oration*, which was said on this Day by the Holy Father. And here by the Way I may observe, that *Basil* the Great, and other Fathers beside *Nazianzen*, call Christ's Nativity the *Theophany*, tho' the Words Θεοφανία and Ἐπιφάνεια are applied also by the Fathers to the Day of *Christ's Baptism*, as is very evident. Another Historical Passage for the Antiquity of this Day, is that concerning the Emperor *Theodosius*, who lay for some Months under the Censure of *Ambrose* the Bishop of *Milan*. This great Person, when the Feast of the Nativity drew near, made great Lamentation that he was shut out from the publick Assemblies. And how importunate he was to be admitted to the Communion of the Church, and to be at its Service appointed for that Occasion, we may read in the *Tripartite History*.

|| Εἰς τὴν ἁγίαν τῶν χριστουγέννων. Orat. 25.

Lastly, I will produce St. *Chrysostom*, who thus speaks in one of his Homilies, * *With us the First Feast is* Epiphany. *What then is the Occasion of this Feast? Because God was seen on Earth, and convers'd with Men, because God, the only begotten Son of God was with us*. And this Father hath a particular Homily † on this Day, namely, the 25th. of *December*, which Time he saith was known to them about Ten Years before, and discover'd by the *Western* Church, but they observ'd Christ's Birth-Day before at another Time, as I have remark'd already. We see then what is the Tenor of *Antiquity* concerning this Festival. From the Writers of the Church we find, that ever since the latter end of the Second Century, this Feast obtain'd in some of the *Eastern* Churches, and is spoken of often, and commended by the Fathers; and that ever since the Fourth and Fifth Centuries it hath been observ'd on *December* 25th. both by the *Latin* and *Greek* Churches.

* Hom. 88. Tom. 5.

† Εἰς τὴν γενέθλιον ἡμέραν τοῦ Σωτῆρος ἡμῶν. Hom. 72. Tom. 5.

Then

Then as to the other Feasts that relate to our Saviour, they were most of them kept by the Ancients. *Easter*, or the observing the Time of *Christ's Resurrection* was an early Festival in the Church, and is mention'd by * *Tertullian* and † *Origen*, who flourish'd at the end of the Second Century, and the beginning of the Third, and by ‖ *Cyprian*, who lived about the middle of this latter. *Whitsunday*, or *Pentecost*, is mention'd by *Ignatius* in the middle of the Second Century, and by *Justin Martyr* towards the middle of it. That it was observ'd in the Church, is witness'd by * *Tertullian* and † *Origen*. St. *Augustine* makes mention of it, as of an Apostolical Institution. Yea ‖ *Epiphanius* was of Opinion, that those Words concerning St. *Paul*, Acts 20. 16. *he hasted to be at Jerusalem the Day of* Pentecost, are meant of his keeping the *Christian Pentecost*, *i. e.* the Time of the Descent of the Holy Ghost. St. *Chrysostom* hath particular Sermons or Homilies on Christ's *Passion*, *Resurrection*, *Ascension*, and the *Descent of the Holy Ghost*, and he takes notice of these as the Subject of particular Festival Days. St. * *Austine* mentions the Anniversary Celebration of all these, and saith, there was the Tradition of the Church for the observing of them.

* De jejunio.
† Contra Cels. l. 8.
‖ Epist. 53.
* *De Coronâ Militum & de Baptismo, & de Idololatriâ.*
† Contra Cels. lib. 8.
‖ Heres. 75.
* Ep. 118.

But I can't say so much for the Antiquity of the other Days that have reference to some Things relating to Christ, *as his Presentation in the Temple*, and *his Circumcision*. Yea, we read, that the Christians heretofore used to *fast* on this latter Day, it being the *Calends of* January, in opposition to the Custom of the *Pagans*, who celebrated this Day in Memory of *Janus*, *with* great Feasting, and sending of New-Year's Gifts.

And, as for the *Saint's Days*, it appears, that some of them were kept by the ancient Churches, but very sparingly. And indeed it could not be expected, that there should be any Thing of that Nature, seeing there was *no* Primitive Practice in Scripture for it. Tho' *John Baptist*, and *Stephen*, and *James* were Martyrs, yet their Days were not observ'd; the Apostles and Apostolick Men did not enjoin the celebrating of their Memories. Nor did they *enjoin* the *Days* before-mention'd, which relate to our Saviour's Glorious Transactions; which proves, that they (as well as the others) are *not of Divine Institution*. The Feast of *All-Saints* bears not so ancient a Date as some others, it being instituted by Pope *Boniface* in the Seventh Century, he changing the *Pantheon* at *Rome* into a *Temple* to the *Virgin Mary* and *All Martyrs*. And some others are of a later Date, and seem to have been of *Popish* Extraction. But that there were of *Old Commemorations of Martyrs*, is attested by † *Tertullian*, and by other Fathers, as *Origen*, *Cyprian*, the *Gregories*, and St. *Augustine*. Especially in the *African* Churches these Anniversary Days were kept; and thence the *Cœmeteries* or Burying-Places of the *Christians* (which were great capacious Vaults, and would hold great Numbers of Persons) were call'd *Martyrum Memoriæ*, because they put them in Mind of the Faith and Constancy of the *Martyrs* buried there, whose *Memory* they annually celebrated. Particular Days were solemniz'd in the Fourth Century in Remembrance of St. *Peter*, St. *Paul*, and the other Apostles, and *John Baptist*, for St. *Chrysostome* hath *Homilies* and *Orations* on these particular Occasions. And that Festival Days were in use in the ancient Churches, may be clear'd from *This* Remarkable Passage in Ecclesiastical History, that *Aerius* was censured by the Church for holding These Feasts Unlawful. To conclude this Head, I have shew'd what was the Practice of the Ancients, as to the keeping of Holy-Days, and it is evident that the *Greatest Antiquity* is to be pleaded for the Observation of the Feasts of *Christ's Nativity*, *Resurrection* and *Ascension*, and of the *Descent* of the *Holy Ghost*.

† *Oblationes pro defunctis & pro Natalitiis annuâ die facimus.* De Coron. Mil. c. 3.

Again, The *Reasonableness* of this Practice appears from the Nature of the Thing it self. First, Our Saviour's Undertakings for us, his *Birth*, his *Passion*, his *Resurrection*, &c. are Blessings of a Transcendent Nature in themselves, and of so great Importance to us, that if we have a true Sense of them, we can't neglect the Remembrance of them. On these great Transactions depends all our Happiness both in this and in another World, and therefore one would think there could not be a greater Motive (as certainly there is not) seriously to call them to mind. Particularly as to *Christ's Birth*, if the Heavenly Quire of *Angels*, who had no such Interest as we have in the Nativity of Christ, sung aloud their Joyful Carols, and invited others to bear a part with them, we surely have greater Reason to do so, and to break forth into Triumphs and Exultations.

Exultations. The Result of Christ's Incarnation being *Peace on Earth*, and *Good Will towards Men*, we ought gratefully to resent so immense a Favour, and affectionately to recount so singular a Benefit, and to give Praise and *Glory to God on High*. Shall we reckon our Time from the *Year of our Lord* (as the Grand *Christian Epocha*) and yet suffer the solemn Commemorating of *That it self* to be out of Date? Shall we count all our Years from hence, and in the mean time suffer *it* to be superannuated? Was that the most happy *Æra* of our Welfare, and is it from that we Date our Bliss, and shall we not Hallow it by our Devotion?

It is true, our Faith and Religion hang not on curious and scrupulous Computations of Times, and therefore we are not Sollicitous and Nice about the particular and just Account of the Day of Christ's Birth. Yea, we can well suppose that we cannot exactly keep this very Day in all Countries at the very same time; for any one who hath the meanest Skill in things of this Nature, knows that the 25th of *December* cannot always exactly and punctually have the very same Place in the Return of the Solar Year, which that Day, wherein Christ was born, had at first. And likewise 'tis known that the *Gregorian* Account outstrips the *Julian* by several Days, and therefore the Day of Christ's Birth must needs be celebrated sooner or later (and consequently not at the same time) according to the Accompts observed in different Places.

Yea, let us suppose this was not the Day on which Christ was born, that it was at *another time*, which we can't assign: Supposing it rational to pronounce of Christ's first Coming in the Flesh as himself did of his Last to Judgment, *That Day and Hour knoweth no man*: Yet still it may not be unlawful to set apart some Time to commemorate so Transcendent a Blessing as that is. Tho' we miss of the Just Day, yet this hinders not the Duty of Thanksgiving. And this we are assured of, (maugre all the Cavils and Exceptions of disputing Men) that there was a Day when Christ was born, and we are assured that it was the Joyfullest Day that ever happen'd. If Christ had not been born, we might justly (and with more Reason than *Job* did) curse the Day of our *own Birth*. It had been better that we had never seen the Light, if a Saviour had not been born to us and for us. Wherefore we ought to shew some Signs of our being affected with the unspeakable Mercies convey'd to us on that Day, and it is fitting to set apart some Time or other for the celebrating of it. I am very much pleas'd with the Determination of a learned and pious Man, who was the Glory of the *Reformed* Churches in *Germany*, after the Controversy about Christ's Birth-Day, he concludes thus, * "The Scripture being "silent concerning the exact Time of Christ's Nativity, let us be silent "also, and let us worship our Saviour, who was born in the Fullness of "Time, altho' we can't tell in what particular Point of Time he was born. Reason and Religion and every thing cry aloud that *some Day* is to be set apart for the remembring of Christ's Nativity: Why not *this* as well as another? Especially there being some probable Arguments brought for it; and we cannot assign one *more* likely than this.

* *Abr. Scultet. Exercitat. Evang. l. 1. c. 46.*

Let me add this (and those Persons who are for an Agreement with the *Reformed Protestants* abroad have no Reason to slight it) that most of the Reformed Churches keep the Anniversary Day of Christ's Nativity, and that upon the 25th of *December*, according to their several Accompts, as a late Author, who hath made it his Business to search into these Things, tells us from his own Knowledge, or from Authentick Information of Persons conversant in those Parts. And particularly we are certain that they yearly solemnize the Birth of Christ on this Day at *Geneva*; and their Writers defend this Practice as *lawful*, *useful*, and *pious*, as we may see in * *Turretinus*.

* *Institut. Theol. pars 2. Loc. 13. Quæst. 10.*

Then, as to the commemorating of the *Apostles* and other *Holy Men*, (if it be done in that *Manner* as it ought, of which I am to treat particularly anon), the *Reasonableness* of it is manifest, first, In respect of God; secondly, Of the Saints themselves; thirdly, Of our own selves.

First, We may with good Reason celebrate the Memory of the Eminent Servants of God, because hereby we glorifie God in them. What can more advance the Glory of the Eternal and Supreme Being, than the admiring and magnifying, the praising and extolling of those Excellent Gifts, Vertues, and Endowments wherewith he blessed his Servants, and made them the In-

struments of so great Blessings to the World? If the giving Testimony to Divine Truth, if the propagating and establishing of the Gospel, if the Conversion of innumerable Souls be the Things whereby the Divine Majesty is glorified, then we may be encouraged to laud and exalt the Memories of *Apostles and Evangelists*, and other *Martyrs* of Jesus, by whose Doctrine the Truth hath been asserted, by whose Lives and Examples Christianity hath flourished, and by whose patient Sufferings and Death, Thousands of Converts and Proselytes have been gained to the Church. For even the *Adversaries* of these Holy Men, observing their Cheerfulness, and beholding their Patience and Constancy under all their Torments, began to think well of Christianity which inspired them with such wonderful *Power*; and they concluded that *surely* that Religion was extraordinarily Good which these Men held so fast, and they believed there was something Divine and Supernatural in it; and then they forthwith embraced that Religion which carried such Vertue with it; and at last chose those very Torments which they once inflicted on the Christians. Let us then look on the *Apostles* of Christ, and *glorifie God* for the marvellous Things wrought by them.

And that we may know how great they were, let us think how mean and contemptible the Condition of these Men was. They were a Company of illiterate Rusticks who knew nothing but their Boats and Cottages. We have read of a Dictator from the *Plough*: Behold here Dictators from the *Fishing Trade!* They went from their *Cabbins* to preside over the *World*, from their *Boats* to sit at the Stern of the Church, from the *Oar* to the Guidance of Kingdoms, and from their *Nets* to the Holy Intrigues and Mysteries of Religion. About a dozen poor despicable Men baffled the *Wisdom* and *Power* of the World; the Rabbies at *Jerusalem*, and the Philosophers at *Athens* sat at the Feet of Poor Fishermen. Worldly Ease and Pleasure were despised by them, and daily Sufferings were preferr'd before Secular Pomp and Grandure. And the *Saints that came after them* were ambitious to imitate them; and the Christian Zeal was observ'd to be hottest under the persecuting Emperors. It made them slight all the Things of this Life, trample on the Allurements, and defie the Charms of the Flesh. Hunger and Thirst were their Daily Entertainments, unless it were when the *Eucharist* was their Repast. *They* were Mortal Men as well as *we*, and yet how *Unlike* were they to Us in their courting of Hardships and Dangers! They loved to charge new Difficulties in the Face, and to look out for fresh Experiments of their Courage. Their Valour was always enhansed by the Greatness and Hazard of their Undertakings; and, if ever they seem'd to be Angry and Displeased, it was because the Danger was *not Big enough*. They were patient under Racks and Tormenting Engines, and smil'd at the Sight of Wild Beasts, Swords and Fires. The Church swom safe in the Deluge of Bloud, and shined brighter and brighter in the Flames. This was the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our Eyes: Praised be God for those Undaunted Heroes, who contended earnestly for the Faith, and resisted even unto Bloud, and were valiant for the Truth upon the Earth, and publickly own'd it when beset with such Affrighting Dangers. We owe the Gospel and our Religion to these Noble Spirits. If *They* had not *Died*, *Christianity it self* might have *Expired*. What a Blessing is This to the Church which we now recount, *viz.* no less than Religion *preserv'd* and *kept alive* by these *dying Saints*. Let *God* then receive *Glory* in their *Praises*. In celebrating their Memories we laud the Almighty.

Secondly, In respect of the *Saints themselves*, it is just that we call them to mind, and pay a due honour to them. This is promis'd as the Reward of their past Lives, *Psal.* 112. 6. *The Righteous shall be had in everlasting Remembrance.* Which *Solomon* (receiving it from his Royal Father) utters in these Words, *The Memory of the Just is blessed*, Prov. 10. 7. Whence the *Rabbins* always in their Writings, when they mention the Name of a worthy and pious Man deceas'd, do it with *Praise* and *Benediction*, generally using this Form set down by *Solomon*. Thus we fulfill the Promise made by Heaven, and thus we give the Saints their Due; for the Design of these Memorials is that they may have this their deserved Reward. And truly, if we weigh Things rightly, there is the highest Reason that we should extoll them; *We* Fearful and Effeminate

Creature,

Creatures, who can indure Nothing; we who live at Ease, and tremble at the Appearance of Hardships; *we* shameful Cowards, who shrink back and sneak at the very *mentioning* of what they suffer'd; *we* may well celebrate the Names of those who have done *so much*, when *we* our selves have done *so little*. Our Saviour pronounces those *Blessed*, who are *Persecuted for Righteousness sake*; And shall they not *be so* in *our* constant Thoughts and Judgments? Shall we not always think and speak of them with Reverence, as of the Blessed Servants of Jesus?

There is some Reason that *This* should be urged upon us, since some bold Men in our Days have disparag'd the Devout and Holy *Martyrs*, and reckon them as a Company of Tame Fools, Men that were religiously Rash and Frantick, and would needs thrust themselves into the Flames. But this is no New Thing: For 'tis as old as *Pliny*, who, writing to the Emperor *Trajan*, tells him that he had upon Examination found the Christians to be a sort of * *Obstinate and stiff-necked People*, and this was the Spring of all their Actions and Sufferings, and therefore they merited the Sufferings they underwent. So according to *Antoninus* their Readiness to undergoe Death and Martyrdom was † *out of mere Stubbornness*. || *Epictetus* attributes the Sufferings of the Christians to *Madness and Hardness acquired by Use*. This was the Sense of the Prime Philosophers; and it is greedily imbibed by our Modern Atheists and Politicians, who are wont to express their great Dislike of the *Church's Martyrs*, and conclude that all their Sufferings, and Loss of Goods and Life for Religion, were but so many Witnesses of their foolish Obstinacy. They think they might have been so wise and politick as to have kept themselves out of Harms way. And all this is founded on the Doctrine of *Self-Preservation*, which some subtle Heads have miserably perverted.

* *Non dubitandum quidlibet esset quod faterentur Pervicaciam certè & inflexibilem Obstinationem debere puniri.* Epist. 97.

† Κατὰ ψιλὴν παράταξιν lib. 11.

|| Lib. 4. cap. 7.

But the true Account of the Matter is this: Man is made up of Soul and Body; the latter of which is Corruptible, but the former is of a quite contrary Nature: It is Immortal, and capable in it self of Bliss or Misery; and hence it follows that my *Soul* is the *most Considerable* part of me, and that which I ought chiefly to look after. I preserve my self when I consult the Welfare of this in the first Place. I take this to be the supreme Law of *Self-Preservation*. Now, if I would preserve my *Soul*, which is my best Treasure, I must be careful to serve Him who gave it me; I must stand in fear of Him who can destroy both Soul and Body in Hell: I must diligently and impartially obey his Commands, for upon *That* my Future Welfare depends. I have all the Reason then to obey God rather than Man; for God's Laws are the Rules of Mens; and Christ assures me, *That he who will save his Life shall lose it*: Then therefore I keep close to the Laws of *Self-Preservation*, when I serve God entirely, tho' I *suffer* for doing so: And tho' I perish *here*, I shall survive in the *other World*, where, I shall be welcome to the Society of Saints and Martyrs, who voluntarily lost their Lives here to find them again in a joyful Eternity. This is the true State of the Matter; wherefore we are obliged to *think and speak Honourably* of the Saints, that hereby they may in some Measure be *Recompensed* for the Reproaches and Sufferings they underwent on Earth.

Thirdly, This present Duty is highly Reasonable and Accountable not only in respect of *God and of the Saints*, but in regard of *our selves*. It is our own Interest to call to mind and celebrate the Memories of the deceased Saints, and to have their Examples ever before our Eyes, because they will be of great Advantage to us. The commemorating and honouring of them are proper Means to raise up our Minds to Heaven, and cause us to desire to be join'd to their Blessed Company. The Contempt of *this World*, and a Willingness to be in *another*, are the Lessons proper to be learnt upon *Festivals*, if they be kept aright: For *then* we are instructed how the Saints despised their Lives, and took Pleasure in Sufferings, and breath'd after future Joys. They saluted Death as the beginning of Immortality, and accordingly the Days of their Martyrdom were remembered by the Church under the Name of Γενέθλια, i. e. the *Days of their Nativity*. If *Those* are styled *so* when *Infants are born into the World* with Sin and Sorrow, no sooner entring on this Stage, but by their Tears and Cries they

become Prophets of their future Miseries; with *more Reason* surely may we call *Those* the Saints *Birth-days* when they are freed from all Sin and Misery, and are born to a New Life, even that of endless Bliss and Happiness. We are taught especially at such Seasons as these to consider how *bravely* those Holy Men quitted this World; and thence we are reminded to prepare our selves for such Noble Adventures, to deny our selves, and to take up our Cross, to be ready to bear the Name of *Martyrs*, that Glorious *Name* which is given at the *Baptism of Bloud*, to be willing (in a holy Manner of Retaliation) to give up our Lives to Christ who gave his for us.

But in nothing more ought the *Influence* of the Christian Festivals to be discern'd than in *This*, That they are proper Incitements to a *Holy Life*. For we *commemorate* the Saints, that we may *follow* them: We *honour them*, that we may be *Saints our selves*. To what End is the *Rehearsal* of their exemplary Graces, but that they might be *effectual Motives* to Vertue and Godliness? *Imitating* the Lives of the Saints is the true celebrating of their Festivals. But how strangely do Men pervert this Design! Do we not see that many Persons beautify and inrich the Tombs of those whom they repute to be Saints in *Heaven*, and yet they are observ'd to disgrace, revile, and persecute the real Saints on *Earth*? They make the *Dead Saints* shine with Gold and Precious Stones, and at the same time let the *Living Ones* pine with Hunger. These Men surely are of the Race of the Old Pharisees, who Garnish'd the Sepulchres of the Prophets, but Kill'd their Successors. But we ought really to believe, That if the Saints in Heaven were acquainted with the Actions of Men on Earth, and could be capable of Grief, they would be exceedingly troubled that there is this Pretence of *Honouring* God's Servants, and yet, that the *Lives* of those who pretend *This* are so unsuitable to it; that there are Days observed in Remembrance of the Deceased Saints, and yet that there is so little care to follow their Examples; that the Pious Actions of the Saints are commemorated, and yet that Men give themselves over to all Impiety and Wickedness. Who sees not that the Great and Principal End of the *Christian Festivals* is to promote Purity and Holiness of Living? We inquire into the Saints Lives, that we may follow their Examples. We are answerable unto God for the Benefit vouchsafed us of their Holy Conversations; and therefore our *Returns* must be proportionable to so great a Blessing: We are ingaged to view their excellent Behaviour, and at the same time to copy it out in our Lives. And when we behold them placed in *Heaven*, we are unspeakably incourag'd to *persevere in Holiness*, seeing that *our* Labour, like *theirs*, shall not be in vain in the Lord. Thus I have briefly mention'd the *Reasons* which may induce us to remember the Actions and Sufferings of the eminent Saints of God, and to honour them on that Account.

Thirdly and Lastly, I am to speak of the *Due and Right Manner of Celebrating* the Festivals of the Church. For unless I add this, all that I have premis'd is to little purpose; for it is not the bare Act of keeping a Day that is acceptable to God, but he requires that it be done in such a Manner as is acceptable to Him. When therefore we solemnly meet together to commemorate the Blessed Undertakings of our Saviour, and to thank God for the Exemplary Lives and Deaths of his holy Servants, who did and suffer'd so great Things for the Defence of Christianity, who gave Testimony to the Truth by shedding their Bloud and sacrificing their Lives for it; we do it Lawfully and Laudably, if these following Qualifications and Conditions be observ'd:

As first, If the Observation of these Seasons be no Impediment to our Necessary Labours and Lawful Callings; and prove not Occasions of Idleness, Vanity, and Loosenes. There are many that think the Design of Holy-Days is to free them from the Work of their Callings, and that the Church's Festivals are so many Days to be devoted to Pleasure and Licentiousness, to Drunkenness and Debauchery, as if they were herein directed by the double Denotation of the * *Hebrew* Word which signifies *to keep a Festival or Holy-Day*, and also *to turn round and stagger like a Drunken Man*. More-especially to speak of observing of the *Time of Christ's Birth*, they tell us, they must rejoyce at this Time; and what is their Rejoycing but spending their Hours in lewd Sports, in the Indulging of extravagant Mirth and Jollity, in Gaming, and Drinking, and Wantonness, and all manner of Debauchery? To *keep Christmass*, with some Persons,

* Chagag.

Persons, is no other than to spend Twelve Days in Riot and Luxury, to be mad and frolick, loose and licentious, to be disorderly and prophane, to neglect their Calling, to forget themselves and their Duty, to dishonour God, and offend Good Men; in a Word, to mind nothing less than the *Design* of Christ's Nativity and Coming into the World, which was to destroy the Works of the Devil. Were it not for that *General Prophaneness* and *Corruption* of Manners at *All Times* among us, I might have said, That the Devil hath more Service done him in these Days than all the Year besides. An *Universal License* is now given to Sin, and what was boggled at at *another Time*, and counted scandalous, is now to be thought Laudable and Lawful. Nothing comes amiss now; the Flood-Gates are set open, and a general Deluge of Vice and Wickedness breaks in upon all Places. As Christ at *This Time* took upon Him *Humane Nature*; so truly many Men do at this very Season assume the *Diabolical Nature*, and with great Earnestness and Zeal promote the Interest of Satan. It was the Saying of the Men of *Lystra*, [*The* Gods *are come down amongst us in the Likeness of Men*]; I may as truly say, The Devils are come up amongst us in the Likeness and Shape of Men. Their Hellish and Prophane Behaviour intitle them to no better a *Name*.

What a Shame is this to the Profession of the Gospel! What a Blot and Reproach is this to the Christian Religion, which commands a greater Severity and Circumspection than any Religion whatsoever? Shall that Impostor *Mahomet* leave *this* Injunction with his Disciples, That they drink no Wine, and hath it been generally observed by them 'till of late? And shall *Christians* who are commanded *not to be drunk with Wine, wherein is Excess*, and not to surfeit themselves with the Pleasures of this World; shall these Persons break their Master's Law, and at *This Time most Visibly* of all, when they undertake to commemorate the Coming of the spotless Lamb of God? As some of the *Græcians* are said to have worshipp'd *Mercury* by throwing Stones at him, and their *Hercules* by Railing; so these Men persuade themselves they *adore and worship Christ* whilst they permit and practise all manner of Lewdness and Naughtiness; and they are so *Impious* and *Absurd* as to imagine that they may solemnize *Christ's Nativity* in this manner. But these Men must be told, that whilst they do nothing but feed and cram themselves, they may be said to lodge Christ again in the *Manger*: they do by their *Brutish* and Sensual Living bring Him into the *Stable* among the Beasts. They do with *Joseph* run away with the Babe into *Egypt*; they follow the *Flesh-pots*; they hanker after the forbidden *Delights* and *Pleasures* which they should abandon. They make *Christ's Nativity* to be truly *Æra Dionysiana*, but in another Sense than 'tis commonly call'd so, they dedicate it to *Bacchus*; they *prophane* it instead of *observing* it.

And so for any of the rest of the *Festivals*, there are a sort of Men that dedicate them anew, *i. e.* To Idleness and Lewdness. So that what one of the Ancients saith of the Publick Festivals in Honour of the *Roman* Emperors, which were kept by the People very *loosly* and *disorderly*, may not impertinently be applied here: "* The publick Joy is "expressed by that which is a publick Disgrace: Those "Things are esteem'd comely and fitting on these Days, "which on others are counted unfitting and indecent: The "most extravagant Manners pass for Obedience; and the "Occasion of Luxury is thought to be Religion and Reverence." This Prophaning of the Church's Festivals was taken Notice of by St. *Jerom*, who at the same time shews the Absurdity of it. "† The Saints and Martyrs, *saith he*, were "noted for their Fasting and Abstinence, and Mortification; "and therefore it must needs be a very ridiculous Thing to "keep their Days with indulging of Gluttony, Intemperance, and Lewdness." St. *Chrysostom* more than once blames his People for Idleness and Debauchery on the Feast-Days of the Church, and exposes the Folly of it. I wish there may be no such *Spots* as These in our Christian *Feasts*. May all such Scandals and Blemishes be removed; lest it be said now as heretofore by the *Jewish* Doctors, That || Feast-Days

* *Siccine exprimitur publicum gaudium per publicum dedecus? Hæccine Solennes dies Principum decent, quæ alios dies non decent? Malorum morum Licentia Pietas erit? & Occasio Luxuriæ Religio deputabitur?* Tertull. Apologetic.

† *Valdè absurdum est nimiâ Saturitate velle honorare Martyrem, quem scias Deo placuisse Jejuniis.* Epist. *ad* Eust.

|| *Ulcus anni Festum est.* Talmud *in* Tract. Kidushim.

Days are the most Corrupt and Ulcerated Seasons of the Year. All manner of Vices break forth then, and corrupt the Manners of Men. It is this which makes the Christian Feasts look like the Old *Bacchanalia* and *Saturnalia*, or other mad Feasts which the Pagans devoted to their Deities; or like the Modern *Italian Carnavals*, made up of Folly and Wantonness, and all manner of Extravagancy.

But we are to abhorr the very mentioning of these Things as unbecoming Christians; and to think the Apostle *Peter*'s Counsel most seasonable at such Times; *Be sober, be vigilant, because your Adversary the Devil as a roaring Lion walketh about seeking whom he may devour.* And we are to value St. *Paul*'s Advice, *Eph.* 5. 18, 19. *Be not drunk with Wine, wherein is Excess, but be fill'd* (inebriated) *with the Spirit, speaking to your selves in Psalms and Hymns, and spiritual Songs, singing and making Melody in your Hearts to the Lord.* Express your Joy by *Praises* and *Thanksgivings*, and not by violating the Laws of Christian Sobriety and Temperance. When we celebrate a Festival-Day, we may make a short Truce with our ordinary Labours, and our inward Joy and Thanksgivings may be cherished by those Refreshments which God vouchsafes us in the innocent Use of his Creatures. But then we must take care that we do not, under a Pretence of Rejoycing, take Liberty to be Extravagant. Our Mirth must be *Modest* and *Grave*, and such as beseems the Gospel. There must be nothing that is a Discredit to Christianity, and a Reproach to Religion, and a Scandal to our Holy Profession. This is the first Qualification, and the Summ of it is this, That to the due and lawful Observing of a Christian Festival it is required that we lay aside all Intemperance and Luxury, and that our Thanksgiving and Rejoycing be such that they may be effectually subservient to holy and religious Purposes. I have insisted largely upon this, because it is the principal Thing; but I shall be briefer in the following Heads.

Secondly, It is required that we place no Holiness in the Days themselves I speak not of a Relative Holiness (for that belongs to all Things, Persons, Times, and Places, that immediately relate to God and Religion) but of an Absolute and Intrinsick One; and such there is not in any Days or Seasons whatsoever. Yet the contrary is the fond Notion of some ignorant, though perhaps well-meaning People, and thence they pay a strange Reverence to the Time of Christ's Nativity, and that of his Resurrection; and Days on which some of the Saints are commemorated, are kept by them as Sacred in themselves. And the marvellous Preference they give to these, makes them neglect Religion at other Times. Now they will come to Church, though they have been absent many Months. Now they must receive the Sacrament, although they had neglected it all the Year besides. Yea, some of them are wont to *contract* and *croud* all their Devotion into these Days, so that they scarcely leave *any* for the rest. This is a very foolish Practice, and founded on a very gross Mistake, namely, That there is a Real and Inseparable Sanctity in some Days above others. We ought to rid our Minds of this false Apprehension whensoever we keep a Day in a solemn manner. And it may be this was design'd in that Silence which we find in Scripture concerning the *punctual Time* of Christ's Birth. The particular Day is not specified, perhaps, that none might over-reverence and idolize the Day.

Thirdly, All *Jewish Ceremoniousness* must be excluded, when we celebrate any of the Times set apart by our Church. For the Apostle directly speaks against this when he blames the *Galatians* for *observing Days and Times*, Gal. 4. 10. that is, the Judaical Holy-Days, which were part of the *Ceremonial Law*. But the Evangelical Festivals are not of that Nature; they are not *Jewish* or *Typical*, and *Shadows of Things to come*, as the Apostle describes those Ceremonial Observances; but they are Remembrances of Things past; they were design'd to put us in mind of the Blessed Undertakings of our Lord for us, and of the Remarkable Actions and Sufferings of the Saints. Therefore let not *Judaism* be mix'd with these Christian Memorials.

Fourthly, That we may commemorate the Saints aright, it is requisite that there be no *Popish Idolatry* or *Superstition* blended with this Solemnity. We must remember that the Respect and Honour which we pay to deceased Saints differs only

only in Degrees, not in Nature and Quality, from the Respect we give to living Saints. Wherefore as we ought not to worship the Saints that are alive, so neither those that are departed. It is plain and undeniable, that among those of the *Romish* Communion, the Honouring of the Saints Memories degenerates into an excessive and inordinate Esteem of them, and at length a Worshipping of them. But this is to be abhorr'd by us, whilst we innocently celebrate the Memory of the Apostles and Holy Men, and on certain Days remember them. There were Anniversary Memorials of Persons that were eminent in the Church for their Learning and Piety, as appears from some Orations now extant of *Gregory Nazianzen* and others. And *Polenburg* tells us in his Funeral Harangue on *Curcelléus*, That they Yearly commemorate the Renowned *Calvin* at *Geneva* with a Publick Oration in his Praise. Why then should any who follow the Persuasion of that Worthy Servant of God, disallow of the fix'd and annual Memorials which our Church appoints for the setting forth the Praise of those Eminent Saints whom the Inspired Writings have given us an Account of? Especially when we consecrate no Days to the Honour and Worship of those Saints, as the *Papists* do; for when we dispute against their Doctrines and Practices, and lay to their Charge the *worshipping of Saints*, we make use of this Argument among others that they *dedicate certain Days* (as well as Temples and Altars) *to the Saints*, which is no less than *Worshipping* of them. Therefore a Judicious Divine of our own Church hath these Words, * *Saints are made Idols when Holydays are consecrated to their Honour, because God is the only Lord of Days and Times, and therefore they are only to be dedicated to his Honour. And tho' we retain the Names of Saints Days in the Church of* England, *yet are we altogether free from Idolatry, because we dedicate the Days themselves to the Honour of God.*

* Perkins's *Idolatry of the last Times.* P. 44, 45.

This then I assert, after all that hath been said (and it is necessary I should assert it, to qualifie what hath been delivered) that tho' we commemorate some Holy Men on certain Days, yet we do not devote those Days to their Honour, but we set them apart wholly for the Worship of the most High. The Seventh Day is a *Sabbath of* and *to the Lord*, Exod. 16. 25. ---20. 10. ---35. 29. because to *God* only are Days to be dedicated. Barely to commemorate such or such a Person in a solemn way, as for Example *Calvin* at *Geneva*, at a certain Time yearly, is another thing; for it is not done with Prayers and a Service appropriated to that Day, but it is a civil Commemoration wholly. But to set apart a Day to any Person is a religious Act, and it is paying of Worship to him. Thence among the *Pagans* the Dedication of Days to their Heroes was one Specimen of the Adoration they gave them. And even * one of the Roman Communion acknowledges that this dedicating of Days to Saints in the Roman Church is in Imitation of the *Pagans*. Which well agrees with what was enjoin'd by Pope *Gregory*, That † the *Pagan Festivals should by Degrees be turned into Christian ones, and some things should be done in Imitation of the Gentiles, that they might the more easily be brought over to Christianity.* Nothing is more obvious in the *Roman* Religion than this, that it consists of several *Heathen* Rites which savour of Superstition and Idolatry; and particularly the Keeping of Days dedicated to Men deceased is of that sort. Here then let us be very Cautious, let us take Care that we give not that to Men which is proper to God, that we worship not those Saints whom we commemorate on these Days.

* Polydor. Virgil. *de Inventione rerum*, l. 6. c. 8.

† Decret. Epist. 71. lib. 9.

Fifthly, Let there be no *Fictitious Saints* Days observed, as among the *Papists*, who commemorate St. *Dunstan*, and St. *Becket*, who were eminent for nothing so much as their maintaining of the Pope's Authority and Jurisdiction, and despising that of their King. Other Popish Saints are St. *Bernardine* of *Sienna*, St. *Gregory* or Pope *Hildebrand*, St. *Catharine* of *Sienna*, Saint *Almachius* or *Almanack*. St. *Francis* and several other Saints, remembred by the Church of *Rome*, were of a higher Rank than the *Apostles*; for neither St. *Peter*, nor St. *Paul*, nor any other of the Apostolick Number pretended to Works of Supererogation, went not bare-legg'd, whipt not themselves, vow'd not Poverty and Celibacy; they did not tumble in the Snow, nor wear Hair-Shirts, or Iron-Doublets, or stock themselves with Vermin, as the foresaid Saint and others in the Roman Kalendar did: Therefore they were but petty Saints in Comparison of St. *Francis* and his Fellows. In the Church of *Rome* we hear of the *Feasts* of the *Conception* and of the *Assumption* of the Virgin *Mary*, which

which are of late Date; the former of which was instituted in Pope *Gregory* the VIIth's Time; it being then stiffly maintain'd by the *Franciscans* that the Virgin *Mary* was conceiv'd without Original Sin: Tho' at the same Time the *Dominicans* as stiffly opposed it: And whether she was infected with that Sin or no, is left undetermin'd by the *Council* of *Trent*. The latter Festival commenced not till the beginning of the Ninth Century, and the Reality of the Thing it self is question'd by some of the chief Writers of the Church of *Rome*. The Feast of *All-Souls* ow'd its Original to Pope *John* the XVIIIth. and the much admired Feast of *Corpus Christi* was first instituted by Pope *Urban* the IVth. and the Holy Days of the *Lance and Nails* wherewith our Saviour was pierced, were first instituted in the Year of our Lord 1530; and such like Festivals as these are celebrated at *Rome*.

They Saint and Unsaint as they please: Thus *Scotus* was made a Martyr after his Death, and his Anniversary is remembred in the Kalendar on the 4th of the Ides of *November*, in the Roman *Martyrology* set forth by *Gregory* XIII. at *Antwerp*, 1586. But since that Time he hath been unmartyr'd by Cardinal *Baronius* and others of the Church. Some have attempted to shew that the Romanists keep Days of such Persons as never were in being. Saints are placed by them in Heaven that never were upon Earth, and some have thought that St. *George* is of that Number. We ought then to be wary here, and not to admit of any Counterfeit Saints and Mock-Festivals. There is more to make a Saint indeed than the Pope's *Canonizing* him, and the *Radiant Circle* about his Head made by the Painter.

Sixthly, Let all Opinion of *Merit* be excluded in the setting apart and celebrating the Days for Religious Feasting and Rejoicing. It is a great Fault of some of the Devotionists among the *Roman* Catholicks, that they value themselves too much upon the observing of those Solemnities, and because they think that therein they do more than some others, they look upon what they do in this kind as Meritorious. But all such vain Thoughts and arrogant Surmises must be rejected; otherwise this part of our Service is perform'd in an undue Manner.

Seventhly, Festivals should not be *too Numerous*; and in order to that, none but *Apostles*, and such others as have *lay'd down their Lives for Christ's sake*, and whose *Deeds are particularly Recorded* in the *New Testament* should be solemnly remembred on any Day for that Purpose. For otherwise there should be Festivals for these following Persons, *Zachariah* and *Simeon*, *Timothy* and *Titus*, *Silas*, *Apollos*, *Tychicus*, all of them Eminent Saints. This is very fitting, because otherwise Saints Days would be over-multiplied, and thereby the *Lord's Day* would grow into Disesteem, as 'tis generally with such as magnifie the Saints Days.

Eighthly, Therefore I add this, It is lawful to observe the Days on which Saints are remembred, if we take Care that *these* be not thought as Honourable as the *Lord's-day*, nor reputed to be of the same Rank with it, but that *those* be observed only as Ecclesiastical Institutions, and *this* as a Divine Command; for the Lord's Day is to be sanctified above all others, by Reason of the Divine Sanction that attends it. For it is styled the *Lord's Day*, as the Sacrament of Christ's Body and Bloud is styled the *Lord's Supper*, i. e. peculiarly *Appointed and Instituted by the Lord*, and so it becomes a *Divine Ordinance*, and accordingly the Apostles, therein guided by the Spirit, made *This* the Day of their Solemn Meetings, and the Church in all Ages hath celebrated it in a peculiar and extraordinary manner, as different from all other Days whatsoever. We are not then to equalize the *Saints Days*, or any *other Festivals*, whatsoever with this Day, as some do. Much less are we to preferr and esteem those above this, as one would perswade us all Christians do, whose Words are these, * *Ordinary Sundays are Days accounted by all Christians less solemn than diverse other Festivals which are celebrated but once a Year.* Which being found in a Book that goes up and down the Nation, and is in all Mens Hands, and is often reprinted, I thought it convenient to take Notice of the Passage, and to censure it. For there is no Anniversary Solemnity, no not that of Christ's Nativity, or Passion, or Resurrection (call'd *Easter*) that may vie with *the Lord's Day*, this being grounded, as 'tis a seventh Day, on the fourth Commandment, and as 'tis the first Day of the

* *Present State of England. 2d Part of the Parliament of England.*

the Week, on the express Authority and Example of Christ's Apostles, who (as we read) solemnly kept this Day. Which cannot be said of any other Festival whatsoever. I cannot but take Notice here of a vain Suggestion that I met with in a late Writer, who tells us, That * *'tis highly probable, from all Sundays in the Year being placed at the Head of the Festivals, that it was the Intention of those who compiled the Liturgy, that they should all be observ'd after the same manner, not only with Prayers and Thanksgivings, but with Rest from ordinary Labour.* Such poor weak Arguments do some delight to make use of, to make all the Festivals equal with the Lord's Day.

* Mr. Nelson's Preface to the Companion of the Festivals.

Ninthly, We lawfully and in a right manner may solemnize the other Days, if we do it without *uncharitable Censuring* of others who differ from us in this Particular. This is a Condition that St. *Paul* prescribes to be observ'd in this very Case, and with a little Alteration I will represent it to you in his Words, *Rom.* 14. 3, &c. *Let not him that keeps a Day, despise him that keeps not a Day; and let not him that keepeth not a Day, judge him that keepeth a Day: for God hath received him. Who art thou that judgest another Man's Servant? To his own Master he standeth or falleth. One Man esteems one Day above another: another esteemeth every Day alike. Let every Man be fully persuaded in his own Mind. He that regardeth the Day, regardeth it unto the Lord; and he that regardeth not the Day to the Lord, he doth not regard it. But why dost thou judge thy Brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy Brother? For we shall all stand before the Judgment-Seat of Christ. Let us not therefore judge one another any more: but judge this rather, That no Man put a stumbling-block, or an Occasion to fall in his Brother's Way.*

Tenthly and Lastly, Let not the Observation of *these* Days be *impos'd* on any by Force. *Socrates* † speaking of the Disagreement of the *Eastern* and *Western* Church about the Observation of *Easter*, declares, that the Apostles and Evangelists left that and other Festivals free, and did not by any Precept or Law enjoin them. They are not therefore to be look'd upon as *necessary*, and consequently they are not to be forced upon any Man.

† Eccl. Hist. l. 5. c. 22.

Thus I have impartially deliver'd what I had to say on this Subject. If there be these *Conditions* and *Limitations* observed, I do not see but that all sober and unprejudic'd Minds may be reconciled to the Doctrines which I have discours'd of. But if the fore-nam'd Qualifications be not allow'd, I apprehend that the *Right Use* of these Days is taken away, and instead of being set apart to Holy Purposes, they are *Perverted*, *Abused*, and *Prophaned*. And if it be thus, then say I, it is best for us (I do not prescribe to our Governours, but only offer something to be consider'd) to suspend the Use of them, and to keep our selves more strictly to the *Lord's-Day*. Yea, truly, if the *Lord's-Day* be kept as it should, most of the other Days may be the better spared.

Of ECCLESIASTICAL CENSURES.

I Come now in the last Place to speak of the *Censures of the Church, and Submission to them*, and the due Way of being *freed from them*, all which are Institutions of Divine Appointment. The Church hath Power to admonish Offenders: To Correct and Punish them by the Sentence of Excommunication, and afterwards upon their Repentance to remit their Fault and Punishment, and to receive them into Favour. Of these I will distinctly speak, and first of publick *Admonition*, and then of *Excommunication*, where I will, First Shew that they are of *Divine Institution*. Secondly, I will assign the *Reasons* and *Ends* of them. Thirdly, I will touch upon the *manner* of exercising them. And Lastly, Conclude with a seasonable *Inference* from the whole.

The first part of the Church-Censures is *Admonition*; and this we find to be agreeable to Christ's own Order and Direction, *Mat.* 18. 15, 16, 17. where he commands, in Case of Offence, that there be not only a *telling of the Fault between Brother and Brother alone*, and afterwards *before one or Two Witnesses*, but that, *upon Neglect of being heard*, there ought to be a publick and more solemn Admonition; *Tell it to the Church*, that is, to the Governors and Pastors of the

Church, with the Consent of the Brethren. The Offender is to be openly check'd and rebuked in the publick Congregation. This is call'd by the Apostle, *coming with the Rod*, 1 Cor. 4. 21. that is, exercising this sort of sharp Discipline on Transgressors. This is meant by *warning them that are unruly*, 1 Thess. 5. 14. And the same is intended in that Advice to *Timothy*, *them that Sin rebuke before all*, 1 Tim. 5. 20. Scandalous Sinners are to be publickly and openly reprehended by the Officers of the Church. Those who profess and pretend to be Friends to the Christian Religion, and yet make no Conscience of their Ways, but lead as prophane and dissolute Lives as others, must be openly and severely admonish'd and rebuk'd. Yea, the Apostle in another Place advises, that this Censure be exercis'd once and again; he speaks of the *first and second Admonition*, Tit. 3. 10. as the Fore-runner of Excommunication or Separation from the Church, of which I will next treat. If the Admonitions and Reprehensions of the Church prove to be of no Efficacy, then

Secondly, Actual Corrections and Punishments are to take Place, *i.e.* either the *Lesser*, or *the Greater Excommunication*. The former is a debarring of Offenders for a Time from some part of Religious Worship in the publick Assemblies, as receiving the Sacrament of the Lord's-Supper. This is founded on what the Apostle hath said in the 11th. Chapter of his first Epistle to the *Corinthians* concerning the prophaning of the *Lord's-Supper*, and the Care that is to be taken, that we be not guilty of it: For if *those who eat this Bread and drink this Cup of the Lord unworthily, are guilty of the Body and Blood of the Lord*, then it is as true, that the Rulers and Guides of the Church, who suffer them to come to this Holy Communion, are in a great Measure guilty. Whence it is to be inferr'd, that it is the Duty of the Overseers and Ministers of the Church to exclude such Persons from the *Lord's-Supper*. A famous Instance of this we have in St. *Ambrose* Bishop of *Milan*, who suspended the Emperor *Theodosius* the Elder from the Sacrament. The Occasion of which was this, * one of *Theodosius's* Guard was kill'd in a Tumult rais'd by the People of *Thessalonica*, whereupon the Emperor, dissembling his Fury, invited the People to the *Ludi Circenses*, where of a sudden his Soldiers fell on the unarm'd People, and most savagely murther'd about Seven Thousand of them. Because of this great and inhumane Slaughter which his Soldiers at his command committed, the good Bishop refus'd to admit him to the Communion, yea, he would not let him come into his Church, but shut the Doors on him. Whereupon the Conscious Emperor quietly submitted to the Censure, and return'd to his Court, and Six Months lamented his Fault. And then desired the Bishop to take off his Suspension, that he might be at the Service of the Feast of Christ's Nativity (which was coming on): He came to him himself, and confess'd his Crime, and laid aside his Diadem, and put off the Prince to put on the Penitent, and with Prostrations and Tears asked Forgiveness of God whom he had so grievously offended.

* Theodoret. Hist. Eccl. l. 5. c. 17.

This Suspension which I speak of, hath been made use of in all Christian Churches, where the Overseers and Officers have faithfully discharg'd their Trust. It is the Sense and Determination of our own Church, that † *No Minister is to admit to the receiving of the Holy Communion any of his Flock that are openly known to live in notorious Sin, without Repentance.* And, if the Officers of the Church see occasion, they may cast such Offenders out of the Church, and separate them from it for a Time. This simple and partial Ejection answers to the first Degree of Excommunication among the *Jews*, which they call *Niddui*, which was a mere excluding of Offenders out of the Synagogue, *John* 9. 22. but not quite out of the Temple, for they might stand at the Gates.

† Can. 26.

The latter sort of Excommunication, commonly call'd *the Greater Excommunication*, is of a higher Nature, for it is a *total* casting of scandalous Sinners out of the Communion of the Church. That Injunction of the Apostle in 1 Cor. 5. 7. *Purge out of the old Leaven*; and that other, in verse 13. *put away from yourselves that wicked Person*, hath Relation to this, and is as much as if the Apostle had said, Remove out of the Church those scandalous Members by the Sentence of Excommunication. And this is always attended with a Forbearance from their Company. Such Persons are to be shut out from all Conversation with the Faithful. This is founded on *Mat.* 18. 17. *If he neglect to hear the Church, let him be unto thee as a Heathen Man and a Publican.* That is, he is to be debarr'd

debarr'd of all Converse and Society with the Members of the Church. This we find often commanded and practis'd, as in *Rom.* 16. 17. *Mark them which cause Divisions and Offences, contrary to the Doctrine which ye have learned, and avoid them.* Which I doubt not, referrs to Excommunication; and the meaning of the Words is this, Those are to be censured that by their false Doctrines raise Divisions among you, or by their scandalous Lives give Occasion of Offence; and you must take Care to forbear all familiar Converse with such Persons. To this purpose is that which the Apostle more largely suggests to his *Corinthians*, 1 *Cor.* 5. 9, *&c.* [I wrote unto you not to Company with Fornicators: Yet not altogether with the Fornicators of this World, or with the Covetous, or Extortioners, or Idolaters; for then must ye needs go out of the World. But I have written to you not to keep Company, if any Man that is called a *Brother*, be a Fornicator, or Covetous, or an Idolater, or a Railer, or a Drunkard, with *such a one* no not to eat.] Observe it, although they were allow'd in some Cases to eat with *Infidels*, as 1 *Cor.* 10. 27. [If any of them that *believe not* bid you to a Feast, whatsoever is set before you, eat]: Yet they were *not permitted* to keep Company with a *Prophane Brother. With such a one they must not eat.* They must have no Communion with such a Person, for he being one that professes Godliness, and yet renounces it in his Life, is *more* scandalous and *more* dangerous than the Man who professedly withdraws from Religion, and defends a Vicious and Prophane Practice. And the Apostle lays this Charge on the *Thessalanians*, by vertue of his power given him by Christ, in such Cases as these, that they *withdraw themselves from every Brother that walketh disorderly*, 2 *Thess.* 3. 6. According to the same Apostle's Direction, a *Heretick* after a double Admonishment is to be *rejected*, *Tit.* 3. 10. that is, not only from the Communion of the Church, so as not to partake in any of its Ordinances, but from all Communion and Converse with those that belong to the Church. This is part of his Penalty, that he is thrust away and separated from the rest as an Accursed Person. This was allow'd by the Christian Emperors, as appears from the * *Code*, and was practis'd by the Primitive Overseers of the Church. This answers to the second Degree of Excommunication among the *Jews*, which they call'd *Cherem*.

* *Ab omni submoti Ecclesiarum limine penitus arceantur.* Lib. 1. Tit. 1.

The *Extremity* of this is *Anathema*, which some call the *Greatest Excommunication*, and it is inflicted only on the grossest Rank of Criminals, such as Apostates, Hereticks, Blasphemers, Prophane and Lewd Livers, and they also Obstinate and Unreclaimable. Such as these are, by Apostolical Order, to be thrown out of the Church with *Execrations*, and to be declared professed Enemies of God and Religion, and to be delivered over to Eternal Damnation except they repent. This Excommunication is plainly Authoriz'd from 1 *Corin.* 5. 1, *&c.* where first the Apostle rebukes the *Corinthian* Church for not taking care to have the Incestuous Person censured, and *taken away from among them*, i. e. by Excommunication. Whereupon he tells them, That *he had judged*, i. e. determined, *concerning him that had done this Deed*; namely, That he shall be excommunicated; which is thus described in the Fourth and Fifth Verses: *In the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when ye are gather'd together, and my Spirit, with the Power of our Lord Jesus Christ, to deliver such a one to Satan, for the Destruction of the Flesh.* In which Words is the Solemnity wherewith the Sentence of Excommunication was to be inflicted, to wit, In the Publick Congregation, or Assembly of the Church, gather'd in the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and by the Apostle's Office and Authority, and Virtual Presence among them, and by the Authority of Christ committed to him and them, this Censure was to be executed, whereby the Offender was to be cast out of the Communion of the Church, and at the same time delivered to Satan. For an obstinate Sinner is justly said to be delivered up to that Evil Spirit, when he is cast out of the Church, and deprived of all Communion with it by Prayer, Hearing the Word, Receiving the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper; because these are the usual Means by which Satan is weakned, and at last subdu'd. Wherefore the excommunicate Person being denied these, he is now in the Power of Satan. And this will prove *for the Destruction of the Flesh*, because some outward Judgment doth generally overtake such a one. And more particularly these Words referr to what happen'd commonly in those Times when the Apostle writ this Epistle; for after Ex-

communication, the Devil had Power to inflict Diseases and Bodily Pains and Torments on those who were thus censured by the Church. Of *Hymenæus* and *Alexander*, Two stiff Opposers of the Faith and Doctrine of the Gospel, the Apostle saith, That *he deliver'd them to Satan*, 1 Tim. 1. 20. that is, He by his Apostolical and Ministerial Authority cast them out of the Church, and left them to be controll'd by the Diabolical Spirit, and to be tormented and punish'd by them.

This, it is probable, the Apostle means by *cutting off*, *Gal.* 5. 12. *I would they were even cut off that trouble you.* The only Course that is to be taken with these Disturbers of the *Galatian* Churches, is to *cut them off* from among you. There seems to be an elegant Allusion in the Expression; for he threatens the turbulent Spirits who made such a Noise and Disturbance about *Circumcision*, and would needs impose it on all Christians, though they had renounced all the Mosaical Rites and Observances; he threatens them, I say, with *Abscission*. Dr. *Hammond* saith, it is too light to fix such a Notion on the Apostle's Words; but he doth it as much himself at other times: besides that, he forgets that is is a frequent thing with this Apostle to use Verbal Allusions. It is probable that this *Abscission*, (which answers to the Hebrew *Chereth*, *cutting off from God's People*, of which we so often read) is the Excommunication I am now speaking of, and which is of the highest Nature, especially when 'tis pronounced with a final Seclusion from God's Mercy, as when there is no Hope of the Persons returning to the Church. This answers to the *Shammata* and the *Maran-atha* among the *Jews*; namely, The Third and Worst Degree of Excommunication, and is defin'd by them to be a leaving the Offender to Divine Vengeance, and under a final Curse and Malediction, because he would not be amended by the two other sorts of Excommunication, *Niddui* and *Cherem*.

And we have Proof of the Continuance of this Discipline in the *Christian Churches* afterwards. They in Imitation of the Apostles, took care to purge out of the Church those that were Enormous and Scandalous. Which *I* take to be the Meaning of *Rev.* 2. 2. *Thou canst not bear them that are evil.* Which is said of the Church of *Ephesus*, and informs us what *Exact Discipline* was observ'd in those Days in the Church. We read that in the Primitive Times, after a first and second Reproof, Sinners were conven'd before the whole Church of any Place, that is, the Christians, and their Bishop or Pastor; and, if the Offenders were impenitent, they were expell'd out of the Church, with the Consent of all the Church, by the Minister. This Way of Ecclesiastical Punishment is mentioned by * *Tertullian*, and is styled by him *Castigation*, and *Divine Censure*. By † *Cyprian* 'tis call'd the *Spiritual Sword*; and by the Council of *Chalcedon*, ‖ *Ecclesiastical Revenge*; and by some of the Ancient Writers, The *Divine* or *Sacred Thunder*. We read that this was thrown at *Julian the Apostate*; yea, the severest of all the Ecclesiastical Censures was exercised upon him; for he was Anathematiz'd by the whole Church; after which they pray'd no longer for him, but directly against him, and sometimes Curses were pour'd out upon him. But this is rare, and hath seldom been practised among Christians, though it is grounded on the express Practice (as I have shew'd) of the Apostles. Thus I have proved, That these *Church Censures* are not only of Divine Appointment, and founded upon Apostolical Usage, but that they are also justified by Examples afterwards in the Christian Churches.

* *Apologet.* cap. 39.

† Epist. *ad* Pomponium.

‖ Τὰ θεῖα τῶν Ἐκκλησιασμῶν.

The Second Thing I undertook, was, To shew the *Reasons* and *Ends* (for I joyn them both together) of Appointing and Exercising this Discipline. The Designs of it are very good and laudable, and the Advantages very great and numerous; which I will comprize under Three Heads. The Church Censures were intended to be useful; First, In respect of the Offenders themselves. Secondly, In Regard of others. Thirdly, As to Religion, and the Honour of our Great Master.

First, As to the Offenders themselves, this Discipline is of great Use; namely, To make them throughly *sensible* of their Crime. If there were not this Check and Arrest upon them, they would scarcely be apprehensive of their Misdemeanours, and Impunity would harden them in their Sins. But when they

they find themselves deprived of the Privileges and Benefits of Church-Society, they may happily be brought to a Sense of what they have done, and they may see that they have behaved themselves unworthy of Christian Communion, and therefore are excluded from it; and hereby they may be convinced of the Heinousness of their Offence. And with *Conviction* is join'd *Shame*, which is another Design of the Censures pass'd by the Church upon Sinners, as we learn from 2 *Thes.* 3. 14. where Believers are forbid *to have Company with* an excommunicate Person, *that he may be ashamed*, that he may blush, and even be confounded at the Reflection on his scandalous Behaviour, for which he is expell'd from the Society of Christians, and hath merited the Character and Title of a *Heathen Man*. Besides, this Shame is accompanied with *Fear* and *Dread*, which are very serviceable to the Sinner's Amendment, whilst he takes Notice of and actually feels the *Terrible* Effects of his evil Ways. On this Account, those severe Censures are as necessary in the Church, as corporal Punishments in the Common-wealth. And now it may be expected, that this Shame and this Terror will produce *Repentance*, and be instrumental to reclaim the Offender. *Hymenæus* and *Alexander* were by the Apostle *delivered unto Satan, that they might learn not to blaspheme*, 1 Tim. 1. 20. that is, That they might be induced by that severe Discipline to return to their Duty, and never for the future use any prophane Language against the Professors of the true Doctrine of the Gospel. And as the *Repentance* of Sinners is intended by this Severity, so consequently their *Salvation* and *Happiness*; for the Apostle acquaints us, That the End of *delivering them unto Satan for the Destruction of the Flesh*, is, *That the Spirit may be saved in the Day of our Lord Jesus*, 1 Cor. 5. 5. They are delivered to Satan for a Time, that they may be deliver'd from him for ever afterwards. Thus we see that it is the End and Design of Excommunication that the Offender may be convinced, ashamed, terrified, converted and reform'd, and eternally saved. And this is without doubt the primary End of this Institution.

Secondly, In respect of *others*, the Design of it is to deterr them from committing the like Sins, 1 *Tim.* 5. 20. *Them that sin, rebuke before all, that others also may fear*; that not only the Offender himself, but others also may be afraid. The dreadful and sacred Thunder of *Excommunication* is intended to scare and terrify *other* Members of the Church. These are to be warn'd by these Admonishments and Censures: These are to be taught their Duty by their Example. Again, The Church prudently debarrs scandalous Sinners from Communion and Converse with others, thereby to prevent the spreading of Sin, and the infecting of others. A Person breaking out of a Pest-house, and coming with a Plague-sore into Company, is a *Felon* by our *Law*. He is a greater Malefactor by the *Law of God*, who taints and infects others with Sin and Wickedness. But it is the Concern of the Rulers of the Church to confine and shut up the Infected, and to hinder the farther Diffusion of Vice; and this is done by injoyning a Separation from these bold Propagators of Sin. This is incumbent on the Spiritual Governours; and unless they faithfully discharge this Office, they derive the Guilt of those Sinners upon themselves, and become Partakers of other Mens Sins.

Thirdly, In respect of *Religion*, and the *Credit* of it, this Discipline I am speaking of is very useful and advantageous; yea, and indeed necessary. In the Primitive Times especially it was so, when *Heathens* were mix'd with *Christians* every where, and observ'd their Demeanour. They would have entertained very ill Thoughts of the Church and Christ's Followers, if their Offences had not been taken Notice of with some Severity by the Pastors, and the Authors of them punish'd in the Way that we have mention'd. And, truly, it is as requisite now, when we are surrounded with Multitudes of Men that watch for all Occasions of Reproaching and Defaming Christianity and the Adherers to it, that there should be an Ecclesiastical Discipline to animadvert on the Disobedient and Unruly. That the Name of God may not be blasphem'd; that the Christian Religion may not be scandaliz'd; that the Church itself may not be evil spoken of, there is a Necessity of Publick Censure. To maintain Christ's Honour, and to assert and vindicate the Credit of our Holy Profession, there must be this Restraint and Coercion used towards those Members

Members of the Christian Church who walk disorderly. In short, the End and Design of Religion and of Church-Government, is to promote the Observation of Christ's Laws, to countenance real Goodness, to discourage Vice and Wickedness, and all Disobedience to the known Laws of Jesus. So that there is no absolute Need of any express Precept or Injunction for Excommunication (tho' I have shew'd before that we have many) because a Church being constituted by Christ, it follows that those Things must be best which conduce to the preserving of it. Now, 'tis certain that the Church's Preservation depends upon this Discipline, *i. e.* the inflicting of Censures on the Scandalous and Unruly, and thereby purging the Church of it's corrupted Members, and consequently keeping up it's Purity and Holiness which are essential to it. For without this *the Church* and *the World* are the same, and the former ceases to be a distinct Society, or Communion of Persons call'd out of the World. Without this it will not be a Christian Church, but a Synagogue of Satan. Yea, and without this the Distinction between good and bad Men will be quite taken away. This, I conceive, doth give us a clear Account of the Necessity of this Institution, that is, that such as grosly offend against the Rules of Christianity ought to answer for their Miscarriage to the Rulers and Governours of the Church, and submit to the Penal Sanctions of it. Thus (to sum up all) the Welfare of the *Offender*, and of the *Society*, and of *Religion* call for this Severity.

Thirdly, I am next to consider the *Manner of exerting it.* For tho' of it self it be a Sacred Institution of Christ and his Apostles, yet if it be depraved and corrupted, it degenerates either into an Useless or a very Mischievous Administration. Wherefore Care is to be taken that this Part of Discipline be duly and rightly executed; and the rather because it is so dreadful a Judgment, even the greatest upon Earth.

And the first Rule is this, This Ecclesiastical Censure must be *Impartial.* The Apostle speaking of the Exercise of this and other Parts of Church-Government, most solemnly charges *Timothy* that *he observe these Things without preferring one before another, doing Nothing by Partiality*, 1 Tim. 5. 21. In such an important Business as this is there must be no Respect of Persons, no causeless inclining to one side more than another. The Faults and Offences of Parties ought to be equally scann'd, and Sentence is to be pronounced with exact Justice.

Secondly, This Censure must not be exercis'd on Secular Accounts. It is an astonishing Consideration to recount how this Solemn Discipline hath been abused and prophaned in this Respect. History tells us what use the *Popes* made of it: When they and the Emperors could not agree, then presently the Emperors were to be Excommunicated. The World, and not the Church, was interested in the Quarrel; and yet the Spiritual Sword was made use of. Which is a gross perverting of this Sacred Institution. And how contemptible was this Censure rendred when *Thomas Beckett* (then Archbishop of *Canterbury*) excommunicated a Gentleman for cutting off one of his Horses Tails?

A third Rule is, This Penalty ought not to be executed for Disputable Matters. Yet the contrary hath been practis'd too often, and even in the first Ages of the Church, and thereby this Discipline hath been shamefully abused and perverted. All the *Eastern* Churches were excommunicated by Pope *Victor*, because they would not observe *Easter-Day* as *Rome* and other Churches in the *West* did. And in other Instances it might be shew'd that the Roman Bishops have excluded Persons from the Church and Salvation merely for not conforming to their Decrees about indifferent Matters. Yea, *Virgilius*, a German Bishop, was degraded from his Priesthood, and excommunicated for holding *Antipodes*, as if that were *Heretical* Doctrine. But they fansied what they pleased to be an Heresy, and then punish'd it in the Persons that held it by Anathematizing them. This hath been too much imitated by some others, who pretend to have no Kindness for the *Roman* Communion: They uncharitably Lop off many Limbs from the Church for petty and slight Causes, for indifferent Things, and controverted Points. A poor trifling Matter makes them discharge their Thunder with great Fierceness and Rigour. Whereas,

This ought to be a fourth Rule, Excommunication must be only for great and weighty Causes. The Three great Evils that infest the Church are *Heresy*, *Schism*, and *Immorality*, or Prophaneness; and these when they are in their height especially,

especially, are the proper Subject of that Discipline I have been discoursing of. Obstinate *Hereticks*, that is, those who willfully persist in depraving the Fundamental Truths of Christianity, and thereby cast Poison into the Fountains, and subvert the very Ground-work of Religion, are justly to be cast out of the Church. And *Schismaticks* deserve the same Doom, because they rend the Body of Christ, and without Cause separate from the Communion of Saints; most justly therefore is their Penalty to be cut off from that Body, of which they refused to be Members. And as for the *Prophane*, whose Will is perverted as well as their Judgments, and whose Lives are a constant Violation of the Laws of Morality and Right Reason, and especially if they make it their Practice to corrupt the Manners of others, and instill the Principles of Debauchery into Mens Minds, there is no doubt but they most justly fall under the Church's severest Censure. Towards such as these, and these only, Excommunication, and that of the sharpest Kind, was exercis'd by the Apostle; thus we read that *Hymenæus* and *Alexander*, who were two notorious Apostates from the Faith and Doctrine of the Church, and even denied the Resurrection, and thereupon separated themselves from the Communion of the Christian Church, were deliver'd unto Satan, 1 *Tim.* 1. 20. 2 *Tim.* 2. 18. And the same we read of the *Incestuous* Person, 1 *Cor.* 5. 5, 13. Which shews us who are the Persons that are justly liable to this severe Censure; namely, the Unsound and Heretical in Doctine, and those that Separate from the Church without any just Cause, and likewise those that are dissolute in their Manners and wicked in their Lives. But for lesser Causes than these, especially for mean and small ones, the terrible Sentence of Excommunication is not to be made use of.

Another Rule is, That this Censure of the Church must be executed by a Right Administrator, *i. e.* by a Sacred Person, a Bishop or Presbyter, and not by a Lay-Deputy, as hath been done too often. But this is a palpable Abuse of the Discipline of the Church.

Again, It must be administred not only by, but towards those that are capable of it. Therefore the excommunicating of *Rats* for devouring Corn (of which we have a formal Story in Mr. *Fox*) is a scandalous perverting and prophaning of that Sacred Administration. And such is the Bishop of *Canada's* excommunicating the Turtle-doves of that Country, because of the Damage they do to the Fruits of the Earth. These are not capable Subjects of this Sacred Discipline. And among those that are, this Censure must be exercised on such as are Due Persons, that is, Subjects, not Princes and Sovereigns. I have taken Notice before that *Theodosius* the Emperor was suspended from the Lord's Supper by the Bishop of *Milan*, but he could not do this by way of *Jurisdiction* and *Coercion*, but only out of *Paternal Charity* to the Soul of that Guilty Prince. Much less could he or any other Ecclesiastical Person exclude him or any other Emperor or King from Converse and Communion with their Subjects. And least of all is it lawful for the *Church* to inflict any Temporal and Secular Punishment on their Sovereign. Their Laurels and Crowns guard and exempt them from this part of their *Thunder* if they should pretend to it; yea, indeed, the Church can inflict no Bodily or Temporal Punishment on any Person whomsoever; for Spiritual Penalties only are at their Disposal; otherwise the Civil Magistrates Right is invaded.

* Novelaux's *Voyages*, &c.

Lastly, Take this comprehensive Rule, Excommunication is to be used with great Gravity and Seriousness, with great Tenderness and Charity. It is a very Sacred Institution, and therefore ought to be Administred with a becoming Solemnity and Reverence; and such was used in the Primitive Times. It is a Fatherly Censure, and therefore is to be discharged with a proportionable Affection, and Concernedness for the Welfare of the Offenders. And as the Rulers of the Church are not to be Remiss, so they are not to be Rigorous and Hard-hearted in Exercising this Discipline towards them, but to wish for and endeavour their sincere Repentance and Return to the Church again. Of which I will speak next, after I have interposed a seasonable *Inference* from what hath been said already.

And the Inference is this, seeing it hath been proved that Excommunication is a Divine and Apostolical Institution, we are obliged to give our firm Assent to this, and to assert and vindicate the Divine Authority of this Ordinance in

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the Church of Christ: And we are to do this the rather, because some Persons of no inconsiderable Rank have endeavour'd to represent it as a *Secular* Punishment only, and not a *Sacred* or *Ecclesiastical* one. This was asserted by *Erastus*, and * Mr. *Selden* holds that the Church hath Nothing to do with Excommunication, and that there was no such Thing at first, *i. e.* either before Judaism or under it. But this Learned Man might have perceived the first Footsteps of it in *Cain*, who for killing his Brother, and that he might not infect and corrupt others, was with a *Curse* thrown out of the Church, *Gen.* 4. 11. and *driven out from the Face of the Earth, and made a Fugitive and Vagabond in the Earth*, ver. 14. And the next Instance is *Cham*, who for his Wickedness towards his Father was *Cursed*, and excommunicated from the Church, and cast out solemnly from the Family of God, and the Society of the Godly. We read that the *Chereth*, the *cutting off from God's People* was frequent in the *Jewish* Church. And presently after the Return from the Captivity this Discipline was used, for 'tis expressly recorded that *Ezra* Excommunicated all those that refused to put away their strange Wives.

* *De Synedriis.*

As for the *New Testament*, I have abundantly prov'd thence that Excommunication is a Sacred Sanction, and justified by Christ himself, and from these Words of His, *Tell it to the Church*, &c. tho' the forementioned Authors do what they can to evade this Place, and at last by the *Church* understand the *Sanhedrim*. But Nothing can be more Vain and Groundless than this, because we can't imagine that Christ would send his Disciples to the *Jewish* Consistory, when we find that the Apostle would not have the Christians go to Law before Unbelievers. The *Leviathan* follows Mr. *Selden* in this, and looks upon Excommunication as a mere Civil Punishment or Outlawry: And indeed upon the Principle he hath taken up he could not do otherwise; for he holds that Scripture and Christianity are not Law, till the Secular Power enacts it; wherefore he must needs say there can be no *Power of the Church* but what *depends on the State*, and consequently no Ecclesiastick hath Power of himself to Excommunicate.

And both these Persons, tho' they use different ways of arguing, yet unhappily agree in this, That the Church is no Corporation or Society of it self, but hath all its Power originally from the State, its Jurisdiction is wholly derived from the Secular Magistrate. But this is easily confuted by alledging this one thing only, that the Christian Church had a peculiar Power and Jurisdiction *before* the Magistracy became Christian, and protected the Christian Religion; as we see in the *Apostle's Times* and many Years *afterwards*. Therefore the Ecclesiastical Power *then* did not depend upon the Secular, but had a Subsistence of it's own, as being originally in the Church as such. And truly, if there be a *Church*, it follows (as I have observed before) that there is also a Method of Ejecting those out of it who are found to be wholly unworthy of it. We being assured then that Christ Jesus hath founded a *Church*, and that *Baptism* is made by him the Door to let Members into it, we may conclude that there is another Door, a Back-door to let those out at, who behave not themselves as such; and this is *Excommunication*. For it is in the very Notion of Constituting a Church, that it should have Power to exclude Offenders, and to inflict Censures, and to debarr them from Society. There needs no *positive Command* for it, tho' we want not *that*, as I have shew'd already.

Now, that which I press is this, that we should have a due Sense of the Authority and Vertue of this Ordinance. To which (if I be not mistaken) those Words of St. *Paul* referr, tho' commonly interpreted otherwise, 2 *Cor.* 10. 4. *The Weapons of our Warfare are not Carnal* or Secular, *but mighty thro' God to the pulling down of Strong Holds*, for from the Context 'tis plain that he speaks of proceeding against Offenders, which is what he calls *being bold towards some*, v. 1. and *against some*, v. 2. and a *Readiness to revenge all Disobedience*, v. 6. and from the 8th to the 12th *v.* he speaks of the Spiritual Authority, wherewith he is arm'd against his Adversaries. So that it is evident that the forementioned Place is to be understood of the *Censures* of the Church, taking in also the other Sacred Means and Institutions of the Gospel, as the Two Sacraments, Praying, Preaching, *&c.* In our Spiritual *Warfare*, saith the Apostle, we have no other *Weapons* to make use of but these, and these are sufficient, for they are * *mighty through God*, they have a Divine Force upon the Conscience to subdue the most

* *Divina Potentia.* Castalio.

Obstinate

Obstinate and Refractary. This must needs be, because they are of God's Appointment, and therefore his Power goes along with them. We are then to perswade our selves of this, and particularly to own the Authority and Efficacy of the Censure of Excommunication, when it is administred aright, and according to the Rules of the Gospel, and not by partial Administrators. Thus without doubt it is to be look'd upon by us as the great Prop and Supporter of our Religion, as the sure Upholder of True Doctrine and a Holy Life; and as a powerful Means to keep Men within the Bounds of their Duty. And indeed a Church is a Church but in Name, where this Discipline is wholly neglected, and this Divine Institution slighted and contemned.

Having thus finished the First General Head of this Discourse, which was to shew that the Ministers of the Church have Power and Right to censure and punish Offenders, I proceed now to the *Second General* which is this, To make it appear that the same Rulers of the Church have Power to revoke the Sentence of Excommunication against Offenders, when they have sufficient Proof of their being Penitent, and to receive such into the Bosom of the Church again. This is made a settled Constitution in the Church by our Saviour, in *Mat.* 16. 19. —18. 18. where this solemn Act of the Church is call'd *Loosing*, and thence among Christian Writers it goes generally under the Name of *Absolution*: (but I will anon treat of that Place particularly by it self, and therefore dismiss it at present.) This we find practis'd by the Apostle, 2 *Cor.* 2. 6, 7, 8, 9. where we read that the Incestuous Person was upon his Repentance to be taken again into the Communion of the Church of *Corinth*. This is more especially express'd by *forgiving* and *comforting him*, v. 7. *and confirming their Love to him*, ver. 8. And the Apostle himself with some more than ordinary Concernedness gives Order that this be done. And perhaps to this relates the same Apostle's Direction in *Gal.* 6. 1. *If a Man be overtaken in a Fault, ye which are Spiritual*, (ye that are Officers and Governours of the Church) *restore such an one in the Spirit of Meekness*, after ye have severely dealt with him by inflicting the Church-Censures, restore him to the Communion of the Church, and therein shew your Meekness and Mercifulness, as, before, your Severity. And now in order to the *loosing* or *restoring* of the Offender, whose Crime was publick and scandalous, it is absolutely requisite that he give publick Testimonies of his Repentance, as Confession of his Faults, and whatever else is an Evidence of the Reality of his Repentance.

Hence in the Writings of the Fathers of the Church we read of several Sorts of *Penitents*, first, Προσκλαίοντες, *Mourners*, standing without the Porch of the Church, desiring to be pray'd for. Secondly, ἀκροώμενοι, Hearers, they were permitted to come into a Place of the Church call'd νάρθηξ, and stood, and heard the Scriptures read and Sermons. Thirdly, ὑποπίπτοντες, who *lay prostrate* on their Faces till the Bishop pray'd over them. These were admitted to the Nave of the Church. Fourthly, ὑποστάντες, those *that staid* and pray'd with the Faithful, but receiv'd not the Sacrament. Fifthly, μετέχοντες, the *Communicants*, that receiv'd the Eucharist, but were still under Probation, and were not fully restor'd to the Church's Favour. Thus in the Primitive Church, the Penitents had their several Steps and Degrees, wherein they endeavour'd to testifie the Sincerity of their Sorrow and Remorse for their Sins, but most signally they did this by a publick and open Confession of all their Offences, according to the Practice of True Converts and Penitents, *Mat.* 3. 6. *Acts* 19. 18. 2 *Cor.* 2. 6. And 'tis certain that in the Primitive Churches there were none restor'd to the Church without this. Thus I have discoursed on the two General Heads which I propounded; namely, the Power which the Ministers of the Gospel were endow'd with to censure and excommunicate obstinate Offenders, and the Power they have to take off their Censure and Excommunication when the Offenders give sufficient Testimony of their hearty Repentance; and I have distinctly proved both these Powers from distinct Texts of Scripture.

I will now in the last Place demonstrate the Truth of *both these together* from one single Text: And that is *Mat.* 16. 19. *I will give unto thee the Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt bind on Earth, shall be bound in Heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on Earth, shall be loosed in Heaven.* Here the *Power of the Keys* was conferr'd on *Peter*, he being at that Time the Representative of all the Apostles and Rulers of the Church. But we are not

to imagine that this Privilege belong'd wholly to him; for all the other Apostles and Ministers of Christ have an equal Share in it, as is evident from *Mat.* 18. 18. Where Christ speaks to them all, and in the very same Terms and Expressions that he spoke to *Peter*, *Whatsoever ye shall bind on Earth, shall be bound in Heaven; and, whatsoever ye shall loose on Earth, shall be loosed in Heaven.* And again, after his Resurrection, he confirm'd this Privilege to them all, *John* 20. 23. *Whose soever Sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them, and whose soever Sins ye retain, they are retained.* Where our Saviour explains what he had said before, and lets us know that *binding* and *loosing* are the same with *retaining*, and *remitting* or *forgiving*.

Why this is call'd the Power of the *Keys* may be learn'd from *Isa.* 22. 20, 21, 22. *I will call my Servant* Eliakim (who here is made by the Prophet a Figure of Christ and his Kingdom) *and I will commit the Government into his Hand; and the Keys of the House of* David *will I lay upon his Shoulder; so he shall open, and none shall shut, and he shall shut, and none shall open.* That is, he shall have the full Administration of all Things in the Kingdom, for 'tis a plain Allusion to the Office and Authority of a *Steward*; the *Keys* of the House were wont to be given to him, and he had the sole Power to lock or unlock for his Master or Lord. The *Keys* were a Badge of his Office, and an Ensign of his Power, and on solemn Days he wore them on his Shoulder. Whence 'tis said in the foregoing Place, *the Key of the House of* David *will I lay upon his Shoulder.* And without doubt there is an Allusion to this known Custom in *Isa.* 9. 6. (which is spoken of our Saviour) *the Government shall be upon his Shoulder.* Now then hence it is plain that Christ's *giving the Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven* to his Apostles and successive Ministers signifies the Power of governing the Church, (which is styled the * *Kingdom of Heaven*, because it is appointed in Order to Heaven and Happiness) and having the full Administration in it. Besides that *Heaven* it self (as I shall shew afterwards) may be said to be open'd and shut thro' the Ministry of the Gospel. It is true, Christ only *hath the Key of* David, *Rev.* 3. 7. so as to open and shut at his Pleasure, *i. e.* he only hath the Absolute and Supreme Power in his Church, which was prefigur'd by the House of *David*; but Christ's Apostles and Ministers *have the Keys* also, and given to them by him, *i. e.* They have a subordinate Power in God's House under him. The Power of the Keys is originally and fundamentally in Christ the Head of the Church, but under him this Power is placed ministerially in the Pastors of the Church. They, and they alone, have Power to shut and open according to the Order and Directions of Christ their Master, whose *Stewards* they are 1 *Cor.* 4. 1.

* *Mat.* 5. 19. —11. 11. —13. 24, 31, 47, 52.

But in what particular Instances is this Power of the Keys exerted? And in what peculiar Respects are the Ministers of the Gospel said *to open* and *shut*, *to loose* and *bind*? This is the Demand which I am concern'd to give Satisfaction to, and I will do it in these following Particulars.

First, the *Power of the Keys*, or of *Binding* and *Loosing* is exerted by the *Prayers* of God's Ministers; as appears from *Jam.* 5. 14, 15. *Is any man sick among you? Let him call for the Elders of the Church, and let them pray over him, and if he hath committed Sins, they shall be forgiven him.* Tho' God alone can directly and absolutely forgive Sins, yet he is pleased to do it by his Ministers. By their Intercession this Forgiveness is derived unto true Penitents. * Archbishop *Usher* hath prov'd that the *Roman* Church heretofore observed this, and the *Greek* Church absolves after this manner, that is, in the way of *Prayer*.

* *Answer to a Challenge made by a Jesuit.* Chap. 5.

Secondly, This Power is exerted in the *Preaching of the Gospel*. Dr. *Lightfoot*, in his *Harmony of the* New Testament, explains it from the Use of these Words *binding* and *loosing* among the *Jews*, which, he saith, signifie *to prohibit* or *to permit*, or to declare and teach what is prohibited and what is permitted, that is, what is lawful and what unlawful. So the Apostles and other Ministers guided by the Spirit are enabled to inform Men rightly concerning their Duty; yea, their Office is to tell Men what they are to do, and what not. But this is not all that is done in the *Preaching of the Gospel* and in the Ministry of the Word. Hereby is not only shew'd and declar'd the Will of God, but the good and evil Consequences, the Rewards and Punishments which attend the obeying and disobeying of his Will, are likewise declared and publickly denounced. Every Minister of the Gospel hath Power to offer Forgiveness of Sins to all sincere Penitents and true Believers; yea, they have Power to assure to them in Christ's

Christ's Name this Forgiveness. For the Apostle tells us that *they have the Word* (which in the Verse before he calls *the Ministry) of Reconciliation committed to them*, 2 Cor. 5. 19. and that makes them the *Embassadors of Christ*, as they are call'd in the ensuing Verse. By their Office and Function they are authoriz'd to bring and tender the glad Tidings of the Gospel to all Sinners that repent of their former Miscarriages. A Minister may, on good Grounds, say, (to any such Person), as Christ himself, *Be of good chear; thy Sins are forgiven thee.* Any private Christian that understands the Gospel aright, may declare this Forgiveness to Sinners, but not *Authoritatively* and by way of *Office*, as Ministers can. And, on the other hand, they have Power and Authority given them by Christ to declare God's Wrath against all impenitent Sinners, and to proclaim and denounce Judgment and Condemnation as the due Recompence of their Impenitency.

This then I may confidently assert, That *the Power of the Keys*, or *binding* and *loosing*, which belongs to all the True Ministers of the Gospel, is the pronouncing Remission of Sins to those that sincerely follow and obey the Gospel which is preached to them, and the declaring (on the contrary) to those, who disobey the Word which they Preach, that there is no Forgiveness of their Sins; but they remain in their Guilt, and shall be everlastingly damned. Thus 'tis clear that our Saviour hath given unto his Ministers *the Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven.* In the Sense that I have proposed, they are truly said to *open* and *shut* the Gates of Heaven; the former, by ascertaining true Believers of their everlasting Happiness; the latter, by denouncing eternal Torments to all Unbelievers.

Thirdly, The Power of the Keys consists in *administring the Sacraments.* By Baptism every Minister of Christ opens the Door for the Entrance of the baptized into the Church, which is the Kingdom of Heaven, and into Heaven it self; for we are assured, That, *He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved.* In the administring of this Sacrament, but more-especially of the *other*, Pardon of Sin thro' the Merits of Christ Jesus is exhibited, yea, sealed unto us; for these Institutions were design'd to be Seals of the Promises of the Gospel, and of Remission of Sin more-especially. In this Sense a Minister of Christ, in the right giving of the Sacraments to those that are Worthy, may be truly said *to remit their Sins.* And, by a just debarring of undue Persons from the partaking of these Mysteries, he may as truly be said to *retain their Sins.*

Fourthly, The Power of the Keys committed by Christ to his Ministers consists in their *Ruling* and *Governing* those that are in the Church, in giving Laws and Prescriptions for the regulating of their Manners; in taking Care of all the Members of the Church, and in supervising the whole Flock. And indeed whatever belongs to Ecclesiastick *Discipline and Government*, all that is comprised in *Jurisdiction*, appertains to the Power of the Keys, and is deservedly call'd *Binding* and *Loosing*; For in the Ruling Part of the Ministry there is always a confining and restraining of some Persons, and a giving more Liberty to others. The same Rules, with the same Degrees and Circumstances, will not suit all the Members of a Church, and therefore it belongs to prudent Governours and Stewards of Christ's House to dispense and assign every one their Portion, as their Conditions and Cases require.

But Fifthly, There is something more than all this intended and signified by *the Power of the Keys*, and the Prerogative of *binding* and *loosing*, *shutting* and *opening*, *retaining* and *remitting Sin.* And so I come to that which I chiefly design'd in producing the Text in St. *Matthew* (with the Explication of it in that of St. *John*) which mentions these Things. It is plain that the Jurisdiction of the Church and the Ministers of Christ doth more-especially and signally consist in those two things which I have before been speaking of; namely, the *Ejecting* of scandalous Persons out of the Church, and *Taking them in again*, after they have given sufficient Evidence of their hearty Repentance. These, as I have shew'd, are generally known by the Name of *Excommunication* and *Absolution.* In these more especially, I say, doth the Ecclesiastick Power and Jurisdiction appear, which is the *Power of the Keys* most properly so call'd. For in *Excommunication* the Keys are exercised in shutting Offenders out of the Church; and in *Absolution*, they are made use of to open the Door of the

Church to let them into it upon Submission and Repentance. This is so plain and obvious an Explication of the Privilege of the *Keys* given by Christ to his Ministers, that no Man can possibly withstand it: For he can't but own the Congruity and Fitness, yea, the Propriety and Strictness of the Exposition; for the Use and End of *Keys* is to *open* and *shut*, to *let in*, and to *let out*; which fully express those two Parts of Ecclesiastical Discipline.

And further, as the Power of the Keys is express'd in other Terms; namely, *binding* and *loosing*, we cannot but see that it is rightly applied to the Censure of the Church by *Excommunication*, and to the *Restoring* of the excommunicated Person by admitting him into the Church again. The former of these is deservedly call'd *binding*, because the Person by that Ecclesiastical Censure is *bound* up and *restrain'd*, he is kept from Communion and Converse, yea, his Sin is bound upon him; whence this part of the Ecclesiastical Discipline is called by Christ *retaining of Sins*, because, by vertue of the Sentence of Excommunication, the Sins of the Offender remain and abide upon him unpardon'd. The latter part of the Church's Power hath justly the Denomination of *Loosing*, because hereby the Person is loosed from his Bonds, and set free from his Restraint and Confinement, and by being received into the Bosom of the Church, in that way that Christ hath appointed, he is absolved from his former Guilt: On which Account this Second Part of the Church Discipline is call'd by Christ himself *remitting of Sins*. For tho' God alone forgives Sins *properly*, *absolutely*, and *sovereignly*, yet the Ministers of God do this *ministerially*, *derivatively*, *conditionally* and *declaratively*. God forgives by his Ministers, whilst they exercise their Power in his Name, and for his Honour and Glory; and their Power of Binding and Loosing is subordinate to the Absolution or Condemnation of the Supreme Tribunal, that is, of God himself. The Pastors of the Church forgive not Sins *immediately*, but use the *Means prescribed* by the Gospel, call'd *loosing*, and so the Remission of Sins obtain'd is ascribed *to the* Pastors: For so 'tis said by our Lord himself, *Whose soever Sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them.* Here he gives Authority to the Apostles and their Successors, *i. e.* the Ministers of the Church, to absolve Sinners. And the Practice of it we find in *Gal.* 6. 1. which I have spoken of before.

And here I must observe further, That in the Commission which is solemnly given to the Pastors of the Church to *remit* or *forgive* Sins, it is necessarily implied that the Offender must *confess* his Sin, and shew his entire Sorrow for it. Here is included a Command to acknowledge his Fault publickly, and give Proof of his Repentance, because the Pastor cannot exercise his Office of *Loosing* without this: He can't receive the Sinner into the Church again, till he hath shew'd himself a true Penitent. Thus this one Text of the Power of the *Keys* contains in it and confirms the main Things that I have said on this Subject of the Censures of the Church, that is, in short, it authorizes and establishes *Excommunication*, and *Absolution*, and in order to this latter *Penitential Confession*.

Of Corporal Punishments *for* Spiritual Faults.

I HAVE shew'd in the foregoing Discourse that *Admonitions* and *Excommunication*, with the different Degrees of it are the Penalties which the Church hath a right to, and makes use of against Hereticks, Schismaticks, and prophane Livers. And it is evident from what hath been said, That these are the only Weapons of the Spiritual Warfare; for the Church-Punishments or Corrections for the abuse of what is amiss are *Spiritual*, and belong to the Soul, to distinguish them from the *Civil Penalties* and *Penal Laws*. Wherefore the Church can punish those Offenders no other ways than those before mention'd. But it may now be asked, Whether Corporal Punishments may be inflicted by the *Secular Magistrate* on those that are found guilty of notorious Heresy, or Schism, or Scandalous Living. There is no doubt as to the last of these; but the great Question is concerning the two former, and especially the first of them, on which I will fix at this Time. The Two great Demands then that are to be satisfied

satisfied are these, First, Who are *Hereticks?* or, What is *Heresy?* Secondly, Whether Hereticks may be corporally *punish'd* for being so?

First, As to the Nature of Heresy and Hereticks, we are to know, That the Word Αἵρεσις, *Heresy*, was used at first by the Greek Philosophers, and other Professors of Learning among them, as *Secta* among the Latins, in a good Sense; or at least in a middle and indifferent one, and signified any Opinion that a Man *chooses* to maintain; the Word had its Original from that *Choice*. But afterwards, when the Word was taken into the Church, it was always used in a bad Sense, to wit, For an *erroneous* or *false Opinion*. Thus we read of the *Sect* (or *Heresy* according to the Original) *of the Sadducees*, Acts 5. 17. and *Sect of the Pharisees*, Acts 15. 5. and the *Sect of the Nazarenes*, Acts 24. 5. The Jews used it in the worst Sense when they objected *Heresy* to the Apostles and other Christians, *Acts* 24. 14. And in the Apostolical Epistles, the Word is of ill Signification; as in 1 *Cor.* 11. 19. *There must be Heresies among you.* So in *Gal.* 5. 20. where *Heresies* are join'd with *Seditions*, *Murder*, and *Drunkenness*. And St. *Peter* foretells that there shall be *False Teachers that shall privily bring in damnable Heresies*, 2 Pet. 2. 1. And *a Man that is a Heretick*, is he that either brings in, or defends and maintains any damnable Heresies, *Tit.* 3. 10. Whence it is plain that the Apostles make Use of the Words *Heresy* and *Heretick* in a bad Sense; the former to signify a False Doctrine that opposes any necessary Article of the Christian Faith; and the latter, to signify the Person that asserts such a Doctrine.

Among the *Fathers* and *Councils*, and the *Writers of the Church*, and the *Determinations* of *Emperors*, there is the same Signification of these Words; but they express it variously. I will mention only at present some Passages out of the most celebrated *Commentators on the Councils*, and out of *Justinian's Code*. They are *Hereticks*, saith *Balsamon*, * who have not right Opinions concerning the Christian Religion. And in another place, this is his Definition of an Heretick: "† Whosoever follows not the Orthodox Faith of the "*Nicene* Fathers." According to *Zonaras*, they are ‖ Hereticks that erre concerning the Faith. * He that is not Orthodox, is an Heretick, saith *Photius*. † They are said to be Hereticks, saith the *Justinian Code*, who refuse to assent to the Four Oecumenical Councils. In another place of the said *Code*, 'tis thus more particularly declared; "‖ They that receive not the Decrees of the Four Coun-"cils, *viz.* Of *Nice*, *Constantinople*, *Ephesus*, and *Chalcedon*, "are called *Hereticks*.

* Αἱρετικοὶ λέγονται οἱ μὴ δοξάζοντες ὀρθῶς τὰ τῆς χριστιανῶν. *Ad* Can. XXV. *Concil.* Carthag.

† *In* Collect. Constitut. Eccles. *in* Paratit. *ad* Tit. 5.

‖ Οἱ περὶ τὴν πίστιν σφαλλόμενοι. *Ad* XXXIII. Can. Laod.

* Αἱρετικὸς ἐστιν ὁ μὴ ὢν ὀρθόδοξος. *In* Nomocan.

† *Hæretici dicti sunt, qui quatuor Oecumenicis Conciliis Fidem adhibere detrectant.* Lib. 1. Tit. *de Hæretic. & Manichæis. in Lege quicunque.*

‖ Cod. lib. 1. Tit. 1. lib. 4.

These are the general Definitions of Hereticks; but there is Need of a particular and closer Account of them, or else the Number of Hereticks will be much larger than any good Man would desire. For though we reverence the Four First Councils, yet all they said or determined is not the necessary Matter of Faith; and, consequently, though we dissent from them in some Points, yet we incurr not the Censure of Heresy. But this is the true and only Notion of *Heresy*, properly so call'd, that is, (as an Apostle hath styled it) of *damnable Heresy*; That it is a Dissenting from the Catholick Faith in any one or more Fundamental Articles of Christianity, together with an obstinate defending of this Dissent.

First, I say, *Heresy* is a Deviation from the Faith of the Catholick Church in such Articles as we learn from the Holy Scriptures to be of the *Foundation*; namely, The Being of a God; The Doctrine of the Trinity; The Divinity and Satisfaction of Christ; His Resurrection and Ascension, and His Coming again to Judgment; The Immortality of Humane Souls; The Rewards of Heaven, and, The Torments of Hell. And he is truly an *Heretick* who denies any of these Articles. But we cannot, and must not give him that Name who is erroneous in some Lesser Matters of Christianity, and dissents from the Church in Propositions of a Lower Nature, and such as admit of some Dispute and Debate, but do not belong to the Substance of Faith or Manners. I do not take all those for *Hereticks*, who have that Brand set upon them by *Irenæus*, or *Epiphanius*, in their Books against Hereticks; for, accord-

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ing to them, those are *Hereticks* that hold any odd Opinion. But St. *Augustine* was of another Mind, who tells us, That * Persons may be ignorant of many Things, and yet the Christian Faith may be intire: And in some Things they may be Erroneous, and yet without the Imputation of the Crime of *Heretical* Doctrine.

* *Multa ignorare possunt salvâ Christianâ Fide, & alicubi errare sine aliquo* Hæretici *dogmatis crimine.* De Pecc. Orig. cont. *Pelag. cap.* 23.

Secondly, As an *Heretick* is one that holds Doctrines contrary to the Holy Scripture, and that in Substantial and Fundamental Points, so he asserts and maintains these Points with great *Wilfulness* and *Obstinacy*. I had observed before that the Greek Word signifies an Opinion taken *up of* a Man's own *Choice*. And *Athanasius* puts this Question, **Whence is Heresy so call'd?* And gives this Answer, It hath its Denomination from this, That Men *choose* such or such a particular and peculiar Opinion, and stick to it. And hence, perhaps, it is, that the *Hebrews* call Hereticks מינים, *Minim*, from *Min Species*, Heresy being some select Species of Religion, distinguish'd from others. Heresy is placed in the Elective Faculty as well as in the Understanding; for it is a willful and tenacious Maintaining of a false Proposition in Religion, contrary to the Holy Writ, and the General Suffrage of the Christian Church. He is not to be reckoned in the Catalogue of *Hereticks* who entertains false Persuasions about the substantial Articles of Religion out of mere Ignorance, or from simple Seduction, or from Rashness and Unadvisedness only. But he merits that Title who openly and publickly maintains those Persuasions out of Self-confidence and Presumption, out of Pride and Arrogance, and a Spirit of Singularity and Contradiction, or out of a greedy Desire of Worldly Gain and Applause. Whence a *Heretick*, according to St. **Augustine*, is one that for temporal Profit, or chiefly for Vain-*glory* and Mastery, begets or follows false and new Opinions in Religion. And one of the Greek Fathers makes † Ambition and Love of Superiority to be the Parents of Heresies. When Persons are thus principled and acted, 'tis no Wonder that they with all Stubbornness defend and propagate their Erroneous Doctrines, and stiffly maintain them after they have been duely informed of their Mistakes, and friendly admonish'd about them. This is the brief Character of an *Heretick*, and we see *Tertullian*'s Words are true, That * *those who are Hereticks are no Christians.* And thence *Theodosius* and *Valentinian* did by publick Edict forbid the Hereticks of their Time to call themselves *Christians*. For it is very hard to reconcile True Christianity with the Denial of the Substantial and Fundamental Articles of the Christian Faith, and with the Willful and Pertinacious Defence of that Denial. So much in Satisfaction to the First Demand, What is *Heresy?* and, Who are *Hereticks?*

* Πόθεν λέγεται αἵρεσις; ἀπὸ τοῦ αἱρεῖσθαί τι ἴδιον καὶ τοῦτο ἐξακολουθεῖν. *In* Quæst. *ad* Antiochum.

* *Qui alicujus temporalis commodi, & maximè Gloriæ, Principatûsque gratiâ falsas ac novas Opiniones vel gignit vel sequitur.* Lib. *de* Util. credendi. Cap. 1.

† Φιλαρχία τῶν αἱρέσεων μήτηρ. Theophylact. *in* 5. cap. Epist. *ad* Gal.

* *De Præscript.* cap. 37.

Secondly, We are to inquire, Whether Hereticks, *i. e.* such as I have described them to be, are any ways to be punished by the Civil Magistrate? Or, which is the same, Whether to the Spiritual and Ecclesiastical Punishments may be added a Secular or Bodily Penalty? To resolve this fully, I will proceed, First, Negatively; and, Secondly, Positively. On the Negative Part, this is the Proposition that I maintain, That Hereticks, though they be heinous Offenders, yet are not to be punish'd with Death. This I will prove, First, From the Direction which our Saviour hath left us in this Case: Secondly, From the Doctrine and Practice of the Apostles: Thirdly, From the Practice of the Christian Churches afterwards: Fourthly, From the Nature and Genius of the Christian Religion.

I begin with the First, The *Direction which Christ Himself* hath *left* us in the *Parable of the Tares*, Mat. 13. 24, *&c.* and the Explication of it, *Ver.* 37. *&c.* By the *Tares* are meant not only Heretical Doctrines, but the Teachers of those Doctrines; for our Saviour saith expressly, *The Tares are the Children of the Wicked One*, Ver. 38. *i. e.* those False Teachers who are set on work by the Evil Spirit, to infuse Errors into the Minds of Men. And these False Teachers (who are represented by *Tares*) are not *Pagans*, or *Jews*, or *Mahometans*, as some

ſome interpret this Place; for theſe Perſons are out of the Lord's Field, and both in Name and Thing are eſtranged from the true Religion. But the Perſons here ſpoken of are of another Character; they pretend to Chriſtianity, and are outwardly of the Chriſtian Church; for 'tis ſaid, theſe Tares are *in the Houſeholder's Field*, and *they are ſown among the Wheat and the good Seed*, Ver. 24, 25, 27. Therefore it can't be expounded concerning thoſe fore-mentioned Perſons, but concerning Heretical Seducers, who bear the Name of *Chriſtians*, and converſe in the *Church*; and they are very fitly and ſignificantly compared unto *Tares*, they being miſchievous Weeds in the Field of Chriſt's Church. But what Courſe is to be taken with them? Are theſe Heretical Teachers to be uſed with the utmoſt Severity? are they to be ſent out of the World? This Demand is reſolved in the Houſholder's Anſwer to his Servant's Queſtion, who ask'd him, *Wilt thou then that we go and gather up the Tares*; i. e. That we root them up and deſtroy them? *Ver.* 28. for the *Gathering them up* here ſpoken of, is in order to the *binding them up in Bundles to burn them*, as we ſee *Ver.* 30. (ſo that this Queſtion is equivalent with that in *Luke* 9. 54. *Wilt thou that we command Fire to come down from Heaven, and conſume them?*) *No*, ſaith our Saviour, by no means; and gives this Reaſon for it, *Ver.* 29. *Leſt while ye gather up the Tares, ye root up alſo the Wheat with them*; that is, If Mens Lives were to be touch'd for preaching Heretical Doctrine, this would open a Gap to great Diſorders; for thus every one that is voted a Heretick, would be in Danger of his Life. The Good Corn would be liable to be pluck'd up, as well as the Tares. Wherefore this ſevere Courſe muſt not be taken now, but only at the Harveſt, which is the End of the World, and the Day of Judgment. *In the Time of Harveſt, I will ſay to the Reapers, Gather ye together the Tares*, &c. *Ver.* 30. This clearly ſhews what was our Saviour's Judgment and Determination in the Caſe before us: He held it not lawful to put any Man to Death upon the Account of Religion, *i. e.* For holding Erroneous and Heretical Opinions. Not that all Puniſhments are unlawful in this Caſe, ſeeing by *gathering up*, or *gathering together* (as the Word is afterwards rendred) *the Tares*, a Capital or Extreme Puniſhment only is meant.

Secondly, I argue from the *Doctrine* and *Example* of the *Apoſtles*. St. *Paul*'s Deciſion is this, *A Man that is an Heretick, after the Firſt and Second Admonition, reject*, Tit. 3. 10. He would have him to be *rejected*, not to be deprived of his Life. He would have ſuch a Perſon to be once and again admoniſhed and warn'd in a Brotherly Way, and if that eaſier Method ſucceeds not, he adviſes, That he be caſt out of the Church, (for that he means by *rejecting*) and not out of the World. And we may obſerve, That in all thoſe Places where the Apoſtle ſpeaks concerning Hereticks, and the ſevere Diſcipline that is to be uſed towards them, there is not the leaſt Hint of puniſhing them by Death; there is no delivering them over to the Magiſtrate's Sword. Whence it is proper to inferr, That thoſe Perſons extend the *Magiſtrate's Office* too far (yea, much farther than God hath appointed) who aſſert, That it is within their Power and Juriſdiction to put Hereticks to Death.

But do we not read, that the Apoſtles themſelves had this Power? Is it not recorded, That St. *Peter* ſtruck *Ananias* and *Sapphira* dead? I anſwer, Firſt, The Caſe is not the ſame; for thoſe Sinners were ſmitten with Death for a Triple Crime, to wit, an Impious breaking of their Vows, and the Guilt of Sacrilege, and Lying to the Holy Ghoſt, which altogether are not to be compar'd with *bare Hereſy*. Secondly, This was an Extraordinary Caſe; and what was done, was done by a Divine Inſtinct and Direction, and therefore is not to be produced to authorize a Thing of an Ordinary Nature. Thirdly, It was not only Extraordinary, but Miraculous. The Fact was done not only by a Divine Direction, but by a Power that was above Humane Strength. Let not thoſe then make uſe of this Example, who can't work Miracles as the Apoſtles did. Laſtly, Though theſe are all of them good Accounts of the Action of the Apoſtle, and ſhew, That the alledging of it, cannot be made uſe of to prove that *Hereticks* may be puniſh'd with Death, yet I conceive this Inſtance may be anſwer'd more ſimply and plainly thus, That St. *Peter* did not ſtrike *Ananias* and *Sapphira* dead, as is alledg'd. This is clear in the Hiſtory (as any Man will acknowledge that peruſes it); for it is not ſaid, yea, it is not hinted in the leaſt, that the

the Apostle inflicted this Punishment on these Persons; but only this is said, That, after St. *Peter* had laid their Crime before them, and rebuked them sharply, *they fell down and gave up the Ghost*, Acts 5. 5, 10. So that it was the immediate Judgment of God upon them; the Divine Arm struck them dead on the Place. There is no Reason then to produce this Text to prove the Lawfulness of taking away Mens Lives for the Maintaining of Heresy, as if this were legitimated here by the Apostle's Example. There is not the Shadow of any such Thing here. Neither Christ nor his Apostles allow of it, nor is it approved of by those that follow'd them. Which leads me to the

Third Thing I mentioned; namely, That the putting to Death for Heretical Opinions is *against the Sentiments and Practice* of the *Primitive Christians that succeeded the Apostles.* Fathers and Councils might be quoted for this in great abundance. St. *Chrysostom* is peremptory in this Matter, * *An Heretick is not to be put to Death*, saith he. St. *Augustine*, though he was persuaded that Heretical Men were to be silenc'd and suppress'd, yet, by no means, thought it lawful to punish them by taking away their Lives: † He tells us, That this was the Persuasion of all good Men in the Catholick Church. It is a new and unheard of way of Preaching, to force Men by Violence to believe, saith || *Gregory the Great.* As for the Primitive *Councils*, we know how they behaved themselves: None of the 318 Bishops that were at the Council of *Nice*; none of the 150 Fathers that were Members of the *Constantinopolitan* Council; none of those 200 that made up the famous Synod of *Ephesus*; and none of the 630 that were present at the Council of *Chalcedon*, did ever shew their Inclination to have Sanguinary Laws made against the *Arians*, the *Macedonians*, the *Nestorians*, and other *Hereticks* of those *Times*, for the confuting and baffling of whom they were conven'd in Council. The *Cap. 26. * Fourth Council of *Toledo* declares against putting to Death for Heresy. And from the Times of the Apostles, to the Council of *Constance*, (that is, for 2 Thousand and Three Hundred Years) there is not one Council to be produced that delivered up Hereticks to the Secular Magistrate to be bereav'd of their Lives; nor do we find that in all that Time, (excepting one, perhaps, *Michael* the Eastern Emperor, who is said to have used the *Manicheans* in *Phrygia* and *Lycania* too severely in the Ninth Century) there was any Prince or Magistrate who put those Hereticks to Death that were condemned by the Councils.

* Οὐ δεῖ ἀναιρεῖν αἱρετικόν. Hom. 46. *in* Matth.

† *Nullis tamen bonis in Ecclesiâ Catholicâ hoc placet, si usque ad mortem in quenquam, licet Hæreticum, sæviatur.* Contra Cresc. lib. 3. cap. 50.

|| Epist. *ad Episcop.* Constantinop.

Next then let us see the Practice of the *Emperors*. *Constantine the Great* was never inclined to take off that Arch-Heretick *Arius* with the Civil Sword, tho' he was very insolent and provoking. Nor did *Theodosius* attempt any such thing against the *Arians*, though he was of the Orthodox Side, and asserted the Decrees of the *Nicene* Council. And as for the other Emperors afterwards, in whose Time the Church was vexed and disturbed with the Heresies of the *Pelagians*, *Manichees*, *Donatists*, &c. we don't read that the Christian Princes, under whom these pernicious Hereticks lived, ever threatned them with Death, much less inflicted it on them.

But here I shall have the *Imperial Laws* themselves produced against what I have said; for some tell us, That they read there, that the Christian Emperors put out Edicts to punish Hereticks with Death. In the first Book of the *Code* of *Justinian*, Title the Fifth, namely, Concerning *Hereticks and Manicheans*, it is decreed by the Emperors *Valentinian* and *Martian*, That the *Manicheans* shall be *punish'd* or restrain'd * *with the utmost* or *last Punishment.* And this is said to be the first Decree against the Life of Hereticks; they having been before punish'd with Banishment and pecuniary Penalties. Under the same Title it is said, That *Theodosius* and *Valentinian* order'd, That the *Manicheans* should be † *deliver'd to the last Punishment*; and by this those who produce these Edicts against us understand no less than punishing with Death. And so, when it is decreed in the same *Title*, Law *Quicunque*, That the foresaid Hereticks are to be || *capitally punish'd*, these Men are very confident that taking away their Lives is meant. There is a great * Lawyer (one that is a zealous Assertor of the Roman Cause, and

* *Ultimo supplicio coerceri.* *Lege* Quicunque.

† *Ultimo supplicio tradi.*

|| *Capite plectantur.*

* Paul Windeck.

and a bitter Adversary of Protestants) who laughs at all those who understand the foresaid Passages or Expressions any otherwise than of punishing with Death.

But this Ridiculous Confidence of his may receive a Check from these following Considerations: First, The Christian Emperors in their Edicts and Laws particularly declar'd their Deference to the Divine Law, that is the *Holy Scriptures*; and what *They* have determined concerned this Matter, we have already heard. Wherefore it is not probable that the foregoing Expressions signify any Sanguinary Punishment; for this would contradict the Laws of the *New Testament*, which their Imperial Majesties profess to be guided and determined by.

Secondly, I appeal to the most celebrated Masters and Professors of the Imperial Laws; for even these are on our side clearly. I will mention but a Pair of them at present, *Wesenbec* and *Vigelius*, who in their excellent Commentaries on that Title of the *Code*, *De Hæreticis & Manichæis*, before-named, interpret the *Utmost* or *Ultimate Punishment*, not concerning Loss of Life, but perpetual Deportation or Banishment, and they assign very substantial Reasons for it.

Thirdly, The Imperial Law interprets it self; for in the last Book of the *Code*, Title *De Executoribus & Exactoribus*, that Perpetual Deportation I mentioned, is expressly call'd, The *Ultimate Punishment*. Yea, and in the fore-cited Law *Quicunque*, the Punishment of Deportation is styl'd, *A Capital Punishment*. Whence we learn what is the Meaning of *capite plecti*, and *capite puniri*, in the Imperial Constitutions: It is no other than *capitis diminutio*, that is, The Change of his State and Condition for the worse; and this *capital Diminution* is either when the *Jus Libertatis* is taken away from a Man, as when of a Free Man he is made a Slave; or when he is depriv'd of the *Jus Civitatis*, as by Deportation and Captivity. In short, the Learned may consult the Title *Of the Signification of Words*, and there find that *Capital* signifies not *Deadly* or *Fatal*, but imports only *Slavery* or *Banishment*, which are Civil Deaths. If this be consider'd, the Interpretation which *Windeck*, and some others, have offered of the preceding Passages of the *Code*, will be discovered to be groundless, and the Quality of the Punishment there mentioned will easily be known.

But after all, tho' we should grant (without any Reason to compell us) that the *last Punishment* and *capital Punishment* are to be understood in the forecited Place concerning cutting off by Death, yet this would not overthrow the Proposition I have been defending; namely, that none are to suffer Death for Heresy, that is, mere Heresy. For the *Manichees* (of whom the foregoing Laws of the Emperors speak) were not mere Hereticks, as *Ecclesiastical History*, and the particular *History* of that Sect, and the *Edicts of the Emperors* about them plainly testifie. From all these it appears, that they were not only Enemies of the Church, but State, and Violaters of the Civil Peace, and Disturbers of the Empire, on which latter Account they might deservedly forfeit their Lives, and justly incurr the *ultimate Penalty* or capital Punishment in the Sense which some understand it.

If it be again objected, That 'tis in express Terms said in one of the Imperial Laws against Hereticks, That the Censure and * *Inquisition against them ought to reach even to Death*; I answer, That those who understand this concerning the putting of Hereticks to Death, do miserably mistake the Words, and the Design of them. For they are to be interpreted merely concerning the nulling and making void of the *Last-Wills* of Hereticks; for tho' the Civil Laws did not inflict Death upon them, yet they punish'd them after they were dead, by ordering their Wills to be raz'd, and made ineffectual.

* *Inquisitionem in mortem extendi debere.* Leg. contra Manichæos.

Having thus satisfied the *Objections* which have been raised against the Assertion which I undertook to make good, I think we may now resume it with Advantage, and conclude, That the primitive Churches of Christ did not allow of Bloudy Laws on the Account of Religion, and particularly against Hereticks. These were not known or exercised in those ancient Times. Nothing of this Nature was intended or put in Practice in the Reigns of the most pious Emperors of the first Ages.

Fourthly, I argue from the *Nature and Genius of the Christian Religion*, That the putting of the most Erroneous and Heretical Persons to Death is not to be allowed. Our Saviour acquainted his Disciples, That *his Kingdom was not of this World*, John 18. 36. that is, It is not such as is manag'd by worldly and secular Power, and especially not by Bloud and Slaughter. Therefore his Followers, especially the Ministers and Rulers of his Church must remember of what Nature and Kind their Master's Kingdom is, and must behave themselves accordingly. At another Time, when the Disciples would needs call for Fire from Heaven, to consume those that refused to receive Christ and them, he rebuked them very sharply, and plainly told them, *They knew not what manner of Spirit they were of*, Luke 9. 54. As much as to say, They did not consider what Spirit they were acted by; namely, a fierce and revengeful Spirit, *which* was wholly disagreeable to the End of his coming into the World. For (as he adds) the *Son of Man is not come to destroy Men's Lives, but to save them.* His Followers therefore are to imitate him in this, and more-especially the Pastors of the Church are to remember that no other Sword is committed to them but that of the Spirit. False Teachers and Seducers were put to Death under the *Jewish* Law. *Elias* by a particular and extraordinary Impulse was commission'd to use the like Severity toward a great Number of False Prophets. But it is otherwise under the Dispensation of the *Gospel*; the Ministers of Christ Jesus are under a special Command to be Merciful and Compassionate, and to do Things worthy of their loving Saviour. *The Servant of the Lord* (i. e. He that is devoted to Christ's Service in the Ministry of the Church) *must not strive, but be gentle unto all Men, apt to teach, Patient, in Meekness instructing those that oppose themselves*, and the Truth, *if God peradventure will give them Repentance to the acknowledging of the Truth*, 2 Tim. 2. 24, 25. Whence we learn that the Guides and Officers of the Church are to be merciful and tender-hearted, and Enemies to Rigour and Severity. They are, as loving and affectionate Fathers, to pity the Mistakes and Errors of their Children, and not to endeavour to take away their Lives for false Opinions in Religion. This is according to the Rules of the Christian Religion, which is merciful and pitiful.

That this was the Sense of the ancient Christians appears from that of *Lactantius*, against those who in his Days maintain'd that Religion was to be defended by Violence, * These two, saith he, are very different and inconsistent, Slaughter and Religion: Nor can Truth be join'd with Force and Bloud, or Righteousness with Cruelty. The primitive Christians were perswaded that a Spirit of Meekness, Gentleness, and Love, best becomes Christianity, and that Rigour, Cruelty, and Slaughter are Unchristian; and that by the Exercise of these the Heavenly *Dove* is transformed into a *Vulture*, a Bird of Prey. Yea, under the very *Jewish* Oeconomy, Religion and Slaughter were thought to be incompatible: For King *David* was not thought to be a fit Person to build a House to God, because he had been a Man of Bloud, and had been vers'd in Wars and Battles. Wherefore that Religious Work was devolv'd to King *Solomon*, he being a Man of Peace. Surely then, under the Gospel, Religion and Mercifulness are best match'd; and Christianity and Rigour are irreconcilable, especially in Matters relating to the Church. So that if there were no Precept or Example in the *New Testament* to back the Doctrine I have been defending, yet 'tis sufficient that it is agreeable to the Tenor of the Gospel, and the Nature of the Christian Religion, which is gentle and merciful.

* *Longè diversa sunt carnificina & pietas; nec potest aut Veritas cum Vi, aut Justitia cum Crudelitate conjungi.* Institut. lib. 5.

Other Reasons might be assign'd of this Doctrine (that is, Why none are to be put to Death for holding or upholding of Heretical Opinions) as this among others, That these Persons are Faulty only as to their Minds and Perswasions, not their Practices. Again, many of these speak and act according to their Consciences, tho' 'tis their Unhappiness that they are Erroneous ones: But other Criminals, that are put to Death by the Magistrate, do generally act against their Consciences, and the Principles of Natural Light and Reason which they yet retain in their Breasts. Besides, there is some hope that the Minds

Minds and Judgments of seduced Persons may be alter'd, and that then they will return to the Truth: Whereas, *Malefactors* sinning against plain moral Principles are hardned; and there is little Hope of their being reduced. Further, it might be added, that suffering Death for Religion (whether it be on a true Account or not) generally spreads the Perswasion among the People; and not only Truth, but Error is propagated by this Means. Wherefore Sanguinary Laws for Religion are to be disallowed of.

Before I proceed to the other part of my Discourse, I will briefly reflect on the unhappy Opinion and Practice of *Papists*, and (I am griev'd I must add) of some *Protestants* which hath been a Contradiction to that Doctrine I have been establishing. Let us see this abroad and at home, and first among those of the *Roman* Communion. Some tell us that St. *Dominic*, the Founder of the *Mendicant* Order, was the first that maintain'd and preach'd it in the Roman Church that Hereticks ought to be put to Death. The same we find asserted and defended by several of their Writers, especially by *Gregory de Valencia tom. 3. disput. 1. qu. 2. Thomas Aquinas, 2. 2. Quæst. 10. Artic. 8. Bellarmin, lib. 3. de Laicis, cap. 21.* The *Canon Law* it self enjoins that Hereticks * *Shall be deliver'd up to the Secular Courts to be punish'd.* Which is expounded by all, that gloss upon the Place, concerning the putting of Hereticks to Death; tho' I have proved before that this Practice was disapprov'd of by the *Councils* and *ancient Fathers* of the Church, out of whom the *Canon Law* is pretended to be taken. Among *Protestants*, the Lutherans, tho' they are for punishing Hereticks, yet by no Means with Death; and their Mr. *Luther* was of that Judgment. But it was otherwise with *Calvin* and his Followers: He caus'd *Servetus*, who denied Christ's Divinity, to be burnt at *Geneva*; and his Judgment as to this he defends and justifies, *viz.* That 'tis lawful to burn Hereticks, and all Blasphemers of God and Christ are to be punish'd with Death. *Beza* vindicates this Doctrine in a * Treatise on Purpose. *Zanchy, Bullinger, Francis Junius, Danæus*, and others of the *Reformed* way hold the same.

* *Sæculari Curiæ puniendos tradi.* Quæst. de Hæret. & Schismaticis.

* *De puniendis Hæreticis à Magistratu.*

Now let us see how it hath been among our selves at home, both before and after the Reformation. In King *Henry* the Second's Time, *Apostacy* was punish'd with Death; a Clerk that had renounced his Baptism, and turned *Jew*, was burnt for doing so. See *Bracton l. 3. cap. 9.* In the same King's Reign was a Sect of Men, whom they call'd *Publicans*, but were indeed the *Albigenses*; these were branded in the Forehead, whipt and exposed to Extremity of Cold, and so starv'd to Death: See *Nubrig. l. 2. c. 13.* But there was no fix'd Law to put any to Death for Error in Doctrine till the Time of King *Henry* IVth. For then the *Lollards* increas'd, and the Writ *de Hæretico comburendo* had it's Entrance first. In King *Henry* the VIII's Time many were burnt at the Stake as Hereticks; namely, for not subscribing to the *Six Articles*. How that Writ for the burning of Hereticks took place in Queen *Mary*'s Days, is too well known to be insisted on. After the *Reformation* likewise, this Punishment was inflicted on some for holding and maintaining of Heresy. Thus in the 4th Year of King *Edward* the VIth, *Joan Bocher*, commonly call'd *Joan* of *Kent*, was burnt for denying Christ to have been incarnate of the Virgin *Mary*. The King was unwilling to sign the Warrant for her Execution; but Archbishop *Cranmer* perswaded him that it was his Duty as he was God's Vicegerent, to punish Sins against God, especially Blasphemy, and that even capital Punishment was due to those who deny'd the Articles of the Apostle's Creed. The King was not satisfied, and sign'd the Warrant with Tears in his Eyes. See Bishop *Burnet's History of the Reformation*. In the same Year one *George Paris* a Dutchman was burnt in *Smithfield* for denying the Divinity of Christ. And in the same King's Reign an Anabaptist suffer'd the same Death, it is likely by the Instigation of the said Archbishop.

This Way of punishing of Hereticks was not laid aside by Queen *Elizabeth*; for two Dutch Anabaptists were burnt in *Smithfield*, in the 18th Year of her Reign. In the 21st Year of the said Queen, one *Hammond*, a most insolent *Arian*, denyed Christ to be God, and was burnt at *Norwich*. And about three or four Years after, one *John Lewis* was burnt in the same Place for the same Heresy, *i. e.* for denying the Divinity of our Saviour, and the like blasphe-

mous Opinions. The Hand of the *Bishops* was in this without Question, for it was their Judgment that *Heresy* deserved no less Punishment than *Death*. This appears from what we meet with in Sir *Simon D'ewes Journal*, p. 207, 208. Where we read that the Bishops in Queen *Elizabeth*'s Time urged her to put *Mary* Queen of *Scots* to Death, and publish'd in print *Reasons to prove the Queen's Majesty bound in Conscience to proceed with Severity in the Case of the late Queen of* Scots. Where they say expressly, That *every good Prince ought, by God's Commandment, to punish even with Death all such as do seek to seduce the People of God from his true Worship unto Superstition and Idolatry.* And again they say thus, Constantine *the Great caus'd* Licinius *to be put to Death, being not his Subject, but his Fellow-Emperor; for that the said* Licinius *labour'd to subvert the Christian Religion. And the same* Constantine *is for the same in all Histories highly commended.* *Hacket* and *Barrow* towards the latter End of this Queen's Reign were executed at *Tiburn* for their bold Assertions about the Discipline of the Church; and the former of them held he was Christ himself, and came with a Fan in his Hand to judge the World, and other Blasphemies he vented. To proceed to King *James* the First's Reign, we find that *Bartholomew Legate*, born in *Essex*, for maintaining Arianism, and particularly for denying the Divinity of Christ, was burnt in *Smithfield* in the Ninth Year of this King's Reign. In the same Year one *Edward Wightman* of *Burton* upon *Trent*, who held and obstinately maintain'd several monstrous Opinions, especially relating to Christ's Person, suffer'd in the same manner at *Litchfield*.

Thus it is evident that *Protestants* have put to Death some Persons on the Account of Religion; for all the Instances before produced are of this sort; only *Hacket* and *Barrow*, 'tis said, lost their Lives for Sedition, and raving against the Queen's Authority, as well as for their Opinions. And truly, if they were found guilty of that Disorder, I have nothing to say for the Mitigation of their Punishment; for the Civil Sword is to decide in Civil Matters. And when I assert that *Hereticks* are not to be punish'd with Death, *I always* understand by *Hereticks* such as are guilty of simple and naked Heresy, and add not Sedition and Rebellion to it. When any under Pretence of Opinions and Doctrines in Religion shall break out into undue Practices, and strike at the Government, and disturb the Peace of the Common-wealth, and design its Ruine and Destruction, they are to be punish'd as Persons of such a Character. Men of Bloud and Cruelty are to be banish'd the World. But as for mere Hereticks, tho' their Doctrines be never so heinous, they are not to be punish'd with Death; for if we act otherwise, we (so far) forget what the *gentle Nature of the Christian Religion* dictates to us, and we degenerate from the *Primitive Ages of Christianity*; and whilst we complain of the *Papists* bloudy Practices, we imitate them. So much for the *Negative* part of the Discourse.

Secondly, I proceed to the *Positive* Part. And the Proposition here is this, That though Heretical Seducers are not to be put to Death, yet some other Punishment may be lawfully inflicted upon them. There may be some outward and bodily restraining of them, so that they shall be hindred, in some Degree at least, from venting their dangerous and blasphemous Opinions. It is very just and fitting that they should be suppress'd and silenced, and effectually disabled from spreading their poisonous and infectious Doctrines. We must not think of finding in the *New Testament* any Examples of the Magistrate's punishing Hereticks in this manner, because there were no Christian Magistrates at that time, nor a great while after. And therefore neither are there any Instances of this in those primitive Times. They did what they could in a moral Way only to withstand the erroneous and pernicious Opinions of those Times. But it can't be hence concluded, that when the Church afterwards was bless'd with *Christian Princes* and *Magistrates*, it was unlawful for those then to check Heretical Seducers by some outward and civil Restraint, *i. e.* some bodily Infliction, or some pecuniary Mulct, or some other Expedient of the like Nature. This Temporal Check or Restraint is grounded; first, On the Practice of the most pious and zealous Princes whom we read of in the *Old Testament*. Secondly, On what is deliver'd to us in the *New Testament*. Thirdly, On the Practice of the Primitive Christian Emperors. Fourthly, On the Suffrage and Practice of the Moderns. Fifthly, On the Reasonableness and Equity of the Thing it self.

First,

First, We read in the Writings of the *Old Testament*, That the Civil Magistrate had a right to execute his Secular Power even in Sacred Things, in Matters Ecclesiastical. We read that they took Care about the Things of Religion, and the Settlement of the Church. We find that the zealous and godly Rulers, such as King *David*, *Jehosaphat*, *Asa*, *Josiah*, gave particular Orders and Commands for the preserving of God's Truth pure and entire, and suppressing of Falshood and Blasphemy, and for the preventing and reforming of Abuses and Corruptions in Worship and Discipline, 2 *Kings* 23. 1 *Chron.* 13. 2 *Chron.* 15. And, when it is said that that zealous Reformer *Josiah* * *made all that were in* Israel *to serve the Lord their God*, it is plainly implied, That if there were any Refractary Persons among them that refused to come to the publick Worship (which was then restored and reformed) he used Compulsion. * 2 *Chron.* 34. 33.

And the Books of *Ezra* and *Nehemiah* mention the Care which was taken by the Rulers and Governours, after the Return from the Captivity, about the settling and observing of the Divine Ordinances, and the regulating of the Church, and the punishing of those that depraved the Doctrine and Worship which were then restored. Whence we gather that Kings and Secular Magistrates are invested with Power, and that from God, to support and maintain Religion, and to restrain and punish the wilful and obstinate Corrupters and Opposers of it.

Secondly, This is grounded on what the *New Testament* delivers to us. For we are to know that what St. *Paul* saith of the Civil Magistrate in *Rom.* 13. is to be applied not only to the Heathen Rulers that were at that time, but also to all Christian Kings and Governours afterwards. *If thou dost that which is Evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the Sword* (that is, He hath not received his Power; for the *Sword* is the Ensign of his Power) *in vain; for he is the Minister of God, a Revenger to execute Wrath upon him that doth Evil*, ver. 4. And St. *Peter* concurs with him, *Epist* 1. *ch.* 2. *ver.* 14. *Governours are sent by God for the punishing of Evil Doers*, i. e. Christian Governours as well as others, are sent and ordain'd by God for this very Purpose; namely, to punish all stubborn Offenders, of which Number those cannot but be thought to be, who make it their Business to subvert and destroy the Fundamental Doctrines and Substantial Articles of the Christian Faith, and thereby to bring the Holy Scriptures into contempt; and at length to destroy Christianity it self. Here certainly the Magistrate is concern'd, and it is part of his Office to animadvert on such as are really guilty in this Kind, and by prudent Restraint to hinder the Mischief which is like to arise from the subtile Endeavours of such Heretical Seducers. Tho' these false Teachers are not to be meddled with as to their Lives, yet their Errors and Heresies are to be suppress'd. And those (whether Magistrates or others) who willfully neglect this Charge, and permit those Heresies and the Authors of them to increase, are Faulty in a high Degree; as appears from *Rev.* 2. 14, 15. where the Church of *Pergamus* is blamed for *having* (that is, tolerating) *them that held the Doctrine of* Balaam, *and the Doctrine of the* Nicolaitans. And the Church of *Thyatira* is rebuked for *suffering that Woman* Jezabel, *which calleth herself a Prophetess, to teach and seduce the Christians* of that Place, *v.* 20. And on the other hand, the Church of *Ephesus* is commended for not suffering such Persons to go unpunish'd, *ver.* 20. *Thou canst not bear them which are Evil*, i. e. false Apostles and Seducers, as the next Words acquaint us. Hence I justly inferr that false Teachers and Seducers should not be suffer'd in a Christian Church.

But that I may not be mistaken, I will explain my self: I would not have any Man be uneasy in the Church whereof he is a Member, but let him have all the Liberty that he is capable of as a Man or a Christian, so far as he receives and doth no Hurt by his Liberty. Let him not be tyed up and restrained as to those Opinions in Religion which are disputable and doubtful, and probable on both Sides, or which are so difficult and intricate that there is no fathoming of them; or such Points as relate not at all to the Foundation of Christianity; or appertain to Matters that are not directly our Duty, and of necessary Obligation. In all these, there is a Freedom to be used, and no Man is to be confin'd and retrench'd. None are to be molested for Thinking or Declaring contrary to what others think and declare about these Points. Especially, 'tis against the Gospel

Gospel Liberty to punish any for *Indifferent* Things, because 'tis the Nature of Things that are *Indifferent* to be neither Good nor Evil; and if they be not Good or Evil, then the doing of them is not Sinful, and therefore is not Punishable. Here Abatements and Relaxations are to take place; and we ought not to be fierce and rough, but to be peaceable and quiet, and to bear with one another. This is the Folly of Men generally; they would punish all that in the least dissent from them, even in dubious or indifferent Things. But let us be convinced of this Folly, and cease to exercise a Tyranny over others by forcing a Belief in Matters of such a Nature as hardly can be Known, or such as are indifferent.

But in other Matters, I plead not for a Toleration; that is, In these Four Things it must never be made use of, First, In *Fundamental Points of Faith.* By which I mean those Great Articles of Belief, which are clearly and plainly deliver'd in the Holy Scriptures, and are of the very Essence of our Religion. Whoever endeavours to undermine these Foundations of Christianity, ought to be restrain'd and punish'd by the Civil Powers, who are constituted by God the Guardians of our Religion. Secondly, In the *Necessary Parts* of *Divine Worship*, as praying unto God, hearing his Word, and other Sacred Ordinances which are of Evangelical Institution. These being substantial Parts of Christianity, must not be neglected, though the Modes of Worship, and the mere Circumstances of it, may be dispens'd with, and are alterable. Thirdly, In the *Indispensible Matters of Morality* and a *Good Life*, there ought to be no Relaxation. Whoever lives contrary to the Precepts of the Moral Law, by breaking forth into Cursing and Swearing, and other Acts of Prophaneness, and by committing Fornication or Adultery, Theft, Murder, *&c.* justly incurrs a Temporal Punishment. Fourthly, In the *just Interest of Government* and *Publick Society* there must be no Liberty or Toleration. The Magistrate may lawfully make use of his Power against such as disturb the Lawful and Established Government.

But I have to do at present only with the First of these Particulars that I have proposed: And my unshaken Assertion is this, That no Doctrine or Opinion must be tolerated in a Christian Church or State which oppugns the Fundamentals and Essentials of Christianity. The Reason is, Because no Sin, which evidently appears to be such, is to be tolerated; and I hope none will dare to say, That the Oppugning of the Fundamental Doctrines and Articles of our Christian Faith is not a Sin. Therefore when Men of Heretical Persuasions arise in the Church, they must not be permitted to do as they please. Their Crime is an Iniquity to be punish'd by the Judge. Only let him be certain that their Crime is punishable, according to the Rules which have been premised. I take this to be a Truth and a Practice conformable to the Word of God, and to the Power which Magistrates are invested with from Christ the King and Head of the Church. And there are none that oppose this but Libertines or Enthusiasts, or Men of too wide and lavish a Charity.

Thirdly, I will shew, That This was the *Opinion and Practice of the Ancient Christians.* *Tertullian*, who saith in one Place, That there * is no Religion shew'd in compelling Men to be Religious, tells us in another, That † it is not unfitting and unworthy of Religion to force Hereticks to their Duty, and not to deal with them always by gentle and fair Means. Their Obstinacy is to be conquer'd, not wrought upon by Persuasion. But I will insist chiefly on the Constitutions of the First *Christian Emperors*, and shew from their Practice, That those who disturb'd the Church with their Heretical Doctrines, were wont to be restrain'd and suppress'd. *Arius*, that noted Heretick, was banish'd by *Constantine the Great*, the first Emperor that imbrac'd and professed the Christian Religion. After him, other Emperors, who adhered to the same Profession, inflicted Bodily Punishment on those that perverted the substantial and received Doctrines of Christianity, and were busy in propagating their Heresies. If we look into the * *Code*, we shall see that *Arcadius*, *Honorius*, *Theodosius*, *Valentinian* did what they could to root out the *Manichæan* Heresies, and others, by using such Methods as these toward the bold Assertors and Propagators of them; namely, Disturbing their Meetings,

* *Religionis non est cogere ad Religionem.* Ad Scapulam, c. 2.

† *Ad Officium Hereticos compelli, non allici, dignum est. Duritia vincenda, non fundenda est.* Adv. Gnostic. cap. 92.

* Lib. 2. *Tit. de Hereticis.*

Meetings, taking away their Oratories, Exile, Confiscation of Goods, depriving them of civil Privileges and Benefits, making void their last Wills and Testaments. That the blasphemous Doctrines of Hereticks might not be propagated, it was decreed by *Constantine the Great*, That none should buy or read their Impious Books; as † *Socrates* testifies concerning him. The same was order'd by *Theodosius* and *Valentinian*, as we see in *Balsamon's* ‖ *Collection of Ecclesiastical Constitutions*. And, the more effectually to suppress their Writings and Books, the foresaid Emperors caus'd them to be gather'd up and burnt, as we are told in the *Theodosian Code*, *Lib.* 1. *Tit.* 1. *Cod. Justin. Lib.* 1. *Tit.* 1. *Socrat. Eccl. Hist. Lib.* 1. *Cap.* 6. *Balsamon in Collect. Constit. Eccles.* Nay, some of their Writings, though they were very useful as to the main, yet because they were mix'd with some Heretical Passages, were not suffer'd to escape the Flames. Whence it is, that we scarcely have at this Day any Book that was made by those Ancient Hereticks. This was the Practice of the Old Orthodox Christians, who being very zealous for the Truth, deliver'd up Perverse and Incorrigible Hereticks to the Secular Laws and Courts. I must needs say, I do not approve of every particular Penalty that was inflicted upon them: I fear there was too much Rigour and Severity used; especially seeing it is to be suspected that *some* of those that were condemn'd in those Days for *Hereticks*, did scarcely deserve that Name; and, perhaps, the Suppressing of their Writings would have been Punishment enough. But in the General I must give it as my Judgment, That Hereticks, properly so called, ought to be hindred by Force from spreading their poysonous Doctrines.

† Eccles. Hist. lib. 1. cap. 6.

‖ *Ex* Cod. lib. 1. Tit. 1.

Fourthly, This hath been the Opinion and Practice of *all Parties* generally, not only Ancients but Moderns. And an Universal Indulgence of Mens Opinions in Religion is disliked by all sober and thinking Men. We have heard what some *Foreign Protestants* have determin'd about this Point, even to an Extremity. Among our selves, 'tis well known what was the Judgment of the *Episcopal* Party, that is, those of our own Church. They were for exercising Force in Spiritual Matters, and they have punish'd Men in their Bodies and Goods on the Account of Religion. Had they done it for downright *Heresy*, and not for a *Ceremony* only, it would have been acceptable to all wise Men. Those of the *Presbyterian* Persuasion have declared it to be their Judgment, That besides Persuading there may be Force made use of in Matters of Religion. * "They, (say they) who upon Pretence of Christian Liberty shall "publish such Opinions, or maintain such Practices as are contrary to the "Light of Nature, or to the known Principles of Christianity, whether concerning Faith, Worship, or Conversation, or to the Power of Godliness; "or such Erroneous Opinions or Practices as either in their own Nature, or "in the manner of publishing or maintaining them, are destructive to the "external Peace and Order which Christ hath established in the Church, may "lawfully be call'd to Account, and proceeded against by the Power of the "Civil Magistrate." Even those that are known by the Name of *Independents*, and who seem most of all to plead for Liberty of Conscience and Religion, have made use of Temporal Punishments in Religion, as we see in *New England*. And 'tis not to be doubted but that all *prevailing* Parties of Religion would use *Imposition*; which they are wont to call *Persecution*, when 'tis used by others upon themselves. That which I observe in the main is this, That 'tis a generally receiv'd Notion and Persuasion, that there may be a *Restraint* upon Persons as to their Opinions and Practices relating to Religion; and all Men, at one Time or other, put it in Practice.

* *Advice of the* Assembly *of* Divines. *Chap.* 20. *Pag.* 36.

Fifthly, This is grounded on the *Reasonableness* and *Equity of the Thing it self*. For Temporal Penalties are not improper Remedies to chastize Spiritual Faults, that is, such as I have before-mentioned. Reason and Discourse are not the only Methods and Instruments (though they are the first and chiefest) to be used for the Convincing of Men. Corporal Restraint and Severity are other Means to work upon the Conscience, and so to reform the Persons. And these in their kind, are as proper and natural Means as Persuasion and Argument. For Man is compounded of Mind and Body, and so is equally capable of being wrought upon by Reason and by Outward Sensation. Arguments affect him

him as to the former part of his Composition; and Terror and Penalties as to the latter; wherefore these are as properly used, upon Occasion, as the other.

But here it is *objected*, That Faith is the Gift of God; and no Man can believe this or that Proposition, unless God inables him: Therefore no Man can compell another to believe; and, consquently, Penalties are of no Use here. I *answer*, As Faith is the Gift of God, so is a Holy Life and Practice. Yet Magistrates punish for Vice in Life and Practice; why then may they not punish for Gross Error and Unbelief? But it is urged again, That a Man *can't* think and believe otherwise concerning such and such Points of Religion, and therefore he is not faulty; for what a Man *cannot do*, is not to be imputed to him as a *Fault*; and it being not a Fault, he [illegible] not to be punish'd for the not doing it. I answer, He may alter his Judgment by the Assistance of God's Grace, *and* in the Use of his Reason improv'd by the Holy Scriptures. And the Outward Force and Infliction which are upon him may be serviceable to open his Eyes, and to discover his Errors to him.

But 'tis further urged, That *Conscience* can't be forced; for God only is Lord of Mens Consciences; and no Man *can* usurp a Dominion over them, because they are free. Wherefore the Civil Power hath nothing to do with them, and, consequently, cannot punish for Heresy, or any other Default in Religion. I answer, Neither hath the Church according to this Way of Arguing, any thing to do with Men, or their Consciences: There ought to be no Admonitions or Ecclesiastical Censures, which yet are authorized by the *New Testament*. Excommunication is a vain and useless Discipline, though practis'd by the Apostles. Yea, the same Argument that these *Objectors* use, will serve against Preaching, and all Exhortations, Reproofs, Threatnings, Expostulations; for Mens Consciences cannot be forced, and therefore none of these are *serviceable* to bring Men off from their present Persuasions, be they never so wicked and dangerous.

We see from this the *Invalidity* of the *Objection*, and we know how to give a satisfactory Solution of it, to wit, That though God is the only Lord of Mens Consciences, and can inlighten and persuade them as he pleases, yet he doth it by certain *Means*. He hath appointed that Men shall be convinc'd and wrought upon in the Use of Praying, Preaching, Ecclesiastical Discipline; and the Objectors grant this themselves, and hold, that this is no infringing of the *Freedom of Conscience*, it is laying no Force upon it. And when God is pleas'd to afflict his Servants with Bodily Infirmities or Outward Distresses and Calamities, they are not backward to acknowledge, that this severe Method is for their Good and Benefit; namely, To reclaim them from their Sins, and to shew them the Folly of their evil Ways, and to amend and reform them. They own, That Afflictions are used as Means for this very Purpose. And why then may not Magistrates, imitating God herein, endeavour to reclaim Men by Correction and Punishment? God doth it, though the Will and Conscience be free; and so may the Civil Powers, by *His* Assistance and Blessing. For tho' the Conscience, properly speaking, cannot be Forced, yet it may be Altered, and brought over to a different, yea, contrary Persuasion by proper Means. And among those Means, this is one, to wit, Infliction of some Penalty by the Secular Magistrate, which, by the Uneasiness which it causes, may produce better Thoughts.

But, moreover, it is objected, That this is the Way not to make Men better, but to make them *Hypocrites*; and besides, Forced Religion is No Religion. To which I answer, First, If there were any Strength in this Objection, (as it is here used) all the Restraint and Punishment inflicted by Parents and Masters, and by Magistrates in *other* Cases, might be proved to have this Effect too, and then, according to the Objectors, the Restraint should be taken off; which yet we see they do not at all urge. Secondly, If they be *Hypocrites*, it is an accidental Thing, and not the Magistrates Fault. His Intention is to bring them to the Profession of Religion, and to do their Duty, whereby they may be saved. Thirdly, What though they be *forced*? This forced Religion may prove in time a willing One. Their Dissimulation and Hypocrisie may end in Sincerity. By this Outward Compulsion which is used, they may come to an Inward and Voluntary Liking of Religion. Wherefore I conclude, That notwith-

notwithstanding what hath been objected, there is Ground for my foregoing Assertion; namely, That Temporal and Bodily Punishments are proper Means to chastize Spiritual Offences.

Again, To shew yet further the *Reasonableness* of this Method, Why may not the Authors and Abettors of *Wicked Opinions* and *Doctrines* be punished, as well as those that are guilty of Immoralities and Enormities in their Lives? Certainly, for the same Reason that these latter are animadverted upon by the Civil Governour, the former may also be in the like manner dealt with. For Lewd Livers are corporally punished, that, by feeling the Smart, they may sensibly be reminded of the Cause of it, their evil Manners, and that thereby they may repent and amend their Lives. And this is the very End and Design of inflicting Punishment on Heretical Seducers. Besides, the Nature of these Mens Faults deserves a corporal Infliction as well as that of the Immoral and Debauch'd. To raze the Foundations of Christian Faith, is worse than to cheat, or to cut a Purse. To corrupt Religion, and to impose upon Mens Belief, is more heinous than to counterfeit Coin, and falsify Deeds. Heresy and Blasphemy are blacker Crimes than Drunkenness and Theft; for those are Transgressions of the First Table, but these of the Second; those immediately and directly against God, these against Men. Is it not reasonable then that there should be a Coercion and Restraint as to both? And the Spiritual Nature of the former is no Argument why they should not be Corporally punished; for we see that *Perjury*, which is a Spiritual Crime, or a Fault in Religion, as well as Heresy, is corporally punish'd, and yet none speaks against it, but every one pronounces it to be just and equal. The same therefore they ought to do as to Heretical and Blasphemous Doctrines.

Further, The *Reasonableness* of punishing obstinate Hereticks is sufficiently accounted for in their own Welfare and Advantage. If they understood themselves aright, they would shew themselves very thankful for this Restraint in Religion. It is happy for them that there is such a Curb, to check and stop them in their wild Career of Error and Extravagancy. A boundless and unlimited Liberty would be fatal to them.

Lastly, It conduces to the Glory of God, and the Good of Christ's Church to suppress Heresy and the Promoters of it. Hereby we shew our Zeal for God's Honour, and we give Proof of our sincere Love to the Cause of Christ. But by an Universal Toleration, the Divine Name and Attributes are vilified and prophaned, and the most sacred Truths are trampled under Foot, and Religion it self unspeakably damnified. These are the *Reasons* on which I build the Grounds of Secular Penalty for Heresy, when there is Occasion for it.

But, after all, I must conclude with this *Caution*, That we must be careful to *do all we can* to prevent the Actual Executing of this *Force* and *Violence*, which I have been speaking of. To this End,

First, We are to consider that Christianity is a voluntary Thing. It is a free Act of the Mind, and therefore we should avoid, as much as we can, all Force and Compulsion. The Dragooning Way of making Converts is to be abominated. Nothing is so horrid, and sounds so harsh in Religion as Gaols, Dungeons, Whips, Halters, Gibbets, Execution. And as for the milder Terms of Fines, Mulcts, and Imprisonment, it were well if they were never used in a Christian Church; and we should do all that is in our Power to hinder the Occasion of naming and using them; fixing this upon our Minds, That Religion is a Matter of Choice, and, consequently, is to be Free and Voluntary. And therefore we are not to delight in any Compulsions, and we are to use them as seldom as is possible.

Secondly, We are to remember, That we are obliged to use all *other* Methods *first*, before we proceed to the severe ones; I mean, of the latter sort: For as for the other, some of them are to be made use of by all Christian Men. When Hereticks appear in the Church, they are to be dealt with by mild and gentle Applications, and we are to pray for them. We must use kind Admonitions, mild Persuasions, meek and loving Exhortations, set Conferences and

* Lib. contr. Cresconium Grammat.

Disputations; for which Reason, St. * *Augustine* would have the Art of Disputing kept up in the Church. If this Method succeeds not, then the Officers of the Church are warranted to proceed to Authoritative Admonishments, and afterwards to sharper Censures, and at last to Excommunication. Thus those that imbrace Heresy, and persist in Defiance of Truth, are to be treated, before the Civil Power is call'd in to assist. Ecclesiastical Punishments ought always to precede the Secular Ones. But when the former prove ineffectual, then, I conceive, it is not unlawful to fly to the latter. But these should be the *last Refuge*; and nothing but *Necessity* ought to put us upon using penal Inflictions, and whenever we do it, it must be with great Uneasiness and Reluctancy. We should be very loth to use Force and Violence against our *Brethren*; and we should delay it as long as we can, that the World may see, and that our own Consciences may bear us Witness, That we delight not in Rigour and Severity, and that we would not make use of Force towards others, if we were not, as it were, forced to it our selves.

And thus I have gone through the several Particulars which relate to the *Institutions* and *Ordinances* appertaining to the Church.

I Enter now upon the FOURTH and LAST GENERAL HEAD, (in the Prosecution of what I undertook in Treating of this former Part of the ARTICLE concerning THE HOLY CATHOLICK CHURCH) namely, *The Perpetuity of the Church*; for (as I observ'd before from Bishop *Pearson*) it is necessarily contained in the *Belief of the Holy Catholick Church*, That we are persuaded and do acknowledge, *That* GOD *hath His Church in all Ages of the World*, past, present, and to come; that Christ will never be without a Church upon Earth. Which is thus expressed by Him, *The Gates of Hell shall not prevail against it*, Mat. 16. 18. that is, against the *Church*.

* Jo. Cleric. *in* loc.

For we are not to attend to what a late * *Annotator* saith, That *it* referrs to the *Rock*, not to the *Church*: Which is contrary both to Grammar, and to the Scope and Design of the Text. One may plainly discern that it is Ungrammatical, because according to the common Rule and Practice of Grammarians, this Relative Pronoun αὐτὴν, ought to answer to the Word of this Gender, which was last mentioned in the Place, if the Sense will well bear it, and that is Ἐκκλησία here; whereas this great Pretender to Grammatical Orthodoxy referrs αὐτὴν to πέτρᾳ, which is a remote Word, and therefore was not to be look'd at here. And what can be plainer than this, That our Saviour intended in this place to express the *Duration* of his *Church*? *I will build it on a Rock*, saith he; it is and shall be Stable and Immovable, and shall continue through all Generations of the World. Yea, though there shall be the most vehement Opposition made against it, not only by Men, but Devils, though the very *Gates of Hell* make the most powerful Resistance against it, yet they *shall not prevail against it*; they shall not be able to over-power the Church of Christ. This is the natural and easie Purport of the Words; but how forc'd and foreign is the Sense which that *Annotator* puts upon them? namely, That they are spoken of St. *Peter* only, and that when 'tis said, *The Gates of Hell shall not prevail against it*, the Meaning is, That [the Danger of a certain and speedy Death upon the Account of his preaching the Gospel, should not deterr him from discharging the Office impos'd on him, and so not Death it self] which hath nothing of Consistency with what is here said by our Saviour, who speaks not of St. *Peter*, but of the *Church*. And that he doth so is evident, because, if by *the Gates of Hell* be *only* meant *Death* (as this Critick would have it) then this which our Saviour here saith concerning that Apostle, prov'd not true, for the Gates of Hell actually prevail'd against him when he was put to Death by *Nero*, as Ecclesiastical History informs us. This is enough to shew the Invalidity of this Author's Interpretation of the Place.

But the true and obvious Meaning is this, That Christ would make his Church Stable and Durable, like a House founded on a *Rock*, which hath an immoveable Foundation. And the *Grave*, which we translate *Hell* here, is represented

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as some strong Place, some great City, the Strength whereof is in its *Gates*, as was common of Old: Here were their Towers and their Forts; here their Magistrates and Judges sate; here were their most solemn Conventions and Councils. So that by the *Gates of the Grave*, or *Death*, we are to understand the Invincible *Power* of Death; for this gets the Conquest over all, and there is no resisting it. The Meaning then is, That the Church of Christ shall never be destroyed; no, not by its most Potent Adversaries, tho' you could suppose them to be as strong as Death. And because the Grave is commonly followed by *Hell*, the one is too frequent a Passage to the other; therefore by the *Gates of Hell* we may also understand the Power and Policy of *Satan* and all his Agents and Instruments; and we are assured that none of these shall *prevail* against the Church. No Wisdom and Craft, no Strength and Force of Devils or Men shall be able to extirpate the Flock of Christ, the Congregation of the Faithful. This, like a *Rock*, out-braves all Waves and Storms, and bears up against all Opposition. God hath had a *Church*, whose Beginning was from *Adam*, and shall indure to the World's End. He will ever have a *Select Company* to serve him, to believe in him, and to worship him. This shall never be extinguish'd and wholly banish'd out of the World, but shall continue in all Ages.

To make this good, I will produce the *History of the Bible*, which we are sure is a true and infallible Record. I will amply prove from the Testimony of the Holy Scriptures that the *Church* of God stands inviolable, that from the first founding of it, to the Consummation of all Things, it remains impregnable; that there never was *any Age* wherein there were not some Persons that asserted the Truth, worship'd God sincerely, and kept up the True Religion. Whenever there was a *Defection*, there always followed it a remarkable *Restauration*.

I begin with the first Institution and Setting up of Religion in the World, to wit, in Paradise, when God had made Man, and given him a Law, and required Obedience to it. And without doubt He and our Mother *Eve* were at first exact Observers of the Divine Command, and exerted all Acts of Religion and Worship with an unspotted Purity and Integrity, and declined not from any part of the Holy Precepts which God had enjoin'd them. They were nearly united to God by entire Love and Obedience, and they had the Fruition of his Favour, both which constituted their Happiness. Lo here *the Church* in a single pair of Persons! But this State of Innocency and Bliss was of short duration, for the Sacred History informs us, That our first Parents revolted from God and their Duty, and by Satan's Inticements and Wiles, were prevail'd with to break the Divine Law, and thereby they brought a Curse on themselves and all their future Race.

But that the Infant Church might not perish in its Cradle, in its early Beginning, behold how the Apostacy of our first Progenitors was immediately succeeded with a gracious Recovery. *Adam* repents, and is receiv'd into Favour, and is blessed with the Promise of a Redeemer, *Gen.* 3. 15. *The Seed of the Woman that was to break the Serpent's Head.* This was the first Instauration of Religion, the first Restoring of Mankind; namely, by Christ the Mediator, the Eternal Son of God, who undertook to satisfie the Divine Justice, and to atone for Man's Sin. Now the restored Pair walk in the Fear of God, and in a strict Conformity to God's Will; in which they were forwarded by the Assistance and Society of their excellent Offspring, *Abel the Just*. But he, the Hope of his Parents, and the Prop of Religion, and whose Family might have been the Seminary of the true Church, was soon cut off, being murder'd by his Brother *Cain*. And tho' this wicked One was excommunicated and banish'd, that he might not infect others (for tho' there is no mention of others, it is probable Mankind was then increased to a considerable Number) yet his Posterity remain'd wicked and profligate; and as he himself hated his Brother because he was good and pious, so his Race maintain'd an Hatred and Hostility against those of that Character. Hence the generality of the People of that time forgat God and Religion; and Vice was multiplied, and worldly Pleasure and Business wholly took up their Thoughts, and they were regardless of God's Providence in the World. Hereby the *Church* was again endangered.

But to repair the Loss of *Abel*, and to restore such another Blessing as he was, as well as to reform the Men of that Age, *Seth* is born, who revived the true Worship of God, and re-established Religion, and nourished the Hopes of the promis'd Messiah. Religion, I say, which had suffer'd so much by *Abel*'s Death and *Cain*'s Lewdness, and was almost extinct, now was set on Foot anew, and appeared abroad, and was publickly own'd and encouraged. This is the Meaning of what is said in *Gen.* 4. 26. *Then began Men to call upon the Name of the Lord*, then the Worship of God became more visible and open than before; for the World growing more wicked and prophane, it was requisite to set up and maintain a more publick and solemn Worship of the true God. Now it was that *Seth* more especially instructed his Son *Enosh* and his Family in the Principles of Religion and the Service of God, for which Cause they are afterwards styled *the Sons of God*, Gen. 6. 2. These faithfully and sincerely serv'd the Lord, and labour'd to counterpoize the Wickedness of the Sons of *Cain*, who got the Name of *the Children of Men*, in Contradistinction to the other Appellation. And the next Restorer of Religion was *Enoch*, a sincere holy Man that walked with God uprightly, and by his godly Life condemned the rest of the Vitious World. He was taken alive to Heaven, to give Mankind a Specimen of a Future Immortality.

But, alas! these good Men were not able to bear up against the Generality of the debauched World, and tho' at this Time there was a Separation and Distinction between the Prophane and others, now the Contagion spreads further, and the *Sons of God* converse familiarly, and marry with the *Daughters of Men*, Gen. 6. 4. that is, with the Women of *Cain*'s Race. From which Familiarity and Union of the *Cainites* and *Sethites* is propagated Prophaneness, and the Corruption of Religion, and all manner of Enormities. The fear of God, which is the greatest Guard on Mens Spirits, being lost, the great ones among them betook themselves to Rapine and Oppression, and acted cruelly, savagely and barbarously, and therefore are call'd *Giants*, Gen. 6. 4. These bold and daring Sinners, being of greater Power than the rest, over-ran all with *Violence*, as is particularly taken Notice of in *Gen.* 6. 11. Or perhaps some of this Race of *Cain* were of a more than ordinary Stature, and were *Nephilim*, *Giants*, in that Respect; they were of as vast Bulk as Pride, and on both Accounts were capable of domineering and tyrannizing over others. And it appears that these latter were in their Kind as blameable as they, for Religion was cast off by them all, and a common and general Prophaneness prevail'd every where. *God looked upon the Earth, and behold, it was corrupt, for all Flesh had corrupted his way upon the Earth*, Gen. 6. 12. *His Way*, that is, God's Way, for the Pronoun referrs to *God*, not to *Flesh*, as is commonly thought. There was a Catholick Apostacy, a total Degeneracy and Pollution, an universal Corruption of Religion, Worship and Manners, and of all the Laws that God had prescribed them, for these are meant by *his way*. But when a Hundred and Twenty Years, (for so much Time was allow'd them to repent) were expired, and there was no Amendment in their Lives, the *Flood* came and destroyed those impenitent Sinners.

See at the same time God's Care and Concern for his *Church*; when all the Earth was corrupted and depraved, *Noah* and some of his Family remained unaffected, and their Integrity was recompensed with a peculiar Reward; For God reserved a *Seed*, out of which the *Church*, as well as Mankind, should be propagated. *When the proud Giants perished, the Hope of the World, govern'd by God's Hand, escaped in a weak Vessel, and left to all Ages a Seed of Generation*, Wisd. 14. 6. God shut up his Favourites in the Ark, tho' among Brutes, yet better than degenerate Men. This floating World, this swimming Church was born up, and carried by the Waters Twelve Months together, without either Sails or Oars. But Providence sat at the *Helm*, and steer'd this Vessel in the common Shipwrack of the World, and safely landed the Passengers at the Years End on the Mountains of *Ararat* in *Armenia*, whence 'tis likely they travell'd to the Place where they before dwelt; namely, about *Damascus*. *Noah* being thus delivered, applied himself to Piety and Devotion, and tho' he was not free from Miscarriages, was a great Asserter and Restorer of Religion in his New World, which he was now enter'd upon. And his Son *Shem* was eminent for his Upholding the

the true Worship of the Most High, as we may gather from *Noah*'s Words concerning him, *Gen.* 9. 26. *Blessed be the Lord God of* Shem; that is, the True God, whose Service and Worship he promoted and advanced. *Heber* was another good and holy Man in those Days: He being indued with the Spirit of Prophecy, gave one of his Sons the Name of *Peleg*, from the *Division* of the Earth, which he foresaw would happen in his Son's Days. These Godly Patriarchs hated the Design of *Nimrod*, and separated from that Faction, and made it their Business to preserve and cherish Religion, and to maintain Peace, which is the great Advancer of it. And their Endeavours succeeded accordingly; for *Noah* for the Space of a Hundred and Ten Years after the Flood, kept his People together in good Order, and the Church injoyed Peace and Tranquillity.

But *Cham* and his Family seduced and perverted greater Numbers of Persons than *Noah*, *Shem*, *Japhet*, and *Heber* were able to confirm. But especially *Nimrod*, of *Cham*'s Race, was a sworn Enemy to all Religion and Order, and being grown Great and Potent, he was capable of doing the greater Mischief. Of him 'tis said, That *he began to be a mighty One in the Earth*, Gen. 10. 8. And in the next Verse he is called a *mighty Hunter*; the Import of which is, That he not only addicted himself to Sports and Pleasures, but hunted Men as well as Beasts, and persecuted those that were Religious and Holy, and took Delight in treating them with Severity. He and his Complices went upon New Discoveries, and coming to *Shinar*, a Place in *Chaldæa*, (so call'd afterwards) they seated themselves there, and enterprized the Building of the Tower of *Babel*. The *Jewish* Historian, *Josephus*, thinks that their Aim in raising so prodigious a Pile, was, to provide against a Floud for the future; but that is a groundless Surmize; for a Plain, in a low and moorish Country, (as that was) could be no fit Place for this End. The Sacred History informs us what was the Ground of their Enterprize, namely, That these wicked Conspirators pretended to build a *City and a Tower, whose Top might reach unto Heaven*, that by erecting such a strange and wonderful Fabrick, *they might make themselves a Name*. Instead of setting up a Lasting Monument of their Thankfulness for the late Safety and Deliverance by the Ark, which was built by *Noah*, who was still alive, *Gen.* 9. 28, they erect this Tower for Applause and Vain-glory, and to perpetuate their Names. They also pretended, That another Design of their Undertaking was to prevent Dispersion; *lest we be scatter'd abroad*, say they, *upon the Face of the whole Earth*. But these seem to have been bare Pretences; their main Design and Plot was to vex the Righteous and Pious, and to extirpate the Worship of God and the True Religion; in order to which, they resolved on building a City of a vast Bigness, and a Tower of a vast Heighth and Strength to secure themselves.

Now, observe how the watchful Providence of Heaven interposed for the Deliverance of his People, and preserving his *Church*. God confounded the Language of these *Babel-builders*, which Punishment consisted either in sending *many Tongues*, (which afterwards was a Blessing vouchsafed to the Apostles, *Acts* 2. 4.) or in causing them not *to be understood*; so that the Undertakers were not able to go on with their Work: And upon this Confusion of Tongues the rebellious Crew was dispersed into several Regions and Countries. Yet this wrought not any Reformation in them; but Religion lay waste a long time, yea, and the Notion and Worship of the True God was lost in some Places; and now *Idolatry* made its first Entrance into the World. It was found in *Nahor* and *Haran*'s Families, and, perhaps, *Abraham* himself was tainted with it at first, *Jos.* 24. 2, 3. However, That he might not be corrupted with it, God called him out of *Chaldæa*, and commanded him to leave that prophane and idolatrous Country, and travel into *Canaan*.

Now it was that God reveal'd Himself to him in a most signal and eminent manner, making a Covenant with him and his Posterity, and promising, that out of his Loins the Messiah should come. This was the most eminent *Exaltation of the Church* that hath hitherto been; for before this, the Holy Seed lived in common with the Wicked, and were mingled together in all Nations; but now the Faithful are distinctly separated from the rest of the World, and *Abraham*'s Family is made the great Seat of Religion, and he is constituted the Restorer of the Worship of the True God. Yet here we cannot but take Notice, That

That *Isaac*, in whom the Church was to be propagated, was laid on the Altar, and the Knife was lift up in order to slaying him. Which was a *Figure* to represent the *Churches* future Condition, to wit, that it should be *Expiring* and yet *Live*. And this we shall see in abundant Instances that I shall produce.

The new-erected *Church* was brought into Streights soon after its Settlement; for the Patriarch *Jacob* and his Family remov'd into *Ægypt*, where, though they fared well at first, yet afterwards those of their Race were hardly treated, and harassed beyond measure. The *Ægyptians* made the *Israelites* work hard, and toil in erecting the *Pyramids*, saith * *Josephus*, to which their *making of Bricks*, on those harsh and unreasonable Terms which the History mentions, is thought to referr. However, we are sure of this, that they indur'd the utmost Slavery, and thence *Ægypt* is so often called *the House of Bondage*. Yet, see here God's Care of his People, *the more they were afflicted, the more they multiplied and grew*, *Exod.* 1. 12. But their Case was much worse towards the latter End of their Abode in *Ægypt*; for then they were not only Slaves, but Idolaters, they being prevail'd with to revolt from their Religion, as is plain from *Jos.* 24. 14. *Ezek.* 20. 4, 7, 8, 10. —23. 3. 8. 21. *Hos.* 11. 2.

* Antiqu. lib. 2. cap. 5.

But now the Time of their Deliverance approach'd under the Conduct of *Moses* their Leader. The Time from *Abraham*'s coming out of *Haran*, untill the *Israelites* departing out of *Ægypt*, is reckoned to be Four hundred and thirty Years, *Exod.* 12. 41. *Gal.* 3. 17. but their Abode in *Ægypt* from the Time of their coming thither with *Jacob* out of *Canaan*, was but Two hundred and fifteen Years, and no more. When these were fulfilled, the *Israelites* were safely led out of *Ægypt* by their Captain, sent to them on purpose by God to rescue them from their Sufferings and Bondage. And here it is observable how their Numbers were increased since their first coming into *Ægypt*. When they first arrived there, they were no more than *Seventy*, besides Women, *Exod.* 1. 5. or (as St. *Stephen* more accurately, taking in some that were not included in the former Number) *Threescore and fifteen*, Acts 7. 14. but when they came out of *Ægypt*, there were *Six hundred thousand, and Three thousand, Five hundred and Fifty Men*, Exod. 12. 17. Numb. 1. 45. besides Women and Children, and young Men, who without doubt were twice as many. Concerning their Travelling, it is particularly recorded, *That God led them about through the Way of the Wilderness of the Red Sea*, Exod. 13. 17. that is, they went not the nearest Way; and the Reason is assign'd, *Lest, peradventure, they should repent when they saw War*; lest they should be disheartned by the Opposition they met with from the *Philistines*. Therefore 'tis said, God led them not thro' the Way of the Land of the *Philistines*, that is, by the *Mediterranean*, which was on their Left-hand, but by the *Arabian Deserts*, which lay on their Right.

Thus at last they were, by the Divine Care and Providence, redeemed out of the House of Bondage, and set free from the Tyranny of their merciless Task-masters; yea, and from the Destruction which was threatned them by *Pharaoh* and his Host, who pursued them close at their Heels; at which Time their Danger was greater than ever it was, there being no way to escape; for the Sea was before them, and the Enemy behind them. To be swallowed up of the one, or to be over-run of the other, was alike fatal and destructive. What Course is to be taken? Which shall they choose, either the devouring Waves, or the destroying Army? In these dismal Straights the dismayed *Israelites* knew not what to do. But the Almighty God knew with what Difficulties they were beset, and he chose this Season to deliver them. *Fear ye not*, said *Moses*, *stand still, and see the Salvation of the Lord, which he will shew to you this Day: for the Ægyptians whom ye have seen to Day, ye shall see them again no more for ever*; that is, No more Alive; but as we read in *Ver.* 30. *Israel saw the Ægyptians dead upon the Sea-shore*. Here was a miraculous Deliverance! and it was entertained with suitable Dispositions of Mind: they were filled with Joy and Exultation, and joyn'd together in a triumphant Song to magnifie and extol the Divine Goodness: And without doubt they solemnly obliged themselves to adhere with great Constancy to God and his Service.

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But now follows a miserable *Defection* in this People; they who in Consort had celebrated the Bounty and Favour of Heaven towards them, now as unanimously repine and blaspheme. There are no less than Eight *Murmurings* of this ungrateful Generation reckon'd up by the *Jewish* Masters. Yea, even in that very Juncture of Time, when God was making a Covenant with them, *Exod.* 19. 5, 6. they committed Idolatry. They had been (as we heard before) guilty of this Crime whilst they were in *Ægypt*, but now they practise it afresh; they make a *Calf* that resembled the *Idol Apis* or *Osiris*, which they worshipp'd in *Ægypt*, and paid Adoration to it as a God. This was a horrid Revolt from the TRUE GOD, and was of that high Nature, that *Josephus*, in his *History of the Jews*, makes no mention of it, as being asham'd of the abominable Folly, Stupidity, and Ingratitude of his Countrymen. Yet this may be observed, That when this People thus turn'd Idolaters, some were untainted; for *Moses* cried out, *He that is on the Lord's Side, let him come to me*, Exod. 32. 26. and presently the Sons of *Levi* were gather'd together, whose Zeal was so great against their Brethren for their Idolatry, that they arose and slew about Three thousand of them. It is no Wonder that for these gross Delinquencies God kept this People in the Wilderness of *Arabia* Forty Years, and though it was but * Eleven Days Journey through it to *Canaan*, yet caused them to wander so many Years backwards and forwards. * Deut. 1. 2.

But amidst these Corruptions and Apostasies, God was mindful of His Church and chosen People, and in a very solemn manner renewed and restored Religion by delivering the *Law* on Mount *Sinai*, which was to be a Certain and Fixed Rule for the Service of God; and *Circumcision* was injoyn'd, that thereby *Abraham*'s Posterity might be distinguished from other Nations, and that the *Jews* might be a peculiar People, and separated from all others, and that this Sacrament might be a distinguishing Badge and Seal of that *Covenant* which was made with them. And now the *Church* of God became *National*, which it never was before; for hitherto it had been preserv'd in Families only. At last, by the Divine Goodness, and under the Conduct of *Joshua*, they are brought into *Canaan* the Land of *Promise*, where they solemnly renounced all Idolatry, and by a Covenant tied themselves to observe the Laws that God had given them, and so addict themselves wholly to his Service, *Josh.* 24. 14, *&c.* It was *Joshua* that settled the Tabernacle in *Shiloh*, where it continued 'till *Eli*'s Time, which was above three Hundred Years after.

After the Decease of this Great Captain, God successively raised up *Thirteen Judges* and *Two High Priests*, who ruled over the *Jewish* People. When these were oppress'd and brought under at several Times by the *Canaanites*, *Midianites*, *Amalekites*, *Moabites*, *Ammonites*, &c. those Governours were set up to be helpful to them in those Times of Danger and Calamity, and accordingly they prov'd very successful. After *Samson*'s Death, a mighty Degeneracy and Corruption insued, for *every Man did that which was right in his own Eyes*, Judg. 17. 6. All Villainies and Outrages were committed, and that with Impunity. Likewise in *Eli*'s Time there were great Abuses and Disorders in the Church; but God raised up *Samuel* to put a Check to them, and by him the pure Religion was restored, and the Priests settled in their proper Stations and Offices, and the Schools of the Prophets erected. In short, there were many *Defections* in the Days of the *Judges*, and as many *Restaurations*; one after another was call'd to that High Place, to defend and protect the People of God, to keep up Religion, and to preserve the Church.

After the *Judges*, followed *Kings*, and most of whom have but a bad Character; but *David* began with reforming his own Court and House, and also his Kingdom: He fix'd and settled the publick Service of God, reduced the whole Clergy into Four and twenty Classes, brought the Ark of God to *Sion*, and gave it a more solemn and eminent Residence. He settled the Maintenance of the Priests and Levites, and appointed Under-Officers in the Tabernacle. In his Time began the *Prophets* to appear, who were Persons raised up by God to be Extraordinary Instructors and Monitors, as the *Priests* were Ordinary Ones; they were not, as these, of the House of *Levi*, but of any Tribe. In King *Solomon*'s Reign, the publick Worship was yet further advanced by his erecting a Magnificent Temple, and ordering every thing that related to the Service there:

there: and he was a Friend to the Church and Religion till towards the latter end of his Reign, when he turn'd Idolater. The just Punishment of which was the Division of his Kingdom into that of *Israel* and *Judah*. In the former of those Idolatry entirely prevail'd, and all the Kings were wicked and profligate. But in the latter there was not a constant Idolatry, but sometimes the Idols and false Gods were set up and adored, and at other times pull'd down and destroy'd. King *Asa* and King *Jehosaphat* were well disposed towards Religion and the Worship of God, and reformed the Church, and demolish'd the Remains of Idolatry. After *Athaliah* had miserably laid waste the Church, King *Joash* succeeded, and immediately made a happy Change in Religion, and ruled well under the Tutorage of his Religious Uncle *Jehoiadah*. So did *Uzziah* shew himself pious all the time that *Zachariah* the Prophet lived. *Hezekiah* was a zealous Reformer, and hath this Character to perpetuate his Memory, that *after him was none like him among all the Kings of* Judah, *nor any that were before him*, 2 Kings 18. 5. *Manasseh*, at first an Idolater, (under whom the Church had a most horrible Aspect) was afterwards a great Advancer of the True Worship of God. *Josiah* purg'd the Temple, and caus'd the Book of the Law, that had a long time been lost, to be read openly; and he celebrated the Passover, and entred into a solemn Covenant to keep the Law. Thus the true Religion was preserv'd in the Kingdom of *Judah*.

But at last they shamefully degenerated, and both Kingdoms were destroy'd, and the People of them carried captive, the one into *Assyria* by *Salmanassar*, the other into *Babylon* by *Nebuchadnezzar*. So it was by the just Judgment of God, the Posterity of *Abraham*, who was call'd out of *Chaldæa*, was now carried into it. They worshipp'd all sorts of Gods and Idols whilest they were at home, and now they are sent abroad into an Idolatrous Country to unlearn Idolatry. It seems Nothing could cure this Catholick Corruption but Banishment. Tho' God had expressly commanded them to make no Images in order to the worshipping them, tho' he instituted several Rites and Observances merely because they were directly opposite to the Customs of the Neighbouring Nations, tho' he signally and exemplarily punish'd them for their Idolatry, yet nothing could root out this inveterate Malady but their *Captivity*. And this did it effectually; for they never relaps'd into Idolatry after their Return from the Captivity in *Babylon*; and whilest they were Captives there, they converted many Gentiles to the Knowledge of the true God. This was follow'd by the *Restauration* of these Captives, of the Tribes of *Judah* and *Benjamin* especially. Which opens a New Scene of Providence, and is a Confirmation of what I'm proving, that the *Church of God* never hath or shall fail.

After the Seventy Years Captivity was expired, the *Jews* were restored to their Religion and Worship as well as their Land. This was done by *Cyrus*, King of the *Medes* and *Persians*, the first Emperor of the *Second Monarchy* (for now the *Assyrian* or *Babylonian* had its Period with *Belshazzar*), who put out a Proclamation to give leave to the Jews to return to their Country under *Zerubbel* their Captain, and to build the City and Temple again. Other Companies of Jews return'd home under the Conduct of *Ezra*, and afterwards of *Nehemiah*. And when there were Stops and Delays in erecting the Temple, *Darius* put forth a Decree to renew what *Cyrus* had commanded; and afterwards *Artaxerxes* in the 7th, and at last in the 20th Year of his Reign set forth an effectual Decree to finish the whole Work, not only Temple but City. And *Nehemiah*, the Governour, built up the Wall by *Artaxerxes*'s Commission, maugre the Opposition of *Sanballat*, *Tobiah* and *Geshem*. This we must own to be the Over-ruling hand of God.

And at the same time there was another remarkable Instance of it, the Jewish Nation was devoted to Ruine in the Days of *Ahasuerus* (of which you have a full Account in the Book of *Esther*): A Peremptory Decree came forth for an Universal Massacre; the King's Letters were sent into all his Provinces to put all the Jews to Death. This Conspiracy of *Haman* (for he was the Grand Plotter and Manager of it) being authoriz'd by Royal Proclamation, became like one of the Laws of those *Medes* and *Persians*, Irreversible. And that which made it more Valid, was, that this Rich Courtier had promised to pay ten Thousand Talents of Silver into the King's Treasuries for the effecting of

of the Business. Who can expect, that the King will not gratifie his Great Minion and Favourite, and at the same time satisfie his desire of Gain, and enrich his Coffers? His *Affection* and his *Interest* are both engaged, and what is there that can be so Powerful as to Countermand *these*? But behold, by the Intercession of a *Jewish Maid*, who was then remaining Captive at *Babylon*, and by other *strange and unthought of* Occurrences (which that History will acquaint us particularly with) the People that were destined to utter Ruine had *Light and Gladness, and Joy and Honour, a Feast and a good Day* (as the Inditer of that History expresses it) and in the Day that their Enemies hoped to have Power over them, *it was turn'd to the contrary, and the Jews ruled over them that hated them.* Thus the *Church*, almost dead and destroy'd, was revived and recovered.

But let us now observe what Passages were remarkable among the Jewish People *after the Return* from the Captivity. The *Learned Jews* observe that the second Temple was destitute of Five Prerogatives, which the first had, *viz.* the *Shechina* or the Glory of God appearing among the Cherubims; the *Fire From Heaven* to burn the *Holocaust*; the *Ark of the Covenant*; *the Spirit of Prophecy*; and the *Urim* and *Thummim*; Tho' 'tis a Question, Whether this last was wanting, seeing mention is made of it in *Ezra* 2. 63. *Nehem.* 7. 65. and there is ground to believe that the *Prophetick Spirit* was not quite lost, for *Haggai* and *Zachary* and *Malachy* were after the Second Temple.

Ezra was now the chief Reformer in the Ecclesiastical Affairs, he instituted the *Great Synagogue*, described by several * Authors, and revised the Copies of the *Old Testament*, and corrected the Mistakes which in the time of the Captivity and Dispersion were contracted. He restored the Office of Preaching, which had been neglected, *Neh.* 8. 1, 2, &c. and order'd a constant and settled Instructing of the People by explaining and expounding the Law.

* Galatin. Arcan. *l.* 4. *c.* 6. Baron. Annal *ad* A. D. 31. Bodin de Rep. *l.* 6. *c.* 8. Casaubon Exercit. 13. Cunæus de Rep. Hebr. L'Empereur.

The Jewish Church continued in some good Order, and had Peace under the *Persian* Emperors, and under *Alexander the Great*, who reverenced *Jaddus* the Jewish High Priest, and went into the Temple at *Jerusalem*, and offer'd Sacrifice to God. They shew'd him the Book of *Daniel*, wherein was foretold that a *Grecian*, i. e. himself should overcome the *Persians*. He was very kind to the Jews, and gave them leave to use their Laws and Religion, and granted them great Immunities and Privileges, as the * Jewish Antiquary acquaints us. Thus we are enter'd upon the *Third Monarchy*, which began by *Alexander the Great*, when he overcame *Darius* the last *Persian* King, about 300 Years before Christ. After *Alexander*'s Death, and the Division of the Monarchy among his Nobles and Commanders, the *Jews* were extremely persecuted and oppress'd by the Kings of *Syria*, but especially by *Antiochus Epiphanes*, of the Race of the *Seleucidæ*, who was justly called the Scourge of the Jews. He took *Jerusalem*, and prophaned the Temple, and set up the Idol of *Jupiter Olympius* in it, and put all those to Death that would not break the Law, and Sacrifice to Idols.

* *Antiq.* L. 11. c. 8.

But God raised up Chieftains, High-Priests, and Rulers among the Jews, who with extraordinary Zeal asserted their Religion. The *Asmonæans* were famous for this, especially *Mattathias*, and *Judas Maccabæus*. And at last *Antiochus* was snatch'd away by a miserable Death, which put a Period for some time to the Persecution of the Jewish Church; all which we find related in the Books of the *Maccabees*.

After this, the *Romans* and *Parthians* at several times oppress'd and harass'd the *Jews*; and about Threescore Years before Christ's coming, *Judæa* was brought under the Power of the *Romans*; which was done by *Pompey*, who subdued *Syria*, and joyn'd it to the *Roman Empire*, (for now we are entring upon the *Fourth Monarchy*) and took *Jerusalem* and destroy'd it, and made the *Jews* submit to the *Roman* Yoke. And this, unquestionably, was a due Recompence for the Sins and Disorders of this Nation; for they had intestine Broils and Wars among themselves; they were divided into Sects and Parties, *Pharisees*, *Sadducees*, *Essenes*: their Religion ran out chiefly into Controversies and foolish Questions, and they set up different Schools for deciding, or rather for bandying them. They doated on Ceremonies, and neglected the sincere Wor-

ship of God. Nothing but Superstition and evil Manners, and perverting the Law of *Moses* by their Traditions was to be found among them.

But when there was this woful *Decension*, and the Church was reduced to this low Condition, CHRIST JESUS appeared in this fit Season to preserve and advance it, and by adding a *New Institution*, to complete and perfect it. Now it is manifest, that the *Church* was dear to Him, in that He came down from Heaven to take Care of it. And see the Effects of this Care; not only Christ Himself, but his Apostles preach'd the Gospel in order to the propagating of the Christian Faith, and thereby procuring the Salvation of Mankind. *Judæa* was chosen as the fittest Place to begin this Work in, it being almost in the Middle of the then known and habitable Earth, at the East End of the *Mediterranean*; and *Jerusalem* was in the Heart of *Judæa*, as the most convenient Situation for this blessed Purpose; and therefore we may observe, That it was particularly foretold, with respect to Christ's Coming and Preaching the Gospel, That *out of* Sion *should go forth the Law, and the Word of the Lord from* Jerusalem, *Isa.* 2. 3. and accordingly we find it injoyn'd by our Saviour, That the Gospel should be preach'd among all Nations, *beginning at* Jerusalem, *Luke* 24. 47. Which Injunction was exactly observ'd by the Apostles, as we are inform'd in the *Acts*: And from Ecclesiastical History we are acquainted, That after they had preach'd in and about *Jerusalem*, they went abroad to convert other Nations; and *Peter* preach'd to the *Jews* dispers'd in *Pontus, Galatia, Bithynia, Cappadocia*, &c. *Andrew* to the *Scythians, John* to those of *Asia the Less, Philip* to them in *Phrygia, Thomas* to the *Parthians, Medes*, and *Persians, Jude* to the *Mesopotamians, Matthew* to the *Æthiopians, Simon Zelotes* to the *Mauritanians, Bartholomew* to the *Indians*. And so that Ancient Prophecy was fulfill'd, *God shall inlarge* Japheth, *and he shall dwell in the Tents of* Shem, *Gen.* 9. 27. *i. e.* The Posterity of the Gentiles shall worship the True God, and come into the *Church*, and at last make up One Body.

But behold, at the very first Erecting of the Christian Religion, it was like to have been blasted in the very Bud. Even in those early Times of Christianity, Seducers and Hereticks arose in the Church; but God raised up eminent Men to withstand and confute their Errors, and thereby to render the contrary Truths more conspicuous and more convincing. When some held that the General Resurrection was past, and others denied Christ to be come in the Flesh, and when some maintain'd the Difference of Meats, and the Unlawfulness of Marriage, and even such Opinions as might be called the *Doctrines of Devils*, St. *Paul* stood up and opposed them. When *Simon Magus* (who is styled by the Fathers, * The First-begotten of the Devil, and, † The Father of Hereticks, and, ‖ The Ring-leader of all Heresy) oppugned the Orthodox Faith, and denied the Doctrine of the Trinity, and affirmed himself to be God, St. *Peter* and other noted Champions encounter'd this Arch-Heretick, and defeated him. And when from him issued a numerous Offspring of Hereticks, and particularly *Menander*, (whom *Eusebius* calls, * The Second Instrument of Diabolick Operation, he reckoning *Simon* the First) all differing from one another, as much as from the Truth, the Holy Christians of that Age presently grew sensible of this Mischief, and with all Zeal attempted the removing of it. When that infamous Pair of Blasphemers, *Ebion* and *Cerinthus*, held that Christ was mere Man, and that the Observance of the *Mosaick* Law was necessary, St. *Paul* writ against the latter Assertion, and St. *John* against the former; and *Ignatius* the good Bishop of *Antioch*, who was St. *John*'s Disciple, writ against both. St. *Jude* (the Survivor of all the Apostles, except St. *John*, and now grown old in the Profession and Defence of the Gospel) animated the Christians of those Times unto this most necessary but glorious Conflict. *When I gave all Diligence* (saith he) *to write to you of the common Salvation*, (*i. e.* of the great and important Cause of Christianity, which concerns us all) *it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you, That ye should earnestly contend for the Faith which was once deliver'd to the Saints.*

* *Ignatius.*
† *Irenæus.*
‖ *Eusebius.*

* Ὄπλον δεύτερον τῆς διαβολικῆς ἐνεργείας. Hist. Eccl. lib. 3. cap. 20.

Again, in the next Centuries, *Marcion* and *Valentine* were attack'd by *Polycarp*, St. *John*'s Scholar. And *Irenæus*, *Polycarp*'s Disciple, wrote against the Heresies of *Simon Magus, Valentinus, Menander, Basilides, Carpocrates, Cerinthus, Ebion*, the *Nicolaites, Cerdon, Marcion*. *Tertullian* grappled with this *Marcion*, and with *Hermogenes*

Hermogenes and *Apelles*. His Books of *Prescriptions* are Objections, Exceptions, Pleas, Allegations, Arguments of the Church against Hereticks, and of these against it and the Orthodox Doctrine. When the Doctrine of *Ebion* and *Cerinthus* was renew'd by *Sabellius* and *Paulus Samosatenus*, these Hereticks were oppos'd by *Gregory* of *Neo-cæsarea*, and *Dionysius* of *Alexandria*.

The *Church* also suffer'd from *Infidels* as well as *Hereticks*. The First Persecution of the Christians was under *Nero*, in the Thirteenth Year of his Reign, about *A. D.* 68. He was the First that made a Law to put Christians to Death. And as *Nero* and *Domitian* raised the Two First Persecutions in the *First* Age, so in the *Second*, Two more were caused by *Trajan* and *Antoninus*. In the *Third*, *Severus* was the Author of the Fifth Persecution; *Maximinus* of the Sixth; *Decius* of the Seventh; *Valerianus* of the Eighth; *Aurelianus* of the Ninth; and at the End of the *Third* and the Beginning of the *Fourth* Century, *Diocletian* was the Author of the Tenth and Last Persecution. The Patience and Courage of the Christians were so invincible, that this Emperor and his Collegue *Maximian* were tyred and wearied out with inflicting Punishments and Tortures upon them; and betook themselves to a private Life, and spent their Time in Gardening. These and the other *Roman* Emperors before-mentioned, used all Arts and all Force to suppress Christianity; but their Attempts were successless. No Storms, no Waves, were able to dash this Rock in pieces. The Cruelties of the Adversaries increas'd the Number of the Christians; and the more these suffer'd, the more they flourish'd. When they were driven into Caves of the Earth, they there undermined the Powers of Darkness, and came forth triumphing over the Strength and Malice of their Enemies.

And at length Christianity prevail'd over all Opposition, and even over *Heathenism* it self; for *Constantine the Great* being set up by God, began to extirpate it, *A. D.* 310. and it was quite expell'd under *Theodosius*, about *A. D.* 390. after whose Time it was never publickly maintain'd in the *Roman* Empire. The fore-mention'd *Constantine* succeeding his Father *Constantius* in the Empire, vanquished *Maxentius* in a pitch'd Battle, and afterwards in the same manner he defeated *Licinius*, the Senate and People of *Rome* begging of him to give his powerful Assistance towards the easing them and their Country of those Tyrannical and Outragious Persons. These Pagan Persecutors being cut off, *Constantine* became sole Emperor, and reign'd alone, and put a Stop to all Persecutions, and not only publickly imbraced Christianity himself, but set forth an Edict to give Liberty and Incouragement to all Christians to worship God according to the Christian Religion. Thus the Church had Rest and Repose, and nothing could be expected but a Behaviour answerable to this wonderful and amazing Act of Divine Providence.

But Men are Men, though they are Christians, and accordingly we shall see that *Heretical* and *False Doctrines* rose again in the Church, and disturb'd the Peace, as well as impair'd the Purity of it. *Persecution* set up Martyrs and Confessors; but, alas! *Heresy* made Apostates. The Bodies, Estates and Lives of the Christians were indanger'd by the former; but their Minds were perverted, and their immortal Souls hazarded by the latter: and therefore 'tis not difficult to tell which was the greater Evil, and the sorer Calamity. But at the same time we are to take Notice of the Divine Goodness towards the Church, in calling forth many Learned and Good Men to appear against those Erroneous and Pernicious Doctrines, and to assert and vindicate the Truth with great Vigor and Courage. The *Arian Heresy* broke out a little after the General Peace procured by *Constantine the Great*'s coming to the Throne: The Patrons of it blasphem'd the Trinity, and especially deny'd the Divinity of Christ; they persecuted the Orthodox Christians; banish'd the dissenting Bishops; vex'd the rest of the Clergy, and punish'd the Laity: In brief, they would have been as great Persecutors as the *Roman Pagan* Emperors, if they had had the same Power. But it was seen how the Great Disposer of all Things was concern'd for his *Church*, when he rais'd up able Champions to defend the injured and persecuted Truth. No Man was more vigorous than *Athanasius* against the *Arians*, as his several *Orations*, *Epistles*, and *Disputations* testify. *Hilary* opposed them with as great Success as Earnestness. *Gregory Nyssen* and *Nazianzen* manfully writ against them. So did St. *Chrysostom* and St. *Augustine*; the latter of whom strenuously

nuously disputed against the two most noted Bishops of the *Arians*, *Maximinus* and *Felicianus*.

The *Arian* Heresy was no sooner suppres'd, than *Pelaganism* sprung up; but it met with Learned Opposers, *Ambrose*, *Jerom*, *Prosper*, but especially *Augustine*, who assaulted the chief Followers of *Pelagius*, namely, *Cælestius* and *Julianus*; and his great Associate in confuting this Heresy was *Alipius*. When the old Errors and Heresies of the foregoing Centuries began to be revived, there were holy Men stir'd up by God to stifle their farther Progress. *Epiphanius* appeared against Eighty Heresies; *Theodoret* shew'd the Vanity of the wild Opinions of the *Valentinians* and other *Gnosticks*. The great Restorers and Asserters of the *Manichæan* Doctrines, *Fortunatus*, *Felix*, *Adimantus*, *Secundinus*, were baffled by St. *Augustine*. He fell upon the *Novatians* and *Donatists*, as also did *Optatus Milevitanus*; he detected the Folly of the *Priscillianists*.

In the next place, I will not be tedious in shewing how entire *Councils*, as well as single *Fathers* and *Doctors* of the Church, were excited in those Times to patronize the Great Truths of the Christian Religion, and with undaunted Minds to set themselves against the Oppugners of them. Thus a General Council was called at *Nice*, a City of *Bithynia*, by *Constantine the Great*, *A. D.* 325. wherein *Arius* and his Followers were condemn'd, who denied the Divinity of Christ. Three hundred and Eighteen Bishops were present at this Council, Three hundred whereof were against *Arius*. This being the First Oecumenick Council, from all Parts of the World, it ought to be very venerable. In the Year 383, the First Council of *Constantinople* was conven'd by the Emperor *Theodosius the Elder*, against *Macedonius*, who denied the Divinity of the Holy Ghost. Afterwards, in the Year 434, the First Council of *Ephesus* met by the Authority of *Theodosius the Younger* against *Nestorius*, who asserted Two Persons in Christ. The Fourth General Council was at *Chalcedon*, *A. D.* 455. by the Emperor *Martianus*, against the *Eutychians*, who confounded those Two Natures in Christ which they should distinguish, and so asserted but one Nature only (made up of the Humane and Divine) in our Lord. So careful was the Christian Church in those Days to establish every thing that related to our Saviour, and to leave us true Apprehensions concerning them. So careful was she to discourage, to censure and condemn all the erroneous Suggestions of *Hereticks*.

And when she was assaulted by *Pagans*, she shew'd the like Care and Concern; witness those Learned *Apologists* both of the * *Greek* and † *Latine* Church, who writ in Confutation of the *Gentile* Religion, and in Defence of the *Christian*, and answer'd all the Objections and Cavils against it; and more particularly what was advanc'd against it by the Learnedest and Wittiest among them, as *Julian*, *Celsus*, *Porphyrius*, *Hierocles*, *Libanius*, was distinctly examin'd, and as fully baffled.

* *Athenagoras*, *Tatianus*, *Theophilus Antiochenus*, *Justin Martyr*, *Clemens Alexandrinus*, *Origen*, *Eusebius*, *Athanasius*, *Theodoret*. † *Tertullian*, *Arnobius*, *Lactantius*, *Minutius Felix*, *Augustinus*.

But now the Church came again to be indanger'd; namely, by the Invasion of the Northern Nations, *Goths* and *Vandals*, *&c.* who sack'd and laid waste the *Western* Empire. For *Constantine the Great* removing his Army from the Northern Frontiers to the Eastern, and himself from *Rome* to *Constantinople*, gave Occasion for these barbarous People to invade *Italy*, when they saw that he had left those Quarters without a Guard.

Soon after the Expulsion of these unwelcome Intruders, the *Christian Church* suffer'd most from *it Self*; for Errors and Heresies, Quarrels, Contentions and Divisions increased among the *Eastern* Christians, which made way for *Mahometism*, and this thrust the *Christians* out of their quiet Habitations. The *Arabian* Impostor got up and flourish'd; and *Saracens* and *Turks* destroy'd the most flourishing Churches, even those famous Ones mentioned in the *Revelation*.

But that there were any Remains of Christianity, and that the Church of Christ was not wholly swallowed up in those Countries, considering the Force that was used to destroy it, is an Argument of the greater Power, and the peculiar Providence of God in respect of his Church. And if we consider that Errors

Errors and Impostures are to make a Difference between the Elect of God and others, and that the former shall always be inlighten'd and adhere to Truth, and that None are hurt by Errors but those that were design'd to be so; and if we further consider, That the *Turks* and *Mahometans* are foretold in Scripture; *Rev.* 9. 14, 15, *&c.* and that their possessing the *Holy Land*, and all the Land of the *Jews*, was also foretold, *Ezekiel Chap.* 37, and 38. we cannot but acknowledge, That the Omniscient and Almighty God dispos'd and ordered this Great Affair, and over-rul'd the whole as he thought fit.

Thus it was in the *East*; let us now look on the *Western* Churches. Whilst the former apostatiz'd to *Mahometism*, the latter fell off to Superstition and Idolatry, and that which at this Day we call *Popery*. For Idleness and Luxury, Pride and Imperiousness, produced the *Supremacy of their Bishops* over the rest of the World, and this was succeeded with *Tyranny*, and imposing on the Consciences of Men, and using Force and Compulsion, and even exercising Bloudshed and Slaughter.

But the *Church* of Christ could never be rooted out; there ever were, even in the Times of the greatest Corruption, some that abhorr'd the Errors and Evils that prevail'd; some that were not defiled with the Filthiness of *Rome*; some that contended earnestly for the Faith once delivered to the Saints. And when *Popish* Corruptions seem'd to overspread the Churches of *Europe*, God stirr'd up the *Waldenses* in *France*, *John Wickliff* in *England*, *John Huss* in *Bohemia*, *Zuinglius* in *Helvetia*, *Luther* in *Saxony*, *Calvin* in *France*, *Knox* in *Scotland*, who vigorously made Opposition against the Errors and Evil Practices of the *Roman* Church. The *Reformation* was begun and continued with a great Series of wonderful and surprizing Events, and with a Success that shews God to be the Author and Disposer of it. And this Land of our Nativity hath peculiarly experienced the Truth of this Doctrine which I have been making good. In the *Marian* Days, and ever since in all the Revolutions that have happen'd, the True Religion hath been preserv'd; in all the Storms and Tempests the *Church* hath rode securely, and *the Gates of Hell have not prevail'd against it.*

If we inquire into the *Grounds* and *Reasons* of all that hath been said, we shall find them to be such as these, First, God's Truth and Faithfulness. Even in *Paradise* it was promised, That *the Seed of the Woman should break the Serpent's Head*, That Christ should defend his Church against Satan and all his powerful and malicious Instruments. *Mount Sion* (which represents the Church in all Ages) *cannot be removed; but abideth for ever*, Psal. 125. 1. *As the Mountains are round about* Jerusalem, *so the Lord is round about his People from henceforth even for ever*, Ver. 2. *She shall not be moved*, Psal. 46. 5. *God will establish it for ever*, Psal. 48. 8. *No Weapon form'd against thee shall prosper*, Isa. 54. 17. *God shall set up a Kingdom which shall never be destroy'd; it shall stand fast for ever*, Dan. 2. 44. All which are meant of the Stability of the Church of Christ. And more expressly, *He shall reign over the House of* Jacob *for ever, and of his Kingdom there shall be no End*, Luke 1. 33. *I am with you always, even unto the End of the World*, Mat. 28. 20. *He shall reign for ever and ever*, Rev. 11. 15. Thus the Perpetuity of the Church of Christ, which is his Kingdom, is promised in Scripture; and these Promises shall be accomplish'd, because God is True and Faithful.

Another Basis on which the Perennity of the Church is built, is the Unchangeableness of God. Here is the *Rock of Ages*, *Isai.* 26. 4. The constant Refuge to fly to in all times; and therefore the Church cannot perish. *Jesus Christ, the same Yesterday, and to day, and for ever*, Heb. 13. 8. And thence it is that the Church is the same. * *Herodotus* relates, That a certain Number of select Soldiers among the *Persians* were call'd *Immortal*, because when ever any one of them was taken away by Sickness or Death, another was added to their Number, and the same Legion was always kept up. Thus the *Church* may be said to be *Immortal*, and never to Fail; for tho' particular Members of it are taken away in the several Ages of the World, yet the constitutent Body of it remains entire, because there are continual Supplies added to it. Let it's Condition be never so low and declining, yet still we find it recruited and repair'd, and we may justly pronounce it to be Perpetual.

* Lib. 7. cap. 83.

It

It must needs be so, if we consider how *Dear* God's *Church* is to him: which is most pathetically express'd in the Inspired Writings, and so frequently, that I shall not here undertake to recount the particular Ways of setting this forth. I can only say this, That all God's Love is set upon his *Church*. The *World* was made for *her*, and all Things in it were design'd to serve *her*. Which is the Meaning (I suppose) of those Words in *Hos.* 2. 21, 22. *I will hear the Heavens, and they shall hear the Earth, and the Earth shall hear the Corn and the Wine and the Oil, and they shall hear* Jezreel, *i. e.* All Things shall call upon me, and I will hear them, and make them Serviceable to *Jezreel*, the Church and it's Children. For the Church is the Cause and Concern of God, and it is certain, that he will maintain his own Cause, and keep up a chosen People in the World, who shall never cease to be a Church: For this Indefectibility depends upon the Eternal Love and Affection of God towards them.

There are several weighty *Inferences*, that may be drawn from the whole. The *first* whereof is this, We ought to believe this Doctrine, and confirm our selves in the Perswasion of the Truth of it; and the rather, because we see it is renounced by some. * It is not, saith *Socinus*, any where really foretold or absolutely promised that the Church shall always exist. † *Smalcius* is of the same Opinion; and so is ‖ *Volkelius*. They assert, That the Church may wholly fail for a time, so that there shall not be one Saint, nor faithful Man left. The * *Remonstrants* agree to this, and tell us, That if every single Person may fall from the Faith, then all in general may fall: But every single Person may fall and that finally and totally, because their Free-Will makes them capable of doing so: Therefore the whole Church is subject to Apostacy, and consequently it may cease to be a Church.

* *Neq; enim eam (Sc. Ecclesiam) perpetuò exituram, usquam revera prædictum aut absolutè promissum est.* Socin. Solut Scrupul. 30. † *Disput.* 8. *de Ecclesiâ.* ‖ *De Ver. Relig.* l. 6. c. 18. * *Apolog.* cap. 22.

But these Men are to be told that it is impossible, that every single Person should fall from the Faith, because the Scriptures acquaint us that there is a certain number of Men, that are secur'd by the *Eternal Election*, and by *Special Grace*, from ever falling away; on which Account, tho' the Church hath had her *Desarts* and howling *Wildernesses*; yet she hath likewise had her Guardian *Fires* and *Clouds*. She subsists every where, and in all Conditions, in *Noah*'s Ark, in the poor *Fisherman*'s Boat, in *Cæsar*'s House. Search from *Genesis* to the *Revelation*, and you'll see that she weathers out all Assaults and Oppositions, and hath always some to stand up to defend her. What she loses in one place, like the Ocean, she gains in another. When she seems to be expiring, she survives; when she is buried, she rises again. She finds Patrons among her Enemies, and the worst of Men are seen to take her part. All her Troubles and Persecutions, all her Defections and Apostacies serve to illustrate the Power and Mercy of God, and to convince the World, that thro' his Goodness there always were and ever will be those faithful Servants of God, to whom the Truth and the Worship of God are precious. There always is a *Church* professing and observing these: As we see in the Family of *Adam*, *Seth* and his Posterity; and before and after the Flood in the Family of *Noah*, in his Son *Shem* and his Posterity, and all the Patriarchs till the Law; and under the Law in the select People of the *Jews* (to which End serve the *Genealogies* which are so frequently set down in the *Old Testament*; they are serviceable to shew the Rise, Propagation, and Conservation of God's Church, on which Account they are not useless and superfluous in Scripture, as some vain Men have objected); and under the *Gospel*, in the Christian Oeconomy unto this Day. From whence the perpetual Subsistence of the Church in all Ages plainly appears. Which directly opposes the Sentiment and Perswasion of the Atheistical Spirits of these Times, who look upon the *Church* it self as a Chimera, and the *Perpetuity* of it as no other.

But here, by way of *Caution*, let me add, That the *Being* or *Duration* of the Church is a Thing distinct from the *Visibility* of it. It shall always be, but it is not always seen. In *Ahab*'s Time *Elias* himself could not see the Church, 1 *King.* 19. 14. *I, even I only am left*; all the other Israelites seem'd Apostates from that true Religion; yet God tells him, *v.* 18. *He had left him* 7000 *in* Israel *that had not bow'd to* Baal. In the utmost Degeneracy of the Jewish Church in

in *Christ's* Time, there were some True *Israelites*, *Joseph*, *Mary*, *Zacharias*, *Elizabeth*, *Anna*, *Simeon*, *Nicodemus*, *Joseph* of *Arimathea*, who were not infected with the General Corruption of the Age, besides the *Apostles* and *Disciples*, and some Holy Women; and these did not always appear and shew themselves. At Christ's Passion there was no Appearance of the Christian Church, but in *Mary* Christ's Mother, and in the Thief on the Cross. All the Disciples *ran away*; and *for a Time* seemed to forsake the Religion and Cause that they had espoused. In the Time of the Prevalency of *Arianism* a Cloud sometimes intercepted the Light of the Truth. The Church in the *Wilderness*, Rev. 12. 17. was partly in a State of Invisibility. In the Time of the spreading of *Error*, and in the Season of *Persecution*, the Church is not ever apparent to the Eyes of Men: To which that of *Luther* * [" In the *Creed* we say, *I believe the Holy Catholick Church*, " we do not say, *I see her*; for commonly she is cover'd with the *Cross*"] is agreeable. Which shews, That the Opinion of the *Romanists* is false, That Outward Splendor and Prosperity are a Mark of the True Church; whereas it is rather a Mark of it to be persecuted and clouded. This is certain, That She is not always conspicuous and visible, but is for a Time overcast and eclips'd; but, notwithstanding this, God hath always some select Persons that are not infected with the Corruptions of the Age. Satan could never so far corrupt Religion as to extinguish it, or the Professors of it. In the most degenerate Times of the World there hath been a Remnant preserv'd; and generally we may observe, That after the Church hath been most obscured, it hath shone out with the greater Brightness. After it hath been depress'd, it hath lift up its Head, and exerted it self with redoubled Vigour. It must needs be so; for the Perpetuity of the Church requires it. And this is a Doctrine that we ought firmly to believe.

*Coll. Sent.

Secondly, We are not only to do this, but to bless God, and own with Thankfulness this His Care towards his Church. She is a *Great Wonder*, Rev. 12. 1. a Wonder both to Good and Bad Men; to the former, who are so marvellously preserved; to the latter, whose Conspiracies and Attempts against her are so strangely defeated. The *burning Bush, not consumed*, is the true Emblem of the Church, which often seems to be near Destruction, and yet is as often deliver'd from it. She hath had her *Pharaoh's*, her *Nebuchadnezzar's*, her *Nero's*; and she hath also had her *Moses's*, her *Cyrus's*, her *Constantine's*; She is Invincible and Impregnable, and is, and ever shall be *the Pillar and Ground of the Truth*, 1 Tim. 3. 15. The Sense of which Words hath been misrepresented by some, because they have not attended to the Appellation which the Apostle gives the *Church* in this very Verse, where he styles it the *House of God*, and accordingly he adds, That it is *the Pillar and Ground of the Truth*; for as a great House or Building is considerable for these two Things, its *Foundation* or Ground-work, and its *Pillars*, so here most appositely the *Church*, which is the *House of God* (in which he dwelleth, and brings up his Family, *the Houshold of Faith*) upholds and bears up the Evangelical Truth and Faith, as a House is supported by its *Foundations* and *Pillars*. The substantial Doctrines of Christianity, and Godliness which flows from them, have their fixed Seat and Mansion here, and shall never fail. This calls for our Admiration and Thanks.

Thirdly, We are invited to Trust and Rely on God, and to comfort and incourage our selves from what we see hath happen'd to the Church. Amidst the strangest Occurrences and Revolutions, we are to confide in this great Truth, That God's Church shall never fail. Say, That it is for a Time corrupted with Error and Heresy; say, that it is indanger'd by Persecution and Tyranny; say, that it is undermin'd by Policy and Stratagem: yet, it being the singular Charge and Care of Heaven, it shall not be destroy'd. *The Lord is in his holy Temple; the Lord's Throne is in Heaven*, Psal. 11. 3. And again, *The Lord hath prepared his Throne in the Heavens, and his Kingdom ruleth over all*, Psal. 103. 19. This *Kingdom* must *prevail*, whatever Designs and Contrivances there are on Foot in the World. This is a Kingdom that shall not be moved, and those who rise up against it, shall certainly be Ruined and brought to Confusion. At last, *Moses's Serpent* shall devour those of the *Magicians*. The Idol *Dagon* shall fall prostrate before the *Ark*. In all Ages of the World God hath taken care of his chosen People: There is not a Page in the Holy Writ,

Writ, where this may not be read; and there are constant Proofs of it in all History. There have been many Decays, Interruptions, and Declensions in the Church; and there have been as many Restaurations and Recoveries Though Infidelity, and Ignorance, and all Vice, and with it all Violence. and Cruelty have reigned in the Earth, yet the Servants of God have found a Place there, and have been kept and sustain'd. The natural Result of which is, That from what is already past, we assure our selves of what shall be, that we despair not of the same good Hand of Providence for the future; and that we trust and rely on that *Mercy, which we know indureth for ever.*

Fourthly and Lastly, Let us do what is our proper Duty in the Station we are at present placed in. Let us be stedfast in our Religion; *let us wait on the Lord, and keep his Way*, and be faithful in the Discharge of those Christian Offices, which are required of us, and then expect and hope for a greater Discovery of Mercy and Favour to the Church of Christ than she hath ever yet known; namely, The Total Downfal of her Enemies; and the Universal Exaltation of the Gospel. God's Hand shall be eminently seen in this Great Affair; and when this Grand Business shall be transacted, the Stream of the Current shall be so violent, that nothing shall bear up against it, but all shall be forced to sail down with it. Only let us be helping it forward with our Prayers; namely, "That all Christian Princes and Potentates "may lay aside their Contentions and Hostilities, and intirely unite in the "Advancing the common Interest of Christianity in their own Territories, "and in Foreign Ones: That all Jews, Pagans, and Infidels may be "brought to the Saving Knowledge of the TRUE GOD, and His Son "JESUS CHRIST: That Popish Superstition and Idolatry may be *banish'd* "out of the World: That the Mystical *Babylon* may fall, and never *rise* "again; and, That Righteousness and Peace may prevail over *the Face of* "the whole Earth."

THE

THE
Latter Part *of the* Ninth ARTICLE;

NAMELY,

[*The Communion of Saints.*]

WHERE

The *Nature* of this COMMUNION is Explain'd.

To which are Added,

Two DISCOURSES: The *First*, Concerning the Nature of *Schism*: The *Second*, Concerning *Scandal*, *Things Indifferent*, and *Christian Liberty*.

I HAVE now finished all the Particulars which I undertook to treat of in my Discourses concerning *The Holy Catholick Church*. I come now to speak of the Second Clause in this Article, to wit, *The Communion of Saints*. Which though it be not in the *Aquileian* Symbol, but is of later Date than the other Part of the Article, yet it is of Antiquity sufficient to make it Authentick, and the Matter it self is of very great Importance; besides, that it explains the foregoing Clause; for *the Holy Catholick Church* was and is gather'd in Order to *the Communion of Saints*. Now this *Communion* is Twofold, First, The Saints Communion *with* GOD. Secondly, Their Communion *with one another*.

I begin with the First, The Saints, that is, The True Members of the Catholick Church, from whom it hath the Denomination of *Holy*, hold Communion with God. *Truly, our Fellowship is with the Father*, 1 John 1. 3. And not only with the Father, but *with his Son Jesus Christ*, as the Apostle adds in the same Place. The Communion of Christ and Believers is built on the Mystical Union between both, which is expressed by the Union between the *Head* and the *Members*, *Ephes.* 1. 22, 23. —4. 15, 16. —5. 30. And it is necessary that they first be united after this manner, before there can be any Communion between Him and them. The *Communion of Saints* doth likewise reach to the other Person in the Sacred Trinity; for they are *the Temple of the Holy Ghost*, and *the Spirit of God dwelleth in them*, 1 Cor. 3. 16. —6. 19. and consequently there is an intimate Correspondence between the Holy Ghost and all true Christians. This is the *Fellowship of the Spirit* which the Apostle expressly mentions in *Phil.* 2. 1. that is, the Fellowship and Converse which we injoy with the Spirit.

If it be ask'd, How this Fellowship between GOD and Believers is managed and maintained, the Scripture informs us, That it is done,

First, By the vigorous Exercise of Faith; for Christ *dwells in our Hearts by Faith*, Ephes. 3. 17. We must know then, That Christ and the Church are One Mystical Person, they being (as was noted before) the Members, and He the Head; *for as the Body is One, and hath many Members; and all the Members of that One Body, being many, are One Body, so is Christ and the Church*, 1 Cor. 12. 12. and therefore Christ and Believers are look'd upon as one Person. Now, Faith is the Principal Grace that unites the Members of the Mystical Body to their Head, Christ, and thence proceeds that blessed Intercourse between them.

Secondly, The Saints Communion with Christ, and the other Persons of the Trinity is effected by an ardent Love. *God is Love, and he that dwelleth in Love, dwelleth in God, and God in him;* 1 John 4. 16. This makes us the Habitation of the whole Sacred Trinity, and more particularly Christ and his Members are fastned to one another by this indissoluble Knot, and by it they hold intimate Converse with one another.

Thirdly, This is manag'd by the constant Use of those Sacred Ordinances which are of Divine Appointment. By offering up Prayer, by hearing the Word, and by perusing the Scriptures, and by celebrating the Lord's Supper we converse with God. More-especially and signally this last is styled the *Communion*, not only because we thereby partake or communicate of the Body and Bloud of Christ, but because we more nearly hold Communion with God in this Ordinance; and besides, this is the Seal of that Communion which is between Christ and His Members. In short, these solemn Exercises of Religion were instituted on purpose to further our Converse with Christ our Lord.

Fourthly, Fellowship with God is by Holiness of Life: 1 *John* 1. 5, 6, 7. *God is Light, and in Him is no Darkness at all*; that is, There is no Impurity in Him, therefore we can't be impure, and at the same time have Communion with God. As it follows in the next Words, *If we say we have Fellowship with Him, and walk in Darkness, we lye, and do not the Truth*; that is, we act hypocritically and falsly. *But*, as the Apostle proceeds, *if we walk in the Light, as He is in the Light, we have Fellowship* not only *with one another*, but *with God and Jesus Christ His Son.* Again, *Chap.* 2. *Ver.* 6. *He that saith he abideth in Him*, that is, hath Communion with Him, *ought himself also so to walk, even as He walked*; that is, He must imitate Christ in the Holiness of his Life and Conversation. And *Chap.* 3. *Ver.* 24. *He that keeps His Commandments, dwells in Him, and He in him.* Which is as if he had said, The obeying of the Divine Commandments is One Way (as well as Evidence) of having Communion with God, and wherein we may expect that He will vouchsafe to converse with us.

Fifthly, To comprize all, Communion with God is by the Communication of the *Spirit*. Which is the Meaning of those Words, *Ephes.* 2. 22. *Ye are built together for an Habitation of God, through the Spirit.* Ye hold Converse with God and His Son Christ Jesus, and thereby are become the Habitation of these Divine Guests; and this is effected by the Spirit, and his powerful Operation on our Hearts and Lives. *There is one Body, and one Spirit*, saith the same Apostle, *Ephes.* 4. 4. The Church is that Body, and the Soul as it were that animates and actuates that Body is the Holy Spirit. This is derived and transfused into every Member of that Body from the Head Christ Jesus. And this is the true Source of that Communion which is betwixt Christ and Believers. *Hereby we know that He abideth in us, by the Spirit which He hath given us*, 1 John 3. 24. And again, *Hereby know we that we dwell in Him, and He in us, because He hath given us of His Spirit*, 1 John 4. 13. The Divine Commerce between God and the Faithful, between their Mystical Head and them as Members, is transacted (as well as known and discovered) by the Operation of the Spirit upon them, and is effectual in all those particular Ways of Communion before-mentioned.

Secondly, The *Communion of Saints* is not only *with God*, but *with one another.* As there is a near Converse of the Members of the Mystical Body with the Head, so there is of the Members with each other. The Saints have not only a Fellowship with Christ, but with all true Christians. Now this Fellowship is Twofold; 1. With those Saints that are departed. 2. With those that are in the Land of the Living. As I said before, that the *Catholick Church*, in the largest Sense, comprehends the Saints in Heaven, who were the Church on Earth once, so the *Communion of Saints* may contain in it our Communion with those Saints above. That is, As these continually wish well to us, and send up their Prayers for us, *Rev.* 6. 10. so we are to bless and praise God for them; we are to esteem and honour them; we are to endeavour to imitate them in their pious Examples; we are to long after their Society, and to fit our selves for it. But the *Communion of Saints* is principally meant of their *Communion* here *on Earth* with

with one another, and therefore I will insist upon this, and shew what are the several Parts of it.

This Communion consists, First, in their mutual Affection. They are *of one Heart, and of one Mind*, as 'tis said of the Primitive Converts, *Acts* 4. 32. There is an exact Concord and Harmony among them; and they have a Fellow-feeling of one another's Grievances. Being all united in one Head, *whether one Member suffer, all the Members suffer with it; or one Member be honoured, all the Members rejoice with it*, 1 Cor. 12. 26. They truly observe the Apostle's Injunction of *bearing one anothers Burdens*, Gal. 6. 2. They sympathize with the Condition of all distressed Saints, wherever they are, and thereby hold Communion with all Saints in the World, all Churches of Christ throughout the Universe. And from this Compassion and Love it is, that they feel an ineffable Pleasure and Satisfaction in their Souls whenever they understand and hear of, or behold the Success of the Family of God, the Prosperity of his People, and the Spreading of his Kingdom in the World. Thus it is a Communion of Hearts and Souls, of Love and Affection, of Respect and Kindness.

Secondly, The *Communion of Saints* implies their taking Pleasure in one another's Fellowship and Converse. It is no Wonder that that Holy Man who tells us, That *in the Saints was all his Delight*, Psalm 16. 3. tells us likewise, That *he was a Companion of all them that fear God*, Psalm 119. 63. It is a satisfactory Entertainment of a good Man to converse with the Servants of Jesus; not because they seem to be of this or that Party or Opinion, but because they are humble, patient, charitable, and express the Power of Religion and Godliness in an exemplary Conversation, in an exact Behaviour towards God and Man; because they bear about them the Marks of real Sanctity, and demonstrate themselves to be true Members of Christ their Head. They must needs therefore hold Commerce with their Fellow-Members, and set a high Value on their Society. This is that which St. *John* means in his First *Epistle, Chap.* 1. *Ver.* 3, & 7. where he joyns these Two *Fellowships* together; namely, The *Fellowship of Believers with Christ and the Father*, and their *Fellowship with one another*. Those that hold Communion with God and his Son Jesus Christ, (of which I spake before) do necessarily maintain a Communion and Society with those that are the Children of God, and the Members of Christ Jesus.

Thirdly, The *Communion of Saints* denotes their joyning together in the publick Exercises of Religion and God's Worship. *I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the House of the Lord*, said the Royal Saint, *Psalm* 122. 1. And this is the pious Disposition of all Holy Men; they rejoyce to assemble together for the Worship of God, there to offer up their spiritual Sacrifices with one Consent. As there is an Inward Bond of Union and Communion among Christians, to wit, the Spirit; so there is also an Outward and Visible One, and that is, their Meeting together. They agree and unite in the publick Acts and Duties of Religion and Divine Service; as it is particularly recorded of the Primitive Converts, that they continued stedfastly, not only *in the Apostles Doctrine*, but *Fellowship*, Acts 2. 12. that is, (as 'tis explain'd in the next Words) *in breaking of Bread and in Prayers*. The Meaning is, They united in the Common and Publick Acts of Worship; in all the Offices and Administrations of the Church. Which I particularly insisted upon when I treated of the *several Ordinances and Institutions of Christ's Church*, under the former Clause of this Article of the Creed, and therefore I must not here repeat any thing that I then delivered; only now I have considered them as they are the Matter and Means of Religious *Communion* and *Fellowship*.

Fourthly, This *Communion* consists in a communicating and injoying of one another's Gifts and Graces, and in mutual Edification by one another's religious Duties and Performances. The Saints and Servants of Jesus interchangeably impart their Thoughts and Conceptions, their Purposes and Designs, for the Good of one another. According to the Apostle's Advice, *They teach and admonish one another*, Col. 3. 16. and build up one another in the most Holy Faith. There is also a reciprocal Quickning of Affections by mutual Exhortations and Intreaties, and, whenever there is Occasion, they spare not Reproofs. *They consider one another, to provoke unto Love and to Good Works*, Heb. 10. 24. and by the most powerful Arguments and Motives they incourage one another in the

Ways of Godliness; and thereby shew that they have a mutual Care for one anothers Souls. Moreover, they mutually impart their Comforts, and support one anothers Spirits by consolatory Topicks, in the Seasons of Spiritual Desertion, and Perplexity of Conscience, in Times of outward Danger and Calamity, in the Day of Bodily Sickness, and at the Approaches of Death. Further, they share in one anothers Prayers: When *Peter* was cast into Prison, *Prayer was made without ceasing of the Church unto God for him*, Acts 12. 5. There is a continual Stock of Prayers, a common Bank, whereby a constant Traffick and Exchange is kept up among the Saints. This is called by the Apostle *Supplication for all Saints*, Eph. 6. 18. whereby they are ever partaking of the Benefit of the Petitions and Addresses that are put up to the Divine Majesty throughout the whole World. And accordingly the Fellowship of all Christians dispersed over the whole Earth is preserved.

Fifthly, It is another part of the *Communion of Saints* mutually to contribute their Temporal Good Things to one another. Some of the Primitive Saints were eminent Examples of this communicative Spirit; for *they had all Things common*, Acts 2. 44. But though this was Extraordinary, and is not to be drawn into usual Practice, yet still the Apostle's Counsel is to take place, and a perpetual Communion among the Saints is to be maintain'd, by *distributing to the Necessities of the Saints*, Rom. 12. 13. *By doing Good, especially to those that are of the Houshold of Faith*, Gal. 6. 10. They are to relieve the Members of Christ, both as they are Christ's Members, and as they are their own Fellow-Members. They are to assist one another in their Worldly and Secular Concerns, and chiefly in their Streights and Difficulties; and, in a Word, They are to serve one another in all Christian and Charitable Offices.

Thus I have offer'd a plain but brief Description of this great Work and Task of Christianity, and which is as great a Benefit and Privilege, *The Communion of Saints*. It remains now, that we shew our selves to be true Christians by our *Communion with God*, and with *our Fellow-Members*. We must not forget to uphold the former by Faith and Love, and all the solemn Exercises of Religion, by Purity and Sanctity of Life, and by the Spirit's Guidance and Direction of us; remembring what an unspeakable Honour it is to hold Communion with God, and to be admitted to a near Converse with Him. We must take care to maintain the latter by continued Acts of mutual Affection, by joyning in religious Duties, by renouncing the Fellowship of Sinners, by delighting in the Society of the Saints, by being helpful to one another in the mutual promoting of our Graces, and by being serviceable as to one anothers Bodily Wants and Necessities. Let us revive this Character of a Christian, which is now almost lost. We may observe a strange Remissness as to this Practice, even in the best of Men; they live generally as if they had blotted this Article of the *Communion of Saints* out of their Creed. So backward are they to communicate with one another; so cold is their Converse, so useless, so little edifying is their Society. It is high time therefore for them to rouze themselves, and put in Practice this Duty which seems to be so much neglected, and even laid aside. It is a Shame that wicked Men have their Associations and Clubs, that they unite in their friendly Confederacies and Leagues, and yet that the Friends of Jesus do so little concern themselves to promote an intimate Communion with one another.

That it may be otherwise for the future, and that they effectually apply themselves to this important Task of our Holy Religion, I propound this one Consideration to them; to wit, That this *Communion* which I have been speaking of, implies in it *Commonness*, and accordingly furnishes us with this Truth, That all is *Common*, and should be so in our Christianity; which is a powerful Invitation and Motive to us to practise the Communion of Saints; for the Frame and Make of the Christian Institution puts us upon this. This *Commonness* of all Things in Christianity is thus represented by St. *Paul*, *Eph.* 4. 4, 5, *&c. There is one Body*; that is, the Mystical Body of Christ, the Church, whereof we all are Members. This is it which the same Apostle urges in *Rom.* 12. 5. *We being many, are one Body in Christ, and every one Members one of another*. And in another Place, the Incitement to Christian Communion, and Godly Friendship

is

is our being Members of the same Body, *Col.* 3. 15. *Let the Peace of God rule in your Hearts, to the which ye are call'd in one Body.* This is the mystical Cognation and Affinity which is between us and other Christians: We make but one entire Body; therefore as living Members we ought to hold Converse with one another.

Secondly, It is said in the foremention'd Place, *there is One Spirit*, that actuates and informs this Body. *That one and the self-same Spirit* (as he is call'd 1 *Cor.* 12. 11.) quickens and moves, inspires and influences all the Members of the Church; therefore they are to act as those that are thus influenced. We are not only incorporated into *one Body*, and are Members united under one Glorious Head, but we are also enlivened and actuated by the same Spirit. Therefore, above all the rest of Mankind, *we* are oblig'd to preserve an entire Communion. Which is the meaning, it is likely, of the Apostle's Advice to the *Philippians*, that *they should stand fast in one Spirit with one Mind*, chap. 1. ver. 27.

Thirdly, *we are call'd in one Hope of our Calling*, that is, We all expect one and the same Happiness, we all look for the same Heaven; and it will be impossible to arrive there, unless we agree here upon Earth in Unity of Heart and Affections. Ought we not to love, and take Delight in those on Earth, with whom we must live eternally in Heaven?

Fourthly, the Apostle adds, *There is one Lord*, there is the same common Head of the mystical Body, Christ Jesus, who governs and rules the Church. We have all one and the same Master, and Redeemer, and Saviour, wherefore it becomes us not to be Strangers to one another, but we should rather be very Intimate and Affectionate.

Fifthly, *There is one Faith*, and therefore call'd the *common Faith*, Tit. 1. 4. The same Doctrine is to be believ'd, the same Gospel is to be embrac'd by us all, which ought to unite us to one another.

Sixthly, *There is one Baptism*, one common Sign and Body of Christianity, one Sacramental Covenant whereby we become Members of Christ and his Church; which should teach us Union of Designs and Affections.

Lastly, *There is one God and Father of all*; first, *One God*, that that indivisible Unity of the God-head might shew us the Amiableness of Unity. And then, *One Father of all*, who hath a Paternal Care for us all, that we might love one another as *Children* of the same Father. As the Prophet *Malachi* expostulates, *Have we not all one Father? Hath not one God created us? Why then do we deal treacherously every Man against his Brother?* chap. 2. ver. 10. Thus I have given a short Comment upon the Apostle's Words, and we see how pregnant they are with Arguments for this *Union* and *Communion* I have been treating of.

It might be added, that there is still a farther *Commonness* in Christianity; for there are the same *Graces* and *Vertues*, if we respect the intrinsick Nature and Quality of them; there are the same common *Laws*, *Precepts* and *Rules*; the same common *Ends* and *Designs*, for the Good and Welfare of the whole Church. There are the same *Privileges* and *Benefits* common to all Believers; the same Glory and Blessedness promis'd to them all, and, in a Word, the same *Common Salvation*, as 'tis call'd, *Jude*, ver. 3. If these Things be rightly and duely consider'd, we cannot in the least doubt of the Reasonableness and Equity, and even the Necessity of the *Communion of Saints*.

Of SCHISM.

HERE it is proper to discourse of *Schism*; for if there be a *Church*, and a *Communion of Saints*, then 'tis unlawful to separate from that Church, and not to hold and maintain Communion with it. And this is the general Notion of *Schism*, and it is founded on this, That Saints must hold Communion with one another; and consequently the Violation of this Communion is *Schism*, and is sinful and unlawful. But that we may the better understand the true Meaning of this Word *Schism* (for it will be convenient to treat of the *Word* it self in the first Place, that thence we may fully know what is the *Thing* that is meant by it) it is requisite to take Notice how it is used in the *New Testament*; for from thence

thence we must derive the right Acception of it; and the true Idea of the Thing understood by it.

The Word in its Primary and proper Sense denotes any *Breach* or *Rent*, as in a Garment, or the like, *Mat.* 9. 16. *Mark* 2. 21. But sometimes it is applied to Dissention and Difference in Opinions; as in *John* 7. 43. The Diversity of Opinions and Conjectures of the People concerning Christ, is call'd *Schism*. And this is the import of the Word in *John* 19. 16. —10. 19. And the *Verb* from whence the Greek Word comes is used in the same Sense, *Acts* 23. 7. ἐγένετο σχίσμα τοῦ πλήθους, *there was a Schism* or *Division among the Multitude*. To which that of the Poet answers,

Scinditur incertum studia in contraria vulgus.

The Word is also applied to Human Bodies; as in 1 *Cor.* 12. 25. we read of *Schism in the Body*, which is there oppos'd to *the Members having the same Care for one another*; and therefore by *Schism* is meant one Member's despising and rejecting the rest as superfluous. But from the *Natural Body* the Word is transferr'd to the *Ecclesiastical one*, and signifies a Rupture or Division in the *Church*, which is the Matter I am now enquiring into. This is the unquestionable Meaning of the Word *Schism* or *Schisms* in these two Places, 1 *Cor.* 1. 10. *I beseech you, Brethren, that there be no Divisions (or Schisms) among you*; and in 1 *Cor.* 11. 18. *When ye come together in the Church, I hear that there be Divisions (or Schisms) among you.*

From which Texts I offer this *Definition* of *Schism*, It is an unlawful Breach of the Orders and Institutions of the Christian Church, and an unwarrantable Separation from its Communion. There are two distinct Parts of this Definition: The former describes a *partial Schism*, and the latter join'd with the former represents the Nature of a total and complete Schism.

I begin with the first Member of the Definition, which represents Schism to be *an unlawful Breach of the Orders and Institutions of the Church*, tho' there be no Separation from its Communion, tho' there be not as yet a forsaking of the publick Assemblies. This part of the Definition I prove from that forenamed Place, 1 *Cor.* 11. 18. *When ye come together in the Church, I hear that there be Schisms or Divisions among you.* Tho' you assemble together, yet you are guilty of *Schism*; tho' you come to the Lord's-Supper, yet you are Schismatical. A Schismatick then may be in Communion. There is *Schism* without *Separation*. But what is this *Schism*? The Context of that Place which I now produced will inform us, to wit, That it was a Violation of the Orders and Institutions of the Church of *Corinth*: For in that Chapter we find the Apostle complaining that some of the *Corinthians* behav'd themselves very disorderly in their publick Meetings. They were guilty of great Irreverence in the Worship of God, the Men commonly covering their Heads, and the Women appearing in a quite different Posture, which it seems was disagreeable to the Custom of the *Corinthian* Church, and other Churches of Christ. And they were yet guilty of higher Misdemeanors; for we read how the Lord's-Supper was prophan'd by them; how the proud and wealthy Men among them disdain'd their poor Brethren at their celebrating the Holy Communion, and how it was celebrated contrary to Christ's Institution and the Apostles Directions.

These were Miscarriages and Disorders which St. *Paul* calls *Schisms* or *Divisions* in that forementioned place. Thus we see that what is *Indecent* or *Prophane*, or *contrary to Christ's Institution* in the publick Worship of God is *Schismatical*. It appears hence, that *Schism* is something more than what many (and who talk much against Schism) take it to be; for they place it wholly in *Separating from the Church* (of which I shall speak next). But there are more *Schismaticks* in the Church than *Separatists*; for Schism, according to what I have remarked, is a Breach of any of those Laws and Institutions which Christ or his Apostles have appointed in the Church: It is a corrupting or prophaning of any of the Divine Ordinances; and more generally, it is a making of Sides and Parties in Religion, and a willful fostering of Contention and Division among Christians in Matters Ecclesiastical.

I pro-

I proceed now to the Second Member of the Definition; namely, that *Schism* is an *unwarrantable Separation from the Church-Communion.* Which we learn from the other Acception of the Word in the forecited Place, 1 *Cor.* 1. 10. *I beseech you, Brethren, that there be no Divisions* (*Schism* according to the Greek) *among you*, that is, (as the Words following explain it) no Unchristian Separation from one another in respect of Church Communion. For one Party said, *I am of* Paul; *another, I am of* Apollos; *and another, I am of* Cephas; *and a fourth, I am of Christ.* They affected different Teachers, and ways of Teaching, and thereupon were torn from one another, and were divided as to their Congregations and Assemblies. This is the *Schism* that the Apostle takes Notice of in his *Epistle* to the *Hebrews, chap.* 10. *ver.* 25. finding Fault with them because it was *the manner of some to forsake the Assembling of themselves together.* They either wholly abstained from publick Communion, or set up Meetings of their own in Opposition to the settled Assemblies. And St. *Jude* in his *General Epistle* describes this sort of Persons, and at last sets this distinguishing Mark upon them, *These be they that separate themselves*; namely, from the Communion of the Church, *ver.* 19. They despise and renounce the publick Exercises and Offices of the Church. This is *Schism.* And that this is a great and heinous Sin, and as destructive to the Souls of Men as any Sin whatsoever, is evident from the Apostles blaming and condemning them for it.

Nor can we think otherwise when we consider the thing it self, for *Schism* is against the very Action and Being of a *Church*, which is a Body of Persons that profess the true Religion, and have Communion together in the Ordinances of Christ's Appointment. Now, How can this be where there is a Separation from Communion? For this hinders the publick and solemn Profession of Christianity, and destroys that Communion and Society which are absolutely Necessary to the preserving of a Church. It is indispensibly required of us as we are Members of a Church to own Christianity publickly and openly; We are under an Obligation to assemble together to worship God, that is, To pray, to hear the Word of God, to receive the Sacrament, and to make all Expressions of Reverence to God, and his Son Christ Jesus. The primitive Christians were so firmly perswaded of the Necessity of this Joint-Exercise of Religion, that tho' Christianity was persecuted, yet they held solemn and set Meetings under Ground, for the Worship of God. So fearful were these good Men of approaching to what might look like *Schism.* Afterwards we find, that those who separated from the Christian Churches and Doctrines, were condemned by the Worthy *Fathers* of the Church both before and after *Constantine the Great*; and their particular Errors and Schismatical Breaches are recorded (tho', as I shall mention afterwards, some of those Things which were voted *Schismatical*, scarcely deserv'd that Name.)

Having thus clear'd the Notion of *Schism*, and given a brief Account of the Nature of it from the Writings of the *New Testament*, and briefly shew'd the Sinfulness of it, I come now to remove some *Mistakes* concerning this Doctrine. And because This one, to wit, That *All* Church-Separation, or abandoning Communion on a religious Account, is *Schism*, comprises in it all the rest, I will fully and largely shew the Variety of this Error. If every *Separation* were *Schism*, then when *Seth*'s Offspring separated from *Cain*'s wicked Race, *and began to call on the Name of the Lord* in a pure manner, *Gen.* 4. 26. they were *Schismaticks.* Then *Abraham*, when upon God's Call he left *Chaldea*, his own Country and People, that he might not hold Communion with them in Religion, or Idolatry rather, any longer, was an *unlawful Separatist.* So when the Apostles and Christian Converts forsook Judaism, they incurr'd the Crime of *Schism.* And to come nearer home, our pious Ancestors, and others who being stirr'd up by God in Foreign Countries, set on foot the *Reformation*, and actually departed from the Church of *Rome*, are to be reckon'd in the Number of Schismaticks; and we our selves cannot avoid that Imputation, for we tread in the Steps of our Forefathers, and renounce Communion with the Popish Church. All this will follow upon the vain Notion, That all who separate from Church Communion are guilty of Schism.

But this is so far from being true, and having any solid Foundation, that there is Reason to assert that a *Separation* is sometimes not only Lawful, but

Necessary

Necessary and Indispensible. It is so far from being a *Schism* to avoid the Communion of a Church wherein there are Things that I hold unlawful, that I'm bound on pain of Damnation to avoid it: For it is a damnable Fault outwardly to profess and maintain that which I inwardly believe to be unlawful, if this gross Dissimulation and Hypocrisy be of a damning Nature, as certainly it is. This shews the Necessity of quitting that Society which will involve me in Sin. And of this we may inform our selves further from *Isai.* 52. 11. *Depart ye, depart ye, go ye out from thence*, &c. Which is applied on the like Account in 2 *Cor.* 6. 17. *Come out from among them, and be ye separate, and touch not the unclean Thing.* And the like was convey'd in a Voice from Heaven, *Rev.* 18. 4. *Come out of her my People*, &c. This shews that it is a false and groundless Notion, That *all Church-Separation* is a Schism, and consequently sinful.

Therefore in the Definition of *Schism*, I asserted it to be an *unwarrantable* Separation from the Communion of the Church. By which I mean these three Things; first, That it is a willful and obstinate Separation. For as *Heresy* is limited and restrained in the Sense of it, so ought *Schism* to be; and therefore as that is defined to be an obstinate and perverse renouncing of the Fundamental Truths of Christianity, so this is *such* a separating from Church-Communion.

Again, by *unwarrantable* Separating, I mean that which proceeds from ill Principles, as a Spirit of *Contention* and *Faction*, *Conceit* and *Pride*, and *Desire of Applause*, an *Insolent and Domineering Spirit*, and that which tends to *mischievous Ends and Designs*; namely, To make Sects and Parties in the Church, and to disturb the Peace and Unity of it. But a dividing from the publick Assemblies, which is merely the Result of *Misinformation*, or *Ignorance*, or flows from pure *Weakness*, or from *Rashness*, and is not accompanied with any *Evil Design*, deserves not the odious Name of *Schism*.

In the next Place, by an *unwarrantable* Separation, I mean *such* a one as is without sufficient Cause. And this indeed is the chief Thing that distinguishes an unwarrantable Separation from one that is of another Nature. Every Departure from a Church, and not joining with it, is not Schism, but a *Groundless* Departure is. And that is a Groundless Departure which is *without just Cause*. But on the contrary, a Separation is then Just and Lawful when the Cause is so, that is, when we are compell'd to abandon a Society because of something sinful in it, and that in a very high Degree. Thus when the Society requires of us to comply with gross Errors and vicious Practices, it is not to be questioned but that a Departure from that Society is lawful and warrantable. If a Church, or a Body of Men that go under the Name of a Church, be corrupted in Doctrine and Worship, and demands of us to own and profess those Corruptions, we have Licence to separate from that Body; and 'tis certain that we do not in that Case incurr the Imputation of *Schism*. For there can be no *Schism* but where there is an Obligation to *Communion*, Schism being a Violation of the Bonds of that Communion which we are obliged to maintain; But no Man is obliged to what is sinful and unlawful. Those therefore that relinquish a Church because of the sinful Conditions imposed by it, are not Schismaticks.

But that Church which drives them from joining in Communion with her, by insisting on such Conditions of Communion, is guilty of Schism; as we own the *Church* of *Rome* to be. Wherefore Mr. *Chillingworth* bids the Church of *Rome* * *propose some Form of Worshipping God, taken wholly out of Scripture: And herein* (saith he) *if we refuse to join with you, then, and not till then may you justly say, We have utterly abandoned your Communion.* And he tells us plainly, † *That it is not Schismatical to separate from the External Communion of a Church, tho' it wants Nothing necessary: For if this Church, supposed to want Nothing necessary, require me to profess against my Conscience that I believe some Error, tho' never so small and innocent, which I do not believe, and will not allow me Her Communion but upon this Condition, in this Case the Church for requiring this Condition, is Schismatical, and not I for separating from the Church.* So he. Accordingly, they that give the Occasion of separating from such or such a Church's Communion, are the Authors of that which they call *Schism*, in those that separate from it.

* *Answer to the Preface of* Charity maintain'd.

† *Preface to the Author of* Charity maintain'd.

But not only the imposing of Things *unlawful* and *sinful in themselves*, but of Things which are *indifferent* in the Opinion of the Church-Rulers, and *unlawful* in

in the Opinion of those on whom they are imposed, is thought by some to be a just Cause of *Separation*; and consequently the Separation (according to them) is no *Schism*, that is, it is no sinful Separation. Wherefore I do not look upon those as *Schisms* in a proper and strict Sense which were Quarrels between the *Eastern* and *Western* Churches about keeping of *Easter* in the second Century; and about the admitting to Pardon those that renounced the Faith in time of Persecution, and about the Rebaptizing of Hereticks that return'd to the Church; in which Controversy between the *African* and *Western* Bishops *Cyprian* was the great Stickler, in the third Century. So some do not look upon the Churches of *Dissenters*, who join not with the *Church of England* merely because she imposes such Rites and Ceremonies on all that communicate with her, as the Church her self thinks to be *indifferent*, and they think to be *unlawful*, or at least *suspicious*; Some I say, do not look upon these Persons as *Schismaticks*, because here is some Occasion given to them of departing from the Communion of the Church of *England*; I say, *to them*, whose Consciences cannot comply with these Usages; But as for others, who are satisfy'd either about the Lawfulness or Indifferency of them, there is no Occasion given of Separation; and accordingly they can with a safe Conscience bear with these Rites.

And as for those who dissent from our Church, purely on the Terms of Conformity, it may be thought that they are not obnoxious to the Charge of Schism because they separate not from the *Catholick Church*, that is, the Church of Christ in the whole World professing the fundamental Truths of the Gospel, and practising the Essentials of Christian Worship. There is no Salvation out of this *Catholick Church*; but no *particular Church* can damn another particular Church which differs from it in indifferent Usages and Rites; for these are not the Things that make any Assembly of Men, (whether of all Christians in the World, or of those of one Nation, or of a particular Congregation) *a Church*. But there is something else that constitutes *a Church*, and our own Church tells us what it is, in her XIXth Article, where she gives this Definition of the *Visible Church*, *It is a Congregation of faithful Men, in the which the pure Word of God is preach'd, and the Sacraments duly ministred, according to Christ's Ordinance, in all those Things that of Necessity are requisite to the same.* This certainly is a right Definition, and according to this no particular Churches (for *these* must be judg'd of according to the Essentials of the Universal Visible-Church) in which the Pure Word of God is preach'd, and the Sacraments are duly ministred according to Christ's Ordinance, can be said to be *Schismatical*. But in the settled Churches of the sober Dissenters (as they represent their own Case) the pure Word of God is preach'd, and the Sacraments are duly administred according to Christ's Ordinance; therefore they are True Churches and not Schismatical. One would think, that if it can be proved concerning any Persons or any Body of Men that they hold and preserve an entire Communion with all those Christians in the World who profess all the Fundamental Doctrines of the Christian Faith, and perform to God that Worship which the Holy Scriptures require, and adds no other Things to these; one would think, I say, that such Persons or Bodies of Men should not merit the Title of *Schismaticks*. Now it is pleaded, that this is the Case of those whom I am speaking of.

Yea, farther, They do not divide and separate from the *National Church*, so far as it conforms to the *express* Rules and *explicite* Laws of Christ. Nor do they separate from any one *Particular Church* of Christ, so far as it holds the Fundamentals of Christianity, and the Essentials of Divine Worship. There is not one individual Assembly that worships God according to the Manner prescribed in Scripture, but they are ready to communicate with it. So that they are at Unity both with the *Catholick Church*, and all *Particular Churches* of Christ upon Earth; and therefore they cannot possibly be *Schismaticks*.

It is true, they separate from the National Church so far as they think (and they say, they cannot help their thinking) that it adds Humane Inventions in God's Worship; but they profess and maintain Communion with it, as it retains all the Essentials of Worship prescribed by the Word of God. And they reckon, (and that most justly) that they have the same Religion with the *Church of England*, (for the Religion of the *Church of England* consists not in Ceremonies and Disputable Rites, but in the Substantials of Doctrine and Worship)

Worship) and the *Church of England* hath the same with them: Only the *Church of England*, as they apprehend, mixes some unwarrantable Observances with the Essentials of Worship, and imposes them as necessary Terms of Communion; which the *Dissenters* insist upon to have removed. And if they were so, the Pure and Intire Worship of God will still remain, and then there will be no Impediment to their joyning in Communion with the *Church of England*. 'Till that Time, they think they are not to be blamed for their *Separation*, nor do they call it *Schismatical*; because it is owing to the Cause of it, which is, the requiring strict Conformity to several Things which these Persons believe to be either Unlawful, or suspected to be such, and to have no Allowance from the Word of God. They who separate *barely* on this Account, take it ill to be styled *Schismaticks*, because they say, they separate not from the Church so far as any thing is *evidently* and *indisputably* according to the Scriptures. Other Things are usually alledged to take off the Imputation of Direct *Schism* from our Moderate and Sober *Dissenters*; but some will think I have said too much already.

But there is such a Thing as *Real Schism*, and 'tis to be abhorr'd by all good Men. This (as I have shew'd) is an Unwarrantable Secession from the Church, a Causless Breach of its Communion, and a departing from it without Just Occasion. There are Two Ways of departing from the Church, the one is by *Heresy*, which is a Willful Abandoning of the Fundamentals of the Christian Faith; the other is by *Schism*, which is an Unlawful Breach of the Unity of the Church, and separating from its Communion. But they are *both* of them very dangerous; yea, more dangerous *in some Kind* than the Depravity of Manners. For as in the Natural Body a deep Wound, or Solution of Continuity, is worse than a corrupt Humour, so in the Spiritual or Ecclesiastical Body, a *Disunion* or Disjunction made by Heretical Doctrines and Schismatical Practices, is oftentimes more mischievous than Corrupt and Debauch'd Manners. Let us therefore carefully avoid both of these heinous Sins, and never suffer our selves to be so far seduced as to relinquish any substantial Doctrine of Christianity, or to separate without just Cause from the Communion of the Church, and thereby to disturb its Unity, and to divide the Body of Christ. And whilst we are intent upon observing those, who, out of a Principle of Nonconformity, frequent not our Assemblies, let us take Notice of and be concerned for those vast Multitudes of *Prophane* People, that never or rarely come to Church, never worship God in Publick. These are the *True Separatists* from the Church. And let us also remember, That to be Stiff and Peremptory, and not to comply with our Weak Brethren; to refuse to shew Kindness and Charity to those that are of the same Faith, is *Schismatical*.

Of *Scandal*, *Things Indifferent*, and *Christian Liberty*.

IT is objected by some scrupulous Persons, That by joyning with the Publick Meetings of the *Church of England*, they shall *offend their weak Brethren*, who are dissatisfied at some Things that are in Use in our Church; to wit, the *Ceremonies*, which, though we should grant them to be *Indifferent* Things, are Matter of *Scandal* to weak Consciences: and therefore in this Case it is best to make Use of our Christian Liberty, and to refrain from those Ceremonies, and consequently from the Publick Congregations of the Establish'd Church. This Objection hath been managed very warmly by our Dissenting Brethren ever since the *Reformation*, and it is in as full Force now as ever, and I believe will never be laid aside as long as the Ceremonies of our Church last. I will give a fair and impartial Answer to what is thus suggested, by shewing what is the Nature of *Scandal*, and how Things may be said to be *Indifferent*, and what Use we are to make of our *Christian Liberty* about these Things.

First,

First, For the true Import of the Greek Word σκάνδαλον, which is the Word for *Scandal* or *Offence* in the *New Testament*, it signifies in the primary Acceptation of it some Thing which lies in the Way, and is apt to give him a Fall who lights upon it. Thus the Jews were forbid in their Law to *put a Stumbling-block before the Blind*, Lev. 19. 14. where the Word that the *Septuagint* use is σκάνδαλον And so σκανδαλίζειν is to lay such a Thing in the Way as occasions *stumbling*. But because the Life of Man is call'd a *Way* in the Holy Style, whatsoever is an Obstacle or Hindrance to them that walk in this Way; that is, Whatever occasions their falling into Sin, and proves hurtful and mischievous to them, is not unfitly and improperly call'd a *Scandal* or *Offence*. This is the secondary Signification of the Word in the *Bible*, and among the *Writers* of the *Church*; but is seldom or never used in this Sense by *Prophane Authors*. The Apostle uses no less than Three Words to express the Nature of *Scandal* in *Rom.* 14. 21. *If thy Brother* * *stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak.* And πρόσκομμα, a *Stumbling-block* is equivalent with *Scandal*, 1 *Cor.* 8. 9. This then is the true Notion of *Scandal*; It is that which is an Occasion to another of spiritual Falling, that is, Sinning. It is that which hinders Men from Religion, or confirms them in Vice. It is a Word or Action whereby others are encouraged to do Evil, or disabled from doing Good.

* προσκόπτει, σκανδαλίζεται, ἀσθενεῖ.

To make a farther Discovery of the true Nature of Scandal, we may consider it under this double Notion; 1. As it is *Indirect* and *Accidental*. 2. As it is *Direct* and as *in it self* and *in its own Nature* it causes Men to fall into Sin. The first of these, though it be not the *Scandal* I am inquiring into, yet the right Understanding of it will give some Light to the Subject we are to discourse of. This Indirect and Accidental Scandal arises from voluntary Mistake, and is the Issue of perverse and froward Minds, that will not be pleased with what others do, but *take Offence* at their Actions, though no Offence be *given*. They profess themselves *offended* when no real Stumbling-block is laid in their Way, when there is nothing to exasperate or disturb the Spirits of sober Men, nothing said or done that is a Hindrance to Goodness and Holiness: In brief, when there is not the least Occasion given of *Falling*, and consequently there can be no *Scandal*. Wherefore that must not be concluded to be *truly Offensive* and *really Scandalous*, which these Persons except against and dislike: Yea, it may be the more Innocent and Harmless because they are passionately ingaged against it. He doth not, in the Evangelical Sense, and the true Import of the Word, *offend* his Brother, who barely displeases him; but he truly and properly *offends* him who lays a Stumbling-block before him, which occasions his falling into Sin, and his displeasing of God. If then I discharge my Duty, and stand right in the Court of Heaven and of my own Conscience, and in the mean time, some Persons tell me that they are *scandaliz'd* at my Actions, and are highly *offended* with my Carriage; in this Case I comfort my self that I have done what the Law of God and my own Conscience directed me to, and therefore I can't give Offence; for no Man should be offended at me for my doing my Duty; and 'tis certain that I must not omit a necessary and indispensible Duty to avoid some Mens being scandalized. That *Offence* is taken is not my Sin; but the Sin is theirs who are offended without any just Cause: And I am sure of this, That what is really Good and Vertuous, cannot be the immediate and direct Matter of Scandal. The Pharisees of old were so scrupulous as to *take Offence* even at our Saviour's Discourses and excellent Doctrine, *Mat.* 15. 12. but what said our Saviour? *Let them alone; they be blind Leaders of the Blind*, ver. 14. As much as to say, If they will be offended, let them be offended, 'tis their own Fault and Folly. We find afterwards that the Gospel was an Offence to the unbelieving Jews, 1 *Cor.* 1. 23. *We preach Christ crucified, to the Jews a Stumbling-block*, and Christ Himself was a *Stone of Stumbling, and a Rock of Offence*, 2 *Pet.* 2. 6. But it is not to be imputed to the Blessed Redeemer of the World that any are offended at Him, and at the everlasting Gospel which He hath published; but 'tis the Fault of those who are and resolve to be offended. This I call the *Indirect Scandal*, and the Matter of it is in it self Innocent and Good; and therefore it is no culpable Charge against, or Disparagement to it, that it occasions the Sin of another.

But, Secondly, There is a *Direct Scandal*, which is a Scandal properly so call'd, and this is an Offence really given, and always proves an Occasion of Sin to others. This Offence is either in *Evil Doctrines* and *Evil Practices*, or in *Things that are Indifferent*. To the First of these appertain all False and Erroneous Opinions, such as are apt to possess Mens Minds with evil and depraved Apprehensions concerning the Maker of the World, or the Souls of Men, and their future Existence in another Life; such as shake the Foundations of the Christian Religion, and rifle the First Principles of our Belief; such as dissettle and distract the Thoughts of Men, and render them dubious and indifferent about the Matters of Salvation; such as corrupt good Manners, and administer to Lewdness and Wantonness, or to Hatred and Variance, or any other ill Passion or Practice. These are *really* and *directly Offensive*, and the Occasions of Sin in others.

Again, Scandal is given more visibly by *Deeds* and *Actions* that are absolutely sinful and vicious. Yea, indeed, every Sin, whether we actually and personally commit it our selves, or promote and incourage it in others, is a Real Scandal to our Brother, because it is directly against that Charity which I ought to shew towards his Soul. He that openly transgresses the Divine Law, and Command of God, so that others by his Example are incouraged or invited to do the like, cannot possibly evade the Guilt of *giving Offence*. This is laying a *Block* in my Brother's Way, so fatal a one as may make him *stumble* into Eternal Flames. This then without all Controversy is really and strictly *Offensive*.

But it is possible and usual to give Offence not only by that which is utterly Unlawful and Sinful in its own Nature, but by the Things which are *in themselves Indifferent*, but not expedient to be done in respect of *others*. This was the Supposal of the great Apostle, and we read his pious Resolve upon it, *1 Cor. 8. 13. If Meat make my Brother to offend, I will eat no Flesh whilst the World stands, lest I make my Brother to offend*. We see here, That in the use of *Things Indifferent*, we may scandalize our Brethren. Yea, weak Christians are generally offended by *Indifferent* Matters, as well as by Evil and Criminal Ones. This then is a grand Truth, That when we do something, although not *unlawful* in it self, nor yet *necessary to be done* in respect of any Divine Command, unadvisedly and indiscreetly, with a wilful Breach of our *Christian Liberty*, and without a charitable Regard to the Persons we converse with, and without a due Consideration of the different Cases and Circumstances of our Actions; when we thus act, I say, we cannot avoid *giving Offence* to our Brethren. And because the great Quarrel and Controversy is about these *Indifferent* Matters, and our Carriage in them, it will be proper to insist more largely on this last Kind of Scandal or giving Offence in Matters *Indifferent*. I will then display the Nature of *Things Indifferent*, and of the *Christian Liberty* or *Restraint* which are exercised about them; whence we shall clearly see what Obligation there is upon us with respect to these Indifferent Things, and how *Scandal* arises from the Observing or Omitting of them. I will comprize all in these Three Propositions, First, There are *Indifferent Things* in Religion. Secondly, *Christian Liberty* is exercised about these, so that we may do them or not do them. Thirdly, Notwithstanding this *Liberty*, there may be a *Restraint* and *Limitation*, either as to the observing them, or the not observing them.

First, I say, There are such Things in Religion as are *Indifferent*. There is an *Indifferency* as to some sacred Things, such as have respect to God's Worship and Service, as Outward Circumstances, Rites and Gestures. Now, there are these Two Ingredients towards the making of a Thing *Indifferent* in Religion; first, It must be in it self *neither Good nor Bad*. This the Apostle means when speaking of the Ceremonious Usage of the Jewish Law, he saith, *I know and am persuaded that there is nothing unclean* (and so likewise nothing clean) *in it self*, Rom. 14. 14. And *Ver. 17. The Kingdom of God is not Meat and Drink*; that is, there is no intrinsick Goodness or Religion in those Judaical Rites. These therefore, and all Things of the like Nature are *Indifferent*, because they are in themselves neither Good nor Evil, neither Necessary nor Sinful. The other Ingredient is this, That the Things be *neither injoyned nor forbidden in the Holy Scriptures*. For whatever is to be done and practised (as well as to be known and believed) in Religion, in order to our Salvation, is contained and expressed in

in Sacred Writ, and consequently what is not injoyned here is *Indifferent*. From what hath been thus premised, it appears, That the Things before-mentioned, that is, the External Circumstances and Rites used in the Church about the Service of God, are to be reckoned among *Indifferent Things*. For, first, 'tis acknowledg'd that these Things are of a Middle Nature, and have *no positive Goodness* or *Evil* in them, and accordingly, that they may be alter'd as the Church shall think fit. And then, it is likewise confessed, That the *Scripture hath not determined* any where the Use of them. It is true, the very Circumstances and most minute Ceremonies under the *Old Testament*, were exactly set down, and there was not the least Thing left free. They were bound up to every Punctilio; there was no Latitude, no not so much as to the Kind of *Oyl* they were to use; and they were tied to the very *Snuff* of a Candle. But 'tis not so under the Gospel; the Outward Circumstances of Worship are in a great measure left free: only, some General Rules are prescrib'd us, *Do all to the Glory of God: Let all Things be done decently and in Order*, &c. But these peculiar Observances and Rites which are now in Controversy, are no where injoyn'd in the Sacred Writings, therefore they are *Indifferent*.

The Second *Proposition* is, That *Christian Liberty* is properly exercised about these *Indifferent Things*, so that we may observe them, or not observe them. I have discours'd of the *Liberty* or *Freedom* of Christians in another Place, and shew'd that it consists of several Parts, of which this is one, That we have a Freedom as to the Use of Things Indifferent in Religion. A Christian by virtue of this *Liberty* can act or not act; he is not tied up to one side or another. This is fully expressed by the Apostle in 1*Cor.* 9. 20, 21, 22. *Unto the Jews I became as a Jew*; I complied with them in some Ceremonies which at that time were Indifferent: *To them that are under the Law*, that is, the believing Jews who yet held it requisite to retain the *Mosaick* Rites, *as under the Law*, I refuse not to submit to some of those Ceremonies that they have a good Opinion of. *To them that are without Law*, to wit, the Gentiles, who hold themselves not obliged to keep *Moses's* Law, *as without Law*, not observing it when I was among *them*. *To the Weak became I as weak*, in the Forbearance of those Things which I saw they scrupled through their Weakness. *I am made all Things to all Men*, I making use of my Christian Liberty accommodate my self to the Practices of all my Fellow-Christians in those Matters that are Indifferent. And this I can do without offending God, or hurting my own Conscience, for Christ hath forbid nothing in Religion that is Indifferent.

This is a most Illustrious Example and Instance of that *Christian Liberty* I am speaking of. And we have all of us Right to the same Privilege, as we are Christians; whence the Evangelical Law is called *The Law of Liberty*, to distinguish it from the Old Law, which determin'd all Outward Rites, and left very few Things to Mens Disposal. But *now*, all Indifferent Rites, Appendages, Circumstances, and Modes of Worship are left to our Liberty; and it is in our Power to use them, or not to use them. But

The Third *Proposition* is this, That notwithstanding this Liberty, there may be a *Restraint* and *Limitation*. For this is certain, That the determining a Thing to one side, on good and warrantable Considerations, is not a destroying of Christian Liberty; for even then a Christian is Free, because he is persuaded in his Judgment of the *Indifferency* of the Thing. And the very Notion of *Indifferency* allows of this Determination, because if a Thing be *Indifferent*, it may be *done*, or *not done*. If it be done, then there is a Determination on the Affirmative Part; if it be not done, the Determination is on the Negative. Notwithstanding then the *Original Liberty* which a Christian hath, as to *Indifferent Things* in Religion and Worship, he *may* suffer himself to be drawn to one side or other; that is, to use or not use those Indifferent Things, because it is not against the *Nature* of Christian Liberty to be confin'd and determin'd. This being the main Hinge on which the Controversy turns, I must clear this Assertion, and evidence the Truth of it. Which I will do by shewing *How* and in *what Manner* this Determination or Restraint is made, and *on what Considerations* it is reasonable and fitting to submit to a Restraint. This may be done, First, When the Circumstances of the Case are alter'd. Secondly, When Rulers and Governours interpose

pose by their Authority. Thirdly, When we are in Danger of Offending our weak Brethren.

First, There may be a Restraint of our Liberty when the *Alteration of Circumstances* requires it. I take *Circumstances* here in a large Sense, and understand by that Term not only the Place and Time of Actions, and the Manner of doing them, but the Reasons, Ends, and Intentions of them, and the Persons themselves that act. Any of these are sufficient to change the Nature of Things Indifferent, and to render them Good or Evil, Lawful or Unlawful. Thus the *Usage of the Place* is able to determine the Action sometimes; of which the Eleventh Chapter of the First Epistle to the *Corinthians* is an evident Proof; where the Apostle corrects the Indecencies of their Behaviour and outward Deportment in the Worship of God, by confining them to the Practice of the Christian Churches in *those Places* and *Countries*. And particularly we see that he decides the Dispute about Mens uncovering their Heads, and Womens veiling theirs in the Congregation, by alledging a laudable *Custom*, ver. 16. And this Apostle at other times doth invade the *Liberty* before-mentioned, by determining Indifferent Things according to the Rule of Order observ'd in the *Place* where he was. So as to *Time*, that may be done at one Season, which is not fit to be done at another; as we find in the Decision made by the First Council at *Jerusalem*, about *abstaining from Things strangled, and from Bloud*, and such like Usages, *Acts* 15. 29. which was only a Temporary Decree, the Jews being not able at that Season to bear the Omission and Neglect of those Observances, and therefore the Apostles injoyn'd a Compliance with them for a Time. Likewise, the *Manner* and the *Intentions* which accompany Indifferent Actions in Religion, alter the Nature of them: Thus though it was unlawful for Idolaters to worship on *Hills* and *High-Places*, or in *Groves*, because they did it in an *Idolatrous* Way, and with Designs of promoting Idolatrous Worship, together with Impurity and Lewdness; for which Reason the High-Places and Groves were commanded to be demolish'd, and pious Kings put it in Execution, 2 Kings 23. 8. Yet it was lawful for God's People to build their Altars on High-Places, and the Temple it self was built on a Hill; and we read that Groves were first used and dedicated to God's Worship, *Gen.* 21. 33. The End and Intentions of the Worshippers legitimated this sort of Indifferent Usages.

Likewise, according to the Difference of the *Persons* whom we have to deal with, this Kind of Actions receives a different Determination, and is look'd upon either as Lawful or Unlawful. St. *Paul* circumcised *Timothy*, but refused to do the same to *Titus*, because there was a great Difference as to these two Persons. The former was of *Jewish* Race, but the Parents of the latter were *Gentiles*. So we cannot but observe how differently the Apostle deports himself towards the Churches of *Rome* and of *Galatia*. He exhorts the Christians of the former to comply with the Ceremonial Observances of the Jews, as a Thing that is very fitting and lawful, *Rom.* 14. but rebukes the latter with great Sharpness for doing the like, *Gal.* 4. The Reason is, Because he dealt with Persons of a different Nature; the one were but imperfect Christians, and had not left the Jewish Observances, therefore they were not at that Time to be disheartned; but the other were confirmed Christians, and had thrown off Judaism, and consequently their Relapse could not but prove very dangerous; and therefore the Apostle reproves them with great Sharpness. Thus I think I have sufficiently shew'd, That the different State and Circumstances of Things and Persons alter the Case of Indifferent Actions: for by the Change of these Circumstances, they become either Good or Bad, Lawful or Unlawful. Thus the *Christian Liberty* is restrained, and the Use of *Indifferent* Things is determined to one Side.

Secondly, They may be so by the *Authority* of our Spiritual *Rulers* and *Overseers*. That the Governours of the Church may interpose in these Matters, is manifest from what the first *Apostolical Council* before-mentioned did. They thought good to make use of their Authority, and accordingly determined about *Indifferent Things*; for so they were in themselves, and in their own Nature; but now they are called *Necessary* after they are once injoyn'd. Though it be not in Man's Power to make Things Indifferent to become *Necessary in their own Nature*, yet the Rulers of the Church may judge when the Exigencies of

of it make those Things to become *Necessary as to their present Use.* Observe therefore the Style of the Apostolical Letters, *It seemeth good to the Holy Ghost and to us to lay upon you no greater Burden than these necessary Things*, Acts 15. 28. They are by this Sacred Council call'd *Necessary*, though they are not so in themselves, but only as they relate to the Good and Peace of the Church at that Time. Thus the Representatives of the Church did interpose, and determine what Things were Useful and Necessary in the present State and Juncture of Affairs: they by their Authority did *impose* such Things upon the Churches, and bound them to the Observation of them.

And this Power is rightly devolved to all their lawful Successors in Matters of the like Nature. And our Church in particular takes no more upon her than all *Reformed Churches* abroad, that is, to constitute Laws in Church-Affairs, to ordain Rites, and impose them. They are Mr. *Calvin's* own words in his *Institution*, that *it is one part of the Christian Liberty belonging to the Church, that it hath power to regulate the Circumstances of Divine Worship, and the Rites appertaining to it, for the Churches Peace, Unity and Order.* And accordingly he and the other Officers of the Church did set Bounds and Restraints in Ecclesiastical Matters, by severe Laws and Penalties; and they executed those Laws most exactly against the Libertines that varied from those Determinations. So far were they from thinking that *Christian Liberty* doth exclude all Restraint in indifferent Things. Yea, it was their Judgment (and we see their practice answered to it) that the Pastors of the Church have Power to determine about the Time and Manner, and Form of External Acts of Religious Worship.

And it is supposed that in a Christian Nation *the Civil Powers*, as well as the *Ecclesiastical*, can do this; that is, after they have referred these Matters to the Governours of the Church, to whom the Discussing of them doth most properly belong. Thus the first *Christian Emperors* called Councils, and made Ecclesiastical Laws and Constitutions, and ordered all Things in Religious Affairs. And without doubt it was lawful to submit to their Determination, and to conform to their Injunctions in Matters which were acknowledged to be in themselves of an *indifferent Nature.* It is true, if any thing in itself *Unlawful* and *Sinful* be enjoyned by the Magistrate, his *enjoyning* it cannot make it lawful: And therefore in that case we must obey God rather than Man. But if Authority commands us things merely Indifferent, and of a middle Nature, and relating only to the Circumstances of Worship, here we are to shew our Submission in obeying our Rulers, and we are to balk our own Inclinations, which otherwise we might gratify. For 'tis rightly said by our Church, that * *things of themselves Indifferent do in some sort alter their Natures, when they are either commanded or forbidden by a lawful Magistrate.* His Authority turns the Scales, and we are obliged to yield Obedience to Human Authority by vertue of the Divine Command. * Can. 30.

But when I assert all this, I must also add, that the superior Powers, whether Civil or Spiritual, cannot lawfully invade the Christian Liberty of their Subjects and People, and determine the use of indifferent Things in Religion, unless upon *just occasion.* That is, for the *edification of the Church*, and the *good and welfare of their Brethren.* This Restraint must be when the *Publick Peace* and *Safety of the Church* require it, and for the *promoting of Love, Unity and Concord* among Christians. And I humbly propound this, that this Restraint and Determination in indifferent Points of Religion should not be *universally* and *rigorously imposed*: Because first, such a rigorous and universal Imposition takes away *Christian Liberty*, and renders those things necessary which are Free. Again, This Imposition approaches to the *Legal* and *Ceremonial* Dispensation. Yea, further, this may in time be improv'd into *Popish Superstition*; and some of the observers of these Rites will think that they merit by them. For these Reasons I conceive that those whom Providence hath set over us as our Rulers and Guides, should be *cautious* and *tender* as to the imposing of these indifferent Usages. Which if they be, and as they are at this day, I'm persuaded we may with a safe Conscience recede from our *Liberty*, or rather make use of *one part* of it: For we may as well *observe* those merely indifferent Things, as *not observe* them; and by the Injunction of lawful Authority we are fix'd to the former. For our Superiors have a power to interpose in Matters of this Nature. And so,

Thirdly,

Thirdly, Have our *Weak Brethren*. For as our Duty and Obedience to our Superiors oblige us to comport with their lawful Commands, so the Law of Love and Charity to our Brethren bids us have regard to their innocent Infirmities. In the case of Indifferent Matters we ought to have regard to *them*, that they may not be *offended*. This is the Doctrine of our Blessed Saviour himself, and of his Holy Apostles, as will appear from the Texts which I shall produce. *Then said he*, namely our Saviour, unto the Disciples, *It is impossible but that Offences will come; but woe unto him through whom they come. It were better for him that a Mill-stone were hanged about his neck, and he cast into the Sea, than that he should offend one of these little ones*, Luke 17. 1, 2, 3. In which words there is first the necessity of Scandals or Offences. As the State and Condition of Mankind are at present, *it is impossible but that Offences will come*. Secondly, here is the severe Doom and Sentence against those that are the Authors and Abettors of these Offences, which is express'd first more generally, *Woe unto him through whom they come*: Christ denounces Vengeance and a Curse on those who wilfully lay a Stumbling-Block before their Brethren, and cause them to fall. And then more particularly it is amplify'd by a Comparison, *It were better for him that a Mill-stone*, &c. For the understanding of which, we are to know that this was a Capital Punishment among the Jews, inflicted upon those who were found guilty of very heinous Crimes and Enormities. Some say it was only for Parricides. Such a Malefactor being counted unworthy to have the least Memorial left of him on Earth, they cast him with a Mill-stone tied about his neck into the depth of the Sea, that they might never hear of him again. There were indeed more exquisite Punishments in use among them, but none was esteemed more grievous than this, because the Persons hereby were deprived of Burial, which was always highly valued by them. *But in* a worse condition, saith our Saviour, is he that *offends one of these little ones*, such as the Apostle calls *Babes in Christ*, those whose Understandings are weak, and whose Consciences are tender, and who have Scruples and Doubts about the use of Indifferent Things in Religion.

But why doth our Lord so severely threaten those that offend these *little ones*? Is there no danger of offending others, who are great Ones? Yes, most certainly; for a Christian is not to give Offence to *any*. Our Saviour, though he was a Person exempted, yet he would pay Tribute to the *Roman* Powers, and the Reason he adjoins is this, *lest we should offend them*, Mat. 17. 27. Our Duty then is large and general, and we must offend *none*. But our Saviour here makes mention of *little ones* to check the Pride and Insolence of most Men, who value *themselves* highly, but have low and mean Thoughts of *others*, and therefore care not how they carry themselves towards them, and are perswaded that 'tis no fault to offend them, especially if they be much their *Inferiours*. Christ teaches us another Lesson, that we must Reverence the *little ones*, that we must have respect to the *weak* and *scrupulous*. And this Term *little Ones* couches in it the Reason of our Saviour's Caution here; for as *little Children* often fall, and are easily thrown down, so tender and weak Christians are in the greatest danger of being hurt and endamaged by our Behaviour towards them. Wherefore 'tis a Fault of a high Nature to impose upon and ensnare *one* of these little Ones, *one* of our weak Brethren; much more to scandalize *many* of them. We may read the greatness of the Sin in the dreadfulness of the Punishment denounced against it; for *it were better that a Mill-stone were hanged about our Necks, and we cast into the Sea with it*; that is, if we wilfully and designedly offend these weak Christians, a greater Punishment shall attend us, than any that is appointed in this World for the worst of Malefactors. The Curse of God upon us will prove far heavier than that, and sink us into the irrecoverable Abyss of Eternal Torments. This Punishment may well be thought to be more intolerable than the other, in as much as the Bottomless Pit is more dreadful than the bottom of the Ocean. *God hath made it deep and large, the Pit thereof is Fire and much Wood; the breath of the Lord like a Stream of Brimstone doth kindle it*, Isa. 30. *l. v.* This being throughly considered of, may effectually remind us of our Duty; namely, that we ought out of Charity and Brotherly Compliance with our Neighbours, whose Consc[illegible] [illegible] to be Weak and Scrupulous, to condescend

to

to their Weakness, and either to do as they do, or to suffer them to do according to their particular Perswasion and Conscience, that so we may not be guilty of *Scandal*.

This is the very Doctrine that was urged by St. *Paul* in the 14th Chapter of his Epistle to the *Romans*, v. 16. *Let not your good be evil spoken of*; that is, ye may use your Christian Liberty, but it will not become you so to use it, as that it may tend to the hurt of others; for so that which is in itself Indifferent or Innocent will be Defamed and evil spoken of. *Happy is that Man that condemns not himself in the thing that he allows*, v. 22. that is, though he knows the thing lawful to be done, yet practises not so that he shall have Reason to accuse and blame himself, by doing the thing openly to the Scandal of his Brother. And he begins his 15th Chapter thus, *We that are strong ought to bear the Infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves; but let every one of us please our Neighbour for his good to Edification.* The Gospel requires this of us, that we condescend to the Weaknesses of others, and act or omit some Things which are of an indifferent and middle Nature, to comport with their Innocent Desires.

This was the Mind of this great Apostle, in his first Epistle to the *Corinthian* Christians, Chap. 6. *v.* 12. *All things are lawful unto me, but all things are not expedient: All things are lawful to me, but I will not be brought under the Power of any.* Which he expects, with some Alteration in the latter Clause, thus in the same Epistle, Chap. 10. v. 23. *All things are lawful for me, but all things edifie not.* Whence I conclude that there are many Things which the Apostle, and so likewise other Christians might lawfully do, but that they are offensive to others; that is, to weak and dissatisfy'd Brethren. And it is not fit that any Christian should be so intent on what is lawful for *himself*, as to neglect the Edification of others. It follows therefore immediately in the foremention'd place, *v.* 24. *Let no Man seek his own, but every Man anothers Wealth.* Which no Man can do, unless he act according to the Laws of Christian Prudence and Charity, and use his liberty cautiously, with regard to the satisfaction of his Neighbour. Hence the Apostle blames those who knowing that *an Idol is nothing*, freely eat of the Meat offer'd to Idols, but thereby offend their Brethren who were of weak Consciences. *Take heed*, saith he, *lest this liberty of yours become a Stumbling-Block to them that are weak*, v. 9. As much as if he had said, though you are satisfy'd your selves concerning the lawfulness of being present at the feasting on the Meats offer'd to Idols, yet this is not enough to excuse your Presence there, because you are also obliged to take care of satisfying your weak Brethren. Though *you* think there is no harm in this practice, *they* do, and therefore you ought to consult the Infirmities and regard the Scruples of these dissatisfy'd Brethren, and by that means to avoid the scandalizing of them, and to please your Brethren to Edification. Thus we see what the Apostolical Doctrine was; and we know it was not only taught but practis'd by St. *Paul* both towards the *Jews* and *Gentiles*, as he had occasion at different times to converse with either of them.

We see then what is the State of the Controversy about *Conformity* to things that are *Indifferent* in Religion and the Worship of God; namely this, we may either act according to our own private Perswasions, abstractly from any Restraint whatsoever; or we may be determin'd by the difference of the Circumstance of Action, or we may be limited by the lawful Authority which we live under; or our weak and scrupulous Brethren may sway us to a compliance with them. Any of these are lawful occasions of *Restraint*; and one would think there need be no struggle between the two latter, the Superior Powers, and our Conscientious, but weak Brethren. For the former are obliged to act for the good and welfare of the Christian People committed to their Charge and Trust. They are to take the Apostle's Advice, not only *to follow after the things that make for Peace, but the things wherewith one may edify another*, Rom. 14. 19. They are to set the People an Example of Condescention and Christian Compliance; they are to deny themselves to please their Christian Brethren, and to take care that those who are truly Conscientious be not offended at their Proceedings. This is the Character of a true Christian Magistrate, with respect to Matters of Religion. Especially, seeing he hath Power in things *Indifferent*, to leave them at large and in common for

every ones private Discretion and Conscience to determine them, or else to decide them himself, and to pitch upon one side, and make it obliging by his Commands and Injunctions. It must needs be reckoned a high and glorious Act of condescending Charity to wave this latter Member of his Power, and to practise the former. This will shew that he contends not for Superiority and Mastery, but studies the Edification of the Church, and the Ease and Satisfaction of Mens Consciences.

And he will be the rather induced to do this when he considers, That it is the *Conscience* that makes the *Sin* in these Indifferent Matters of Religion, according to the Apostle's Decision in *Rom.* 14. 23. *He that doubts is damned*; that is, He is condemned of his own Conscience, and therefore of God also. For, as it follows, *Whatsoever is not of Faith is Sin*; whatever is done without a just and reasonable Persuasion of the Lawfulness thereof, is a sinful Act in that Person that doth it. From whence we see how rational it is that Magistrates and Guides of Souls should have Regard to Persons of tender Consciences in these Matters which I have been speaking of, lest by Rigorous Restraint they be the Authors of their falling into Sin. This is the true Case of *Scandals*; which, as is plain from what hath been said, is abusing the Christian Liberty about these Indifferent Things.

The *Remedies* against this are such as these: First, We are to consider, That the Salvation of our Souls is our great Work and Care, and that other Matters are but mean and petty in respect of this, and are not worth our wrangling and contending about them. He that weighs this, will never lay a great Stress on Little Things, and passionately urge that which God hath no where particularly required. Again, Brotherly Love and Charity are an excellent Expedient against all *Scandal*, according to that of St. *John*, the great *Minister* of Love, *He that loveth his Brother, abideth in the Light, and there is no Occasion of stumbling in him*, Epist. 1. Chap. 2. Ver. 10. This Excellent Principle of Charity will inable him to avoid giving Offence to his Brethren. And it must be so according to the Character given it by the Apostle St. *Paul*, *Charity suffereth long, and is kind; Charity envies not; Charity vaunteth not it self, is not puffed up, doth not behave it self unseemly, seeks not her own, is not easily provok'd, thinketh no Evil, beareth all Things, believeth all Things, hopeth all Things, indureth all Things.* If the Christian World would act according to this Divine and Noble Grace, the busy Disputes and Quarrels in Religious Affairs would soon be ended, and *Scandals* would be as rare as Comets.

To this Purpose also, the Evangelical Indowment of *Humility* is very serviceable; a Vertue which many Men think is no part of the Christian Ethicks, or else their Behaviour would be far different from what it is. But certainly, if this Divine Grace did prevail in the Christian World, we should not have our Ears fill'd with Religious Disputes; but Men would prudently and meekly balk their Liberty upon Occasion, and recede from that Right which they might claim, and with calm Spirits follow the Apostolical Counsel, *Make straight Paths for your Feet*, take all Stumbling-blocks and Impediments out of the way, *lest that which is lame be turned out of the way*, lest weak Christians be offended and discouraged, *but let it rather be healed*; that is, Take care to confirm and establish your weak Brethren in their Christian Course by your humble and gentle Behaviour.

But the greatest and most effectual Remedy against Scandal is a Holy Life, a strict Observance of the Divine Laws and Commands. Which I take to be the Meaning of those Words of the Royal Psalmist, *Psalm* 119. ver. 165. *Great Peace have they that love thy Law, and nothing shall offend them.* They that have an intire Love to Religion, and practise what others only talk of, they that spend their Anger on their Vices, and nourish no other Strife and Contention with the Brethren but this, to wit, who shall be most Eminent for Exemplary and Godly Lives; they, and they alone are the Persons that live free from *Offence*. For he that is most careful not to offend God by a vicious Life, will be least sollicitous about taking Offence at Indifferent Matters. Sins and Vices are the great *Scandals* of the World, and most justly deserve that Name; and it should chiefly imploy our Thoughts how we may avoid these, how we may (in this Sense) *have a Conscience void of Offence towards God and towards Men.*

ARTICLE

ARTICLE X.

The Forgiveness of Sins.

A Discourse on Acts X. 43.

Through His NAME *whosoever Believeth in Him, shall receive Remission of Sins.*

WHEREIN

The True NOTION of *Forgiveness of Sins*, is Offered;

AND THE

NATURE

OF THE

Sin against the Holy Ghost,

Is Largely Examin'd and Stated.

AFTER the CREED hath made mention of the *Church*, there follow several *Benefits* and *Privileges* belonging to the Church; namely, The *Communion of Saints*; The *Forgiveness of Sins*; The *Resurrection of the Body*; and, The *Life Everlasting*. I have spoken of the First of these, and now come to treat of the Second; in Handling of which, I will inquire, First, What is *Sin*. Secondly, What is *Forgiveness of Sin*. Thirdly, By *whom* and *in what* Way this Forgiveness is procured. Fourthly, What are the *Conditions* of it. Fifthly, Whether it be *Universal* and *Complete*.

The First Thing to be inquired into, is, *What is Sin?* And the Apostle St. *John* hath answered this Quæry in his *First Epistle, Chap.* iii. *Vers.* 4. where Sin is defined by him, *The Transgression of the Law*. Which is a true and complete Definition, because it takes in all Sin, and comprizes the whole Kind, whether *Original* or *Actual*. If we speak of the former, as it was the Act of our First Parents in eating the Forbidden Fruit, we cannot but own it to be a Transgression of the First Law given to them. Or if we mean by Original Sin, that Inbred Depravity which is found in all the Posterity of *Adam*, and was derived from him, we must acknowledge, that this also is a plain Deviation from the Divine Law; it is a Defection from the pure Will of God. Then, as to *Actual* Sin, which is call'd so to distinguish it from Original Sin in us, which is in Habit only; this is a positive Act, and is the natural Fruit and Effect of that Habitual Corruption: (For *Original* and *Actual Sin*, are as the *corrupt Tree*, and the *corrupt Fruit*, Luke 6. 43. They are *the evil Treasure of the Heart*, and the *evil Things* thence *brought forth*, Mat. 12. 35. They are the *Old*

Man and *its Deeds*, Col. 3. 9. They are the *Conceiving of Lust*, and its *bringing forth*, Jam. 1. 15.) And no one can deny that this is a plain and direct Transgression of the Divine Rule and Law. It is a Declension from the Will of God declared in His Word, which is the Standard by which we are to judge of all our Actions. *To sin* is to stray and wander out of the Way. That is the proper Import both of the *Hebrew* and *Greek* Words. Sin is an Aberration from the Divine Law. And it comprehends whatever is thought, said, or done contrary to this Law; and it is likewise the Omission of what is contained in it. For the Law is Twofold, it is Preceptive and Prohibitive: It commands all Good, and forbids all Evil; and consequently, the Transgression of the Law is either doing what the Law forbids, or not doing; but neglecting the doing of what the Law requires. This is a brief Account of the *Nature* of *Sin*.

The Second Thing to be inquired into, is, What is *Forgiveness of Sins*. In order to which, we must know that the Law contains in it not only *Rules* and *Injunctions* by which we are to direct our Lives, (of which I spoke before) but also a *Penalty*, on Supposition of the Breach of the Law, and violating those Rules contained in it. Wherefore by *Sinning*, that is, transgressing the Law, we become *Guilty*, and liable to that Penalty or Punishment; for *Guilt* is a Liableness to suffer for our Transgressions. Now, that this Guilt is the natural and necessary Result of offending God, is clear on this Threefold Account.

First, Because of the Nature of God, who is *of purer Eyes than to behold Iniquity*, Hab. 1. 13. that is, To behold it without punishing it. His innate Sanctity and Justice require this. And therefore the Apostle tells us, *That it is a righteous Thing with God to recompense Tribulation* to those that are *Offenders* against the Law. There is a natural Righteousness in the Divinity that exacts Punishment, as due to the Sinner; and this he must undergo either in himself or in another Person.

Secondly, The Nature of Sin requires this; for it hath in it self that Evil and Turpitude which deserve the Wrath of God. In every Transgression and Prevarication of the Divine Law, there is that Intrinsick Evil which is the natural Parent of Misery and Infelicity, and of it self makes the Sinner obnoxious to God's Wrath. All Sin, even in its own Nature, deserves Punishment, as we are assured by the Apostle, *Rom.* 1. 32. *They that commit such Things, are worthy of Death.* And again, *Chap.* 6. *Ver.* 23. *The Wages of Sin is Death.* Contrary to which is the Doctrine of the Church of *Rome*, which holds, That some Sins are in themselves Venial; and that they are not Damnable in their own Nature. *We teach*, saith *Bellarmine*, (in his Treatise *of Venial Sin*, *Chap.* 1.) *by common Consent, That some Sins, of their own Nature, do not make a Man liable to Eternal Death, but only to Temporal Punishment.* Such are vain Thoughts, idle Words, an officious Lye, sudden Eruptions of Anger or Lust. These are so little, trivial, and inconsiderable, that they deserve not Punishment. But the Apostle (as we have seen) teaches us otherwise, and so doth our Blessed Saviour, *Mat.* 12. 36. *I say unto you, that every idle Word that Men shall speak, they shall give an Account thereof in the Day of Judgment*, and shall be punish'd for it, if they had not before repented of it. It is evident then that all Sin is Mortal; that is, It is in its own Nature worthy of Death, and may justly be rewarded with it. Yea, some great Doctors of the *Roman* Communion, as *Gerson*, *Fisher*, &c. being convinc'd of the Truth of this Assertion, have forsaken the receiv'd Opinion of that Church, and have acknowledg'd that *every Sin* in it self deserves Eternal Punishment.

Thirdly, The *Divine Sanction* requires this. Even from the Beginning Death was denounced as the just Penalty of Sin, *Gen.* 2. 17. *In the Day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die.* And Death must have been immediately inflicted, unless a Surety had interposed. And that Punishment was intail'd upon Sin, appears from that early Menace, *Gen.* 4. 7. *If thou dost not well, Sin lies at the Door*; that is, The Penalty of Sin is near at hand, and will certainly overtake thee. For I cannot subscribe to Dr. *Lightfoot*'s Interpretation of this Place; to wit, That a *Sin-Offering lies at the Door*, alluding to the Sacrifices which were constantly brought to the Tabernacle-Door. And so he thinks that this is the

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First Lecture of Repentance that we meet with in the Bible. If *Cain* would have repented, there was Hope of Pardon, a Sin-Offering would have been accepted for him. But this Exposition of the Words is confuted by the foregoing Clause, *If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted?* It is not therefore to be thought that the other Clause speaks of *Acceptance* and *Pardon*, which mentions *not doing well*. Besides, This learned Man had no Reason to imagine that *lying at the Door* had reference to the Door of the Tabernacle; for there was no *Tabernacle* at that Time. Therefore 'tis most probable that *Chattah, Sin*, is here to be taken for the *Punishment* of Sin, as 'tis in some other Places of Scripture: and then the Sense is plain and obvious; namely, That there was an early Sanction that made Punishment the Recompence of Sin. And this was more expressly confirmed afterwards in the Threatnings of the Law, *Cursed be he that confirms not all the Words of the Law to do them*, Deut. 27. 26. which is thus represented by the Apostle, *Gal.* 3. 10. *Cursed is every one that continueth not in all Things written in the Book of the Law, to do them.* Which shews, That the Law requires perfect and intire Obedience; and where this is not performed, a Curse insues. And this Curse extends to all Transgressors, and to every Transgression of the Law. Which we are ascertain'd of likewise from *Jam.* 2. 10. *Whosoever shall keep the whole Law, and yet offend in one Point, he is guilty of all.* One Sin as well as another excludes from Life and Happiness, because they all have in them that Depravity and Malignity which are hateful to the Divine Nature. Though the Offence committed be about some small Matter, yet the Offence it self is not small, because it is against the Divine Majesty. Thus I have made it clear, That *Sin*, and *Guilt*, and *Penalty* are inseparable. Where there is a Fault or Offence, there is Guilt, and where Guilt is contracted, there is a necessary Obligation to Punishment.

This now lets us into the Knowledge of the true Nature of *Forgiveness of Sins*, which is the Subject of the present Discourse. It consists of these Three Things, The *Remitting* of the *Fault*, and of the *Guilt*, and of the *Punishment*. This is an accurate Account of this great Privilege, which I do not find any Writers on this Theme have attain'd to. But 'tis certain that if we will be exact, we must assign these Three Ingredients of Forgiveness of Sins.

First, It consists in God's Remitting or Passing by our *Fault*. This must precede the other Two in the Nature and Order of Things, because in order to a Person's being freed from *Guilt* and *Punishment*, it is necessary that he first be forgiven the *Fault*; for unless the Cause be removed, the Effect will not cease. The First Thing then in Pardoning of Sin, is Passing by the *Offence it self*. For, as I have noted before, there is in every Sin a Stain and Depravity, an intrinsick Evil and Turpitude, which make us culpable before God. As long as these are not remitted, but are laid to our Charge, there is no Forgiveness. But when these cease to be imputed, and charg'd upon us, then there is the First Part of *Forgiveness*. I do not say the Stain and Defilement are taken away, and wholly removed, though they are in some measure by *Sanctification*. But it is not this Work of the *Spirit* which I am now speaking of, but the Act of *God the Father*, whereby he graciously remits and overlooks our Sins, though the Depravity and Defilement in some measure remain. Thus *He beholds not Iniquity in Jacob*, Numb. 23. 21. He beholds it not in those that are Penitent, so as to charge them with it. After they have repented of their Delinquencies, he no longer looks upon them as Sinners. This First Part of God's Remission of Sins is diversly expressed by the Pen-men of the Holy Scripture. In the Psalmist's Language, it is *God's hiding His Face from our Sins*, Psal. 51. 9. in Opposition to His *setting our Iniquities before Him, and our Sins in the Light of His Countenance*, *Psal.* 90. 8. so as to impute them to us. This First Degree of Forgiveness is set forth in this Book of *Psalms* by *blotting out Transgressions*, Psal. 51. 1. and *blotting out Iniquity*, ver. 9. And the same Phrase is used in *Isa.* 43. 25. —18. 22. *Acts* 3. 19. For God is said, after the Manner of Men, to write down our Sins in a Book, *Isa.* 65. 6. *Behold, it is written before me*; and therefore very appositely and congruously the Hand-writing is said to be *blotted out* when the Fault is remitted by God. Then the Book is crossed, and the Debt (for so Sin is called) is cancell'd, and it appears no more. This also is very fitly styled God's *casting our Sins behind His Back*, Isa. 38. 17. yea, *casting them into the Depth of the Sea*,

Sea, Mic. 7. 19. And the Psalmist tells us, That *as far as the East is from the West, so far hath He removed our Transgressions from us*, Psal. 103. 12. This very elegantly describes the Nature of this First Part of Divine Pardon.

Secondly, This consists in being absolved from the *Guilt* of Sin, as well as from the Sin or Default it self. This must needs be, because *Guilt* arises from the *Offence*, and consequently, when this latter is remitted, there cannot but be a Cessation of the former. Wherefore this is the next Part or Degree of Pardon of Sin; namely, God's merciful freeing a Man from the Demerit of Sin, and the fearful Apprehension he lies under of being obnoxious to Punishment by reason of Sin. The Guilty Sinner is conscious to himself of his ill Behaviour, and thereupon is in Expectation of the Penalty that is due to it; and he remains so 'till he be absolved and acquitted, that is, 'till the Obligation to Condemnation and Punishment be taken away.

Thirdly, Forgiveness of Sins consists in removing the *Punishment* which is due on Account of the Fault, and is naturally consequent on it and the Guilt. This then is the Third and Last Part of Remission of Sin (if we speak of it strictly and properly, as it is the Bare Remission of Sin): It is the actual Releasing of the Sinner from the Penalty he incurrs by transgressing the Divine Law. And this is a necessary Consequent upon the Two former Acts of Forgiveness; for after the Remission of the *Offence*, and Removing the *Guilt*, there must needs follow a Substraction of the *Punishment*, the Penalty ceases of Course. And here the Justice (as well as the Goodness and Mercy) of God is concerned; for the Judge of all the World will do right; He will not exact the Punishment when the Sin is pardoned. He will not forgive the Debt, and also require Payment. Not that the Persons whose Sins are remitted shall be exempt from Chastizement and Correction, because these are for their real Good and Advantage. But there is nothing of Penal Evil in these Inflictions.

I have not yet wholly display'd the Nature of *Forgiveness of Sins*; but after all, I must add this, That it is probable, that this *Article* of the Creed is to be taken in the most comprehensive Sense, and so it contains in it *Justification*. Though, strictly speaking, there is a Distinction between these Two; for there is more comprehended in *Justification* than *bare Forgiveness of Sins*, this being (as we have heard) a Removal of the Fault, of the Guilt, and of the Punishment; but that is a positive Receiving of the Offender into Favour, after his Sins are remitted, his Guilt taken away, and the evil Consequences removed. It is likely that *Forgiveness* is to be understood in this Place in this General and Large Acception. But of this I have amply spoken in a Treatise of *Faith* and *Justification*.

Thirdly, I am to inquire *by whom* and *in what Way* this Forgiveness of Sins which I have been speaking of, is procur'd and obtain'd? First then, As to the *Fault* and the *Guilt* arising from it, these are taken away by Christ's taking our Sin, and consequently our Guilt, upon Himself; and also by his performing perfect Righteousness and Obedience. As to the former, It was typified and represented by laying the Sins and Offences of the People on the *Scape-Goat*, and transmitting their Guilt upon Him, *Lev.* 16. 8. But afterwards this was plainly and expressly foretold concerning Christ in *Isa.* 53. 6. and applied to this very Thing which I am now treating of; to wit, The Way of Forgiveness of Sins. *All we, like Sheep, have gone astray: we have turn'd every Man to his own Way*; thus we are become Sinful and Guilty. But the Remedy follows in the next Words; *The Lord hath laid on him the Iniquities of us all.* Now, if the Sins of Believers be laid upon *Christ*, they are taken off from *them*; for their Sins can't be charg'd upon Him and them too. Which gives us the true Notion of the First Degrees of Remission of Sins; namely, By our Saviour's assuming the Sin and Guilt to Himself, and by God the Father's imputing these to Him. Whereby our Demerit is transferr'd from us to Christ, and we become clear by his being charged with our Offences. Some may boggle at this, as if it savour'd of the Leaven of *Antinomianism*; but they have no Reason to look upon it as such; for it is St. *Paul*'s express Doctrine, in 2 *Cor.* 5. 21. *He hath made Him to be Sin for us*; that is, God the Father charg'd our Sins upon His Son. On which Account he was reputed a sinful Person; yea, the greatest of Sinners. Not that he really and actually was a Sinner; for in that fore-named Place, where

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'tis said *he was made sin*, it is added, *he knew no sin*, that is, he was perfectly Holy: Therefore it can't be meant of any Intrinsick and real Defilement by Sin. Such a Thought as that, is most Execrable, and ought to be abhorr'd by all Christian Men. He was himself free from all Sin, and was a *Lamb without spot and blemish*; otherwise he could not have *taken away our Sins*. But in a Judicial way he was reckon'd as a Sinner, and so treated, though he had no Personal Sin of his own, but perfectly Holy and Pure.

Which leads me to the Second way of Christ's taking away our Sin and Guilt, and thereby meriting and procuring our *Pardon*; and that was by his Sinless Righteousness and Perfect Obedience. This is particularly mentioned by the Evangelical Prophet, *Isa.* 53. 9. *He did no violence, neither was there any deceit in his Mouth.* Which is thus express'd by St. *Peter*, *He did no sin, neither was guile found in his Mouth*, 1 Epist. ch. 2. ver. 22. And this it was that made him capable of taking away the Violence, Sin, Deceit and Guile that are in *us*. By perfectly fulfilling whatever the Law required, he procured Pardon for us who have Transgressed that Law in all Things. His complete Innocence makes amends for our universal Guiltiness. He remits our faults by his faultless and guiltless Life, and by the Merit of his unstained Actions.

Next, as to the *Punishment*, which is the consequent of Sin and Guilt, this is taken away by Christ's submitting to the Punishment which we should have undergone. This is the great and important Truth which the Gospel acquaints us with, and therein displays the Nature and Method of Forgiveness of Sins. Here we are told in general that the Pardon of our Sins is obtain'd *by Christ's Sufferings and Death*; and in particular, that this is done *in the way of Satisfaction*. First, I say, the Evangelical Writings assure us that Remission of Sins is obtained by the Meritorious Passion and Death of our Saviour. Thus the Wine in the Lord's Supper is called *his Blood*, (that is, the Representation of his Blood) *which was shed for the Remission of Sins*, Mat. 26. 28. We are *justify'd by his Blood*, Rom. 5. 9. *In him we have Redemption through his Blood, even the forgiveness of Sins*, Eph. 1. 7. And the same is repeated in *Col.* 1. 4. *He by himself* (that is, by offering himself on the Cross) *purged our sins*, Heb. 1. 3. He expiated them, and thereby procured the Remission of them. Therefore this is called *the Blood of sprinkling, that speaks better things than that of* Abel, Heb. 12. 24. It pleads for, and obtains Forgiveness and Mercy, whereas *Abel*'s Blood call'd for Vengeance. *The Blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin*, 1 John 1. 7. not only from the stain and pollution of Sin, but it frees us from the Penalty and Forfeiture due to it, and so is the only ground of the Pardon of it. *He wash'd us from our sins in his own Blood*, Rev. 1. 5. he clear'd us from the Guilt and Punishment of them by the Merit of his Sufferings. Thus this great Truth is most evident, that Forgiveness of Sins is the Purchase of Christ's Blood, that it is on the Account of his Passion and Death that *Pardon* is granted to Sinners, and particularly that the *Punishment* of their Sins is Remitted.

And on the same Account it is that they are actually taken into favour, and have positive Blessings confer'd upon them by God, namely, the accepting of their Persons, and a Right and Title to Happiness: For *he hath made them accepted in the Beloved*, Eph. 1. 6. Whereas before God and they were at variance, now they are Friends. Whereas before *they were Enemies*, *now they are reconciled to God by the Death of his Son*, Rom. 5. 10. Which is thus express'd by the same Apostle in *Col.* 1. 21, 22. *You that were sometimes alienated, and Enemies in your minds by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled, in the Body of his Flesh, through Death.* And this was the Design and Office of our High Priest in offering up himself on the Cross to obtain God's favour for us, *He was an High-Priest, to make reconciliation for our sins*, Heb. 2. 17. namely by the infinite value of the Offering which he made of himself. *Him hath God set forth to be a Propitiation, through Faith in his Blood*, by which the Propitiation was made, *Rom.* 3. 25. Thus Reconciliation and Propitiation, and consequently Pardon and Forgiveness flow naturally from Christ's Blood, which by Reason of its infinite value and worth is able to *satisfy* for the Sins of the whole World.

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And that is the next Thing I propounded to shew, that Forgiveness of Sins is *in the way of Satisfaction.* We are absolv'd from our Sins by Christ's satisfying the Divine Justice for them. To clear this grand Point of our Religion, we must know that this was the standing Law and Sanction, *without shedding of Blood is no Remission*, Heb. 8. 22. Forgiveness cannot be purchased but by the Death of the Person who is guilty, or of some other who is Surety for him. For this was the Original Menace against Sinners, That *they should surely die*; yea, even an Eternal Death: And consequently they are obnoxious to that Death till *satisfaction* be made for their Sins to the infinite Majesty of Heaven. This cannot be made by the Offenders themselves, because Sinners cannot Atone for Sin, whereby the infinite God is offended; wherefore some other Person must satisfy for us, in order to our being Partakers of the Divine Favour. For though the Rigour of Justice demands Satisfaction from the offending Person himself, yet there is a Relaxation of that rigour by transferring it on another. But that other who is substituted in the place of the Offender, must be an extraordinary Person, and of infinite Merit, or else he can't make Satisfaction to him that is Infinite. Accordingly we are assured by the Evangelical Writers that this gracious Substitution was actually made by Jesus Christ, and a full Satisfaction thereupon ensued. Nor cou'd there be any hopes of Pardon for Sinners; yea, though they were never so Penitent, and heartily forsook all their Sins, unless the Justice of God were first satisfy'd.

We see even among Men, that Repentance will not procure Pardon in Courts of Judicature. Criminals are not forgiven though they shew signs of Sorrow and Remorse, and sincerely promise Amendment. We see that the Robber, the Murderer, the Traytor, *&c.* are Sentenc'd to Death, *and are Executed*, though they repent of their Enormities; and the *Penalty is justly* inflicted on them, because Justice and the Law must be satisfy'd. How much more then must this be in the Court of Heaven? If Men will not accept of bare Repentance, can we think that *God* will, who is Infinite and Absolute? which shews the Reasonableness of the Doctrine I'm insisting upon; namely, that there is no Forgiveness of Sins, unless an Atonement and Reconciliation be made by the Eternal Son of God, that is, by his assuming our Nature, and Suffering and Dying in it, and thereby making Satisfaction. Whereupon God accepted of the Punishment which Christ underwent in our stead, and forgives us our Sins. And he could not have done it otherwise, so far as we are able to discern; for *Satisfaction* is absolutely requisite to *Remission*.

But some would perswade us that this *Remission* is inconsistent with *Satisfaction*, because the one is Free and Gratuitous, and the other is the result of Justice and Rigour. To which Objection I return this brief Answer (for I have more largely considered it in another * Place) that this is the Excellency of the Glorious Atchievement of our Redemption; that *Justice* and *Mercy* bear an equal part in it. The former is sufficiently discerned in demanding Satisfaction for Sin, and not releasing the Sinner without it. Which shews that God's absolving of us from our Sins, and the Guilt and Punishment that attend them, is not a bare *Condonation*, but that a *Compensation* goes along with it. The latter is as perspicuous, because it was wholly from this, that God would vouchsafe to accept of a Surety and Substitution. It was merely from this that he condescended to pass by the Sins of *Mankind*, when he refused to extend the like favour to the Rebellious and Apostate *Angels*. He left them in their miserable and forlorn State, but was pleased, out of singular Compassion and Clemency to admit of a Way and Method for the Redemption of lost Man. This shews that Grace and Mercy bear a share in the Redemption wrought by Jesus Christ. And from the whole it is evident that *Satisfaction*, which argues the Divine Justice, and *Remission of Sin*, which is an Act of Free Grace, are not inconsistent: Yea, 'tis evident that Christ by satisfying the Divine Justice procured the Pardon of our Sins, as the Apostle speaks, *Eph.* 4. 32. *God for Christ's sake hath forgiven us.* He pardons our Offences because of the Satisfaction made for them by the Blood of the Messias; but it was from his mere Grace and Bounty that he first appointed, and then admitted

* *Concerning God's Justice; in the Discourse of God's Attributes. And on the Fourth Article of the Creed, concerning Christ's Sufferings.*

ted of this Satisfaction. On this Account it is truly said that God *gives forgiveness of Sins*, Acts 5. 31. and that we are *freely forgiven all our Trespasses*, Col. 2. 13. It is a Gift, and it is Free, and yet it is founded on the Meritorious Sufferings of our Lord, whereby he made Atonement for our Sins. And if there had not been this *Atonement*, there could have been no *Forgiveness*.

Whence it follows, that *Forgiveness of Sins* is a discovery which we come to the knowledge of by the *Gospel* only, which reveals the Atonement and Reconciliation which are made by Christ, on which is consequent Remission of Sins. But this can't be known from what Natural Reason suggests to us, for it is not an Essential and Natural Property of the Deity to pardon Sin, and to forgive Offenders. But it is natural to him, as he is infinitely Pure, and hates Sin, to punish it; and therefore the knowledge of *this* we derive from the natural Sentiments we have concerning him. It is not so with the knowledge of Remission of Sin; there is nothing in the Divine Essence and Nature whence we can learn that he will forgive Sin, and remit the Punishment; and 'tis certain he is not obliged to do it: God may pardon our Sins, or not pardon them, as he pleases; it is wholly an Act of Sovereignty and Grace. So that we have no Assurance that he will Forgive, but from the Declaration made in God's Word; consequently, by the mere Light of Nature we can't attain to this Discovery. Pardon of Sin is the result of the Arbitrary Will of Heaven, it is the free Act of God, and therefore it is not to be heard of in the Schools of Philosophers.

Though 'tis true the *Pagans* had some glimmering Light, some uncertain Intimation of this, which proceeded from their Sacrifices and Expiations; and these they had from the Sacred Fountains, though at some distance. But it is the *New Testament* alone that gives us a full Assurance of this Article, that God will *pardon sinners*. From these Writings we are ascertain'd that Christ hath satisfy'd the Divine Justice, and that thereupon is vouchsafed the pardon of all our Demerits. Here we are informed of a twofold *Covenant*, that of *Works*, and that of *Grace*; by vertue of the *former* a Man as long as he continues in *Innocence* and *Integrity* is in the favour of God, but when he loses those, he can expect no Favour, no Mercy, no Forgiveness; but by vertue of the *latter* Sinners and Offenders are for Christ's sake pardon'd and receiv'd to Favour. This is proper to Reveal'd Religion and the Gospel Covenant, but there is no such thing in mere Natural Religion, and in the Covenant of Works. Men may fansie a Natural Inclination in the Deity to pass by the Failings of his Creatures, but there is no Foundation for it, for the Dispensation of Heaven towards Sinners can't be known but by some open Discovery of it. Therefore from Natural Reason we cannot argue that there is such a Benefit or Privilege.

I pass now to the Fourth General Head which I propounded, wherein I undertook to shew what are the *Conditions* of this Forgiveness. For though it is Free, and is an Act of Grace and Favour (as hath been said) yet it doth not exclude *Conditions*. A Pardon is granted to Rebels by the King, and that of his free *Grace* and *Bounty* (he being not bound to pardon them) but it is on these *Terms*, that they humbly acknowledge their Crime, and give Testimonies of their Remorse, and that they return to their Duty and Allegiance. In like manner God's forgiving of Sins is entirely free and gratuitous, and flows from his mere Bounty, but notwithstanding this, he requires something to be done on our part.

First, A Sense of Sin and the Danger of it must preceed the Forgiveness of it. We must urge this on our Minds, that as long as we persist in our Sins, we are wretched and cursed Creatures. Be we never so Rich or Honourable, or accommodated with the utmost Delights and Pleasures of the World, yet we are in most deplorable and miserable Circumstances: We are under the Sentence of Death, and we may expect the Execution of it every Minute. Or, if we be reprieved for a time, yet the Divine Fury and Vengeance will certainly overtake us, and we shall feel the dire effects of it in everlasting Burnings. Let every one who is in his Natural State of Enmity against God, say thus with himself, "Alas, I am a poor, miserable, undone

"done Creature: I am in my self utterly lost and ruin'd, and I know not "how to free my self from that Misery which I am in. My guilt overwhelms "me, and I dare not lift up my Face towards Heaven, and behold that "incensed Majesty which I have so often offended. There is no help for "such a vile sinful Wretch as I am; I must needs eternally Perish, for being "out of Christ I am excluded from all hopes of being saved." But let me tell thee, whilst thou thus growest *sensible* of thy Misery, thou art in the way to Mercy and Deliverance, to Pardon and Forgiveness. Of which we have a famous Instance in *Luke* 18. 13, 14. whilst the conceited *Pharisee* was vaunting his own Righteousness and Worthiness, *the Publican standing afar off, would not so much as lift up his Eyes unto Heaven, but smote upon his Breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner.* Whereupon our Saviour made this Reflection, or rather Determination, *I tell you this Man*, who was thus sensible of his Demerits, *went down to his house justify'd rather than the other.* That is, whatever the other might seem to be, this Person was really pardon'd, and acquitted of his Sins by God. If we would have our spiritual Diseases and Sicknesses cur'd, it is requisite in the first place that we know them, and be apprehensive of them.

Again, The foresaid Instance acquaints us that *Requesting of Forgiveness* is requisite in order to the obtaining that singular Blessing and Favour of God. *God be merciful to me a Sinner*, was the Devout Language of the Publican: He begg'd for that Pardon which he thought himself so unworthy of. The Penitent Psalmist was an illustrious Example of this, in *Psalm* 51. where he expresses his most earnest Desire of the Remission of his Sins, and with a most eager Importunity, craves it of God. *According to the multitude of thy tender Mercies blot out my Transgressions; wash me throughly from mine Iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin*, 1. 20. *Purge me with Hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than Snow.* v. 7. *Hide thy face from my Sins, and blot out all mine Iniquities*, v. 9. Thus he renews and urges the same Petition, namely, Pardon of his Sins. This, this he zealously pursues, and preferrs it to all Things in the World besides. Without this he reckons himself forlorn and wretched; and therefore he so often repeats this One Request, as the One Thing Necessary. In Imitation of this True Penitent we ought with Earnestness and Importunity to beg that God would vouchsafe to forgive our past Follies, and not to Impute our Offences unto us. Let us not shew ourselves more fervent and passionate in any Suit than in this; nor ought we to be prevail'd upon by any Suggestions whatsoever to desist from it: This is the Method prescrib'd by Heaven, if we would be heal'd of our Spiritual Diseases, we must repair to the great Physician, and with our utmost fervency beg his Help and Cure. We are condemned Criminals, and there is no Relief for us unless we sue forth our Pardon, that is, by hearty Prayer sollicite this Grace and Favour of God.

Another indispensible Condition of Forgiveness of Sins is a humble confessing of them. This we have from the Psalmist's Experience, *Psalm* 35. 5. *I acknowledged*, saith he, *my sin unto thee, and mine Iniquity have I not hid. I said I will confess my Transgressions unto the Lord, and thou forgavest the Iniquity of my Sin.* He acknowledged his Offences, and *he said*, that is, he resolved, yet further to do so: And we see what was the happy Fruit and Success of it, his Sins were forgiven him. The like we find in the Example of the Prodigal Son, who had been lewd and debauch'd, and spent his time and his Portion with Harlots; but when he arriv'd to such a humble and filial Disposition of Mind as to use this submissive Style, *I will arise, and go to my Father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinn'd against Heaven, and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy Son*, Luke 15. 18, 19. when he arrived, I say, to this excellent Temper, so as unfeignedly to confess his past Folly, he was taken into Favour, and the indulgent Parent, *when he saw him yet a great way off, had Compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him*, and entertain'd him with all Demonstrations of Love and Kindness and Fatherly Affection. Thus is a humble *Confession* a Preparative to Pardon, and the great Instrument of obtaining it. If we freely and willingly disclose our Sins before God, we capacitate ourselves for Mercy and Pardon, and we shall certainly share

share in them. For the Justice and the Faithfulness of God are engag'd for this, 1 *John* 1. 9. *If we confess our Sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our Sins.* These Attributes being concerned, it is impossible we should fail of Pardon. And besides, it must be so in the Nature of the Thing it self, a hearty Confession prepares for Forgiveness, for in order to having our Maladies cured, we must lay them open before our spiritual Physician.

The next Qualification in order to Pardon is the Divine Endowment of *Faith.* Then a Man ceases to be obnoxious to the Punishment of Sin when he flies to God's Mercy in Christ, and depends upon his Redeemer and Saviour, and relies on his meritorious Sufferings, by which alone the Removal of the Punishment due to him for his Sins is purchased. When Christ said, *Thy sins are forgiven thee*, Luke 7. 48. and then adds, *Thy Faith hath saved thee*, he lets us know, that the *Faith* of that Person to whom he spoke was a Means or Condition of obtaining Pardon and Salvation. Which is signified in those Words of St. *Peter*, *Whosoever believeth in him, shall receive Remission of Sins*, Acts 10. 43. And another Apostle speaks thus to the Jews at *Antioch*, *Thro' this Man is preach'd unto you the Forgiveness of Sins; and by him all that believe are justified*, &c. Acts 13. 38. 39. *Belief* is the Condition of this part of Justification; namely, the releasing us from the Guilt and Penalty which attend our offending of God. And no one can have the gracious Promise of Pardon fullfill'd to him till he actually exerts this Divine Grace.

Moreover, *Repentance* is another necessary Preparatory to this inestimable Privilege which I am discoursing of. *Wash ye, make ye clean, put away the Evil of your Doings before mine Eyes, cease to do Evil:* These are made the preceding Qualifications in order to acquitting Persons from their Sins, *Isai.* 1. 16. 18. We must expect no Pardon as long as we continue in our Sins. We hear a Man swear, and then cry, God forgive me; But he is no nearer to Forgiveness than before, because he doth *not cease to do Evil*, but still persists in his Prophaneness, which is inconsistent with Forgiveness. We having rebell'd against the God of Heaven, the King of Kings, he is pleas'd, out of infinite Kindness and Compassion, to tender us a Pardon in the Bloud of Jesus, but we shall be never the better for it, unless we lay down our Arms, and cease to be Rebels. The King grants no Pardon but upon this Condition. When we with unfeigned Sorrow and godly Contrition reflect upon our past Offences, and by sincere Repentance bid farewel to them, then we are in the right Way to obtain the Remission of our Sins; for we are assured that *whosoever confesseth and forsaketh his Sins, shall find Mercy*, Prov. 28. 13. that is, the Mercy of Forgiveness. And this is the Doctrine of the Gospel, as we learn from our Saviour's applying that to himself, as he had Power to pardon Sins, which *Isaiah* had foretold concerning him, *chap.* 61. *ver.* 1. *The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath appointed me to preach the Gospel to the Poor, he hath sent me to heal the broken hearted, to preach Deliverance to the Captives, and recovering of Sight to the Blind, to set at Liberty them that are bruised.* Luke 4. 18. The *Bruised*, the *Blind*, the *Captives*, the *Broken-hearted*, the *Poor*; all these are but so many Words to set forth the True Penitents, the Gospel-Mourners, those who are weary and heavy-laden under the Burden of their Sins. To these appertain *Healing, recovery of Sight, Deliverance, Binding up, enriching*; that is, to these belong Pardon of Sin, and the Favour of God; and this Pardon and Favour Christ came on Purpose to preach and bestow. Wherefore, when he was leaving the World, he enjoin'd that these two, *Repentance and Remission of Sins* (the one the Forerunner of the other) *should be preached in his Name among all Nations*, Luke 24. 47. And accordingly we find the Jews, upon their Conviction, were call'd upon *to repent, for the Remission of Sins*, *Acts* 2. 38. *Repent and be converted, that your Sins may be blotted out*, Acts 3. 19. And we are told that Christ was *exalted to be a Prince and a Saviour*, for this very End, *to give Repentance, and Forgiveness of Sins*, Acts 5. 31. the one in order to the other, for Repentance is a necessary Requisite of Forgiveness. But those that are in a State of Impenitence, lie under the Wrath of God, and have no Claim to Pardon of Sins.

Lastly, Not only Repentance, but actual Obedience is requisite to the obtaining of this unspeakable Blessing. We must not only lay down our Arms, but we must come in, and serve our King, and be obedient. The Advice to

the offending Jews was not only, *Wash ye, make ye clean, put away the Evil of your Doings from before mine Eyes, cease to do Evil*; but this is added, *Learn to do well, seek Judgment, relieve the Oppressed, judge the Fatherless, plead for the Widow*; shew your Repentance by actual Performances of Righteousness; and then (as it follows) *saith the Lord, tho' your Sins be as Scarlet, they shall be as white as Snow; and tho' they be red like Crimson, they shall be as white as Wool* that never was dyed, or received any Tincture, *Isai.* 1. 17, 18. The Meaning is, their Sins, tho' of the most heinous Nature, shall be forgiven, and they themselves shall be looked upon as without Spot and Blemish. And in another Place we are told that *the Wicked* must not only *forsake his Ways*, but *return unto the Lord*, and then *he will have Mercy upon him, he will abundantly pardon*, Isai. 55. 7. Positive Acts of Holiness and Righteousness are requisite to Forgiveness. Which is the Meaning of *Daniel*'s Counsel to *Nebuchadnezzar, Break off thy Sins by Righteousness, and thine Iniquities by shewing Mercy to the Poor*, 4 Dan. 7. By which Words I interpret those of St. *Peter*, 1 *Epist. chap.* 4. *ver.* 8. *Charity shall cover a Multitude of Sins*; namely, as it is a Means and Condition of Pardon, which is call'd a *hiding* or *covering of Sin*, Psal. 32. 1. And in the fifth Petition in the Lord's Prayer, we see that our forgiving others their Trespasses is a Condition of our being forgiven by God. Which is so plain, that it extorted an Acknowledgment from one who was loth (as some of his Perswasion) to own any *Conditions* in Christianity. * *Our Forgiveness*, saith he, *of others, is made an express Condition of our obtaining Pardon and Forgiveness from God.* And this Learned Man needed not have added, *Such Evangelical Conditions we have not many*; for there are many of them, and the Evangelical Covenant consists of them. And at present I am shewing, That not only Prayer, and Confession, and Faith, and Repentance, but *Evangelical* Obedience are *Conditions* of Forgiveness of Sins. And we may *know* whether we are *forgiven* by examining our selves as to these several Particulars. For without the performing of them, we are uncapable of Pardon, because the Terms of the *New Testament* do absolutely require them on our Part; and so doth the Honour of God's Laws, and his Authority and Government, and the Vindication of his Wisdom and Holiness. For these would be disparaged and vilify'd, if Pardon should be granted to Sinners continuing in their Unbelief and Impenitence. *Grace* then is not so free as to exclude all *Conditions*; but the actual Application of Pardon depends on the Performance of these.

* *Doctor* Owen's *Exposit. on* 130 Psal.

But here, that I may not be mistaken, I will adjoin these several *Cautions*; first, When I say that there are *Conditions* of *Forgiveness*, and that those are in order to this, I do not mean that they *procure* our Forgiveness, or can be call'd the *Causes* of it. Nor is it meant that we *deserve*, or can possibly deserve the Remission of our Sins by any thing of this Nature. For Forgiveness is an Act of Grace, and so is Free, and is not given us *for* our Confession and Prayers, and Repentance, *&c.* tho' it is not given *without these*. For Christ's sake it is granted, and therefore not for ours. Nor is there any *Satisfaction* made to God by these Conditions, for this can only be done by the Atonement made by Christ. It is he that discharges our Debts, and satisfies the Divine Justice by the Sacrifice of himself. And again, nothing of all this that is done by us, in the way of Condition, is performed by our *own Power* or *Strength*. For according to the Terms of the Evangelical Covenant, the very *Ability to perform the Conditions* on our part is from God. And lastly, when I say that the Performance of these Conditions precedes Forgiveness of Sins, I speak of the Precedency or Priority of *Order* rather than of *Time*. For Forgiveness is not strictly subsequent to Faith and Repentance, but Simultaneous with it. These are Concomitants, and Attendants rather than Forerunners of it. Tho' in the order and ranking of these Things we place one before the other, yet we cannot say which of them is first or last in Time. This is the same Case with that of *Justification* and *Sanctification*, we can't tell which of them hath the Priority, because as soon as any Person is Justified, he is Sanctified; and immediately upon his being Sanctified, we inferr that he is Justified. Therefore let us not contend about the Antecedence or Consequence of *Forgiveness*, and of the Things that I call'd Conditions.

Nay, let me decide the Controversy thus, Sometimes one hath the Priority, and sometime the other; as thus, We believe and repent, that we may obtain pardoning

pardoning Mercy, according to that in *Acts* 3. 19. *Repent and be converted, that your Sins may be blotted out*; and again, Having our Sins blotted out, we are thereby excited to all Acts of Faith and Repentance. Thus if we apprehend the Matter aright, and distinguish between the first State of Penitents, and that which is more perfect, we may reconcile some Places of Scripture, which seem to disagree, and we may easily salve the Difference between us and those we style *Antinomians*: For it is certain, that Faith and Repentance are both *before* and *after* Forgiveness of Sins. Where there is true Repentance and Fear of God, there follows Mercy and Forgiveness; and where there is this Forgiveness, the Persons are stirred up to farther Repentance, to a greater Fear and Reverence of God, and to all Obedience.

Fifthly, I am to shew that this Forgiveness of Sins which I have been hitherto discoursing of, is *Universal* and *Complete*. It extends to all Persons, and to all their Offences and Crimes. Thus it was even under the Legal and Mosaical Dispensation: The Guilt of all Sins, of what Nature soever, was atoned by the Legal Sacrifices, upon the Repentance of the Offenders, and other Conditions performed by them. I know this is opposed by the *Socinian Writers* generally, who confidently assert that the Sacrifices under the Law were admitted only for Frailties and Weaknesses, but the Law offer'd no Place of Repentance or Pardon for any presumptuous Sin committed against the Law. But one would think that these Opposers had never read that remarkable Passage in *Lev.* 16. 20, &c. where we find that the Goat which was to be an Offering for Sin was thus to be treated, *Aaron* was to confess over his Head *all the Sins and Iniquities of the People*, and *all their Transgression in all their Sins*, and to lay them on the Goat, and send him away into the Wilderness, being upon him *all their Iniquities*. Here is a solemn Declaration of the *Universality* of Forgiveness of Sins even under the Law; for the Goat was to expiate for *all their Iniquities*, and *all their Transgression in all their Sins*; than which there cannot be more comprehensive Terms. And that the Pardon of Sins was Universal under the Law, is evident from the Sacrifices which were enjoined by the Law to be offered for the Sins of the People, for these made an Expiation for all Kinds and Degrees of Sin, because they were Representations and Types of the Great Sacrifice of Christ to be offer'd. On this Account it was that they expiated for the most Flagitious Crimes, as well as for lesser Offences. Yea, by vertue of the Sacrifice of the Lamb of God, who was slain from the Foundation of the World, they released Offenders from the Obligation to Eternal Punishment.

A Divine of our own denies this, and endeavours to perswade his Hearers and Readers, that the Pardon of Sins under the Law was *partial* and *incomplete*, and that the Law mentions no Pardon but what is Temporal. His express Words are these * *I am sure that in the whole Law there is not the least mention of any other Pardon or Forgiveness allowed to Offenders but only what respects their Temporal Punishment*. And he quotes that Text to prove it, *The Blood of Bulls and Goats could not take away Sin*, Heb. 10. 4. But he is mistaken in the Meaning of the Passage, and thence he is *sure* before there is ground for it. For this place speaks of the Legal Rites and Sacrifices only as they are consider'd in *themselves*; in that respect they could not take away Sins. It was not by any Vertue or intrinsick Worth of *their own* that they appeased God's Anger, and removed the Guilt of Sin; but they prefigur'd and shadow'd out the Propitiatory Sacrifice of the Lamb of God; and so they took away Sin, and freed the Offenders even from the Obnoxiousness to Punishment in the other Life. Nor is it a sufficient Objection against this, that great Offenders, as Adulterers, Murderers, Idolaters under the Law suffer'd capital Punishments here; for their Sins upon true Repentance were expiated by the Mosaick Offerings, tho' they underwent a Penalty in this Life. The very same Thing is now under the Gospel, the greatest Criminals and Malefactors suffer Death notwithstanding the Pardon of their Sins through the Blood of Christ, if they repent unfeignedly, and abhor their former Crimes. I take it therefore to be a true Proposition, that *Forgiveness of all Sins* was revealed in the Law; namely, by the Institution of Bloudy Sacrifices. For these Sacrifices were offer'd not only for the expiating of lesser Sins, but of those that were great and flagitious; and these Sins were actually expiated and

* Doctor Scot's *Christian Life*. Vol. 5. p. 235.

and atoned for, thro' the Divine Mercy, in the Use of those appointed Sacrifices. Of this I have spoken in * another Place, and therefore will add no more at present.

* Survey of the different Dispensations of Religion. P. 165, 166, &c.

But that the Forgiveness of Sins was Universal under the Law, I prove yet further from express Texts of the *Old Testament*. It was proclaimed as part of God's Name and Character, that *he forgiveth Iniquity, Transgression and Sin*, Exod. 34. 7. that is, Offences of whatsoever Denomination, all Crimes, be they never so many, or never so great. *Pardon mine Iniquity*, saith the Psalmist, *for it is great*, Psal. 25. 11. And of God he saith, *He forgiveth all thine Iniquities*, Psal. 103. 3. That Promise extends to all true Israelites, *I will cleanse them from all their Iniquity, whereby they have sinned against me, and I will pardon all their Iniquities whereby they have sinned*, Jer. 33. 8. To which places of Scripture those Words of St. *Peter* referr, *Acts* 10. 43. *To him give all the Prophets* (the prophetick Penmen of the *Old Testament*) *witness, that thro' his Name whosoever* (without Exception of any Person) *believeth in him, shall receive Remission of Sins.*

Under the *Gospel* this universal and complete Remission is much more expressly discovered and confirmed. *Whatsoever ye shall loose on Earth, shall be loosed in Heaven*, Mat. 18. 18. *Whosoever Sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them*, John 20. 23. Christ excepts no Sins, and no Sinners. We are assured that the Satisfaction which Christ made, being of infinite Value and Merit, reaches to all Kinds and Degrees of Sin. Wherefore 'tis said of the *Colossians*, who had been heathen Idolaters, *that God had forgiven them all Trespasses*, Col. 2. 13. And this Truth is attested by St. *John*, who declares, That *the Blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all Sin*, Epist. 1. ch. 1. ver. 7. And from several other Texts, yea, and from the whole Scheme of the Gospel, and the Frame of the Christian Religion, it is manifest that there is an universal Absolution, a Plenary Condonation of Sin. Tho' we rightly hold against the *Papists* that all Sins are *mortal* in their own Nature, because they are all Transgressions of the Law, on which Death follows according to the Demerit of the Fact, yet God hath declared in his Word that these are *Pardonable*, thro' his Mercy and Grace.

It is true, some of the *Ancients* had entertained another Notion. * *Tertullian* held that those who committed Adultery or Fornication, or Murder, or Idolatry after Baptism, could not be pardon'd by the Church upon their Repentance. And it appears from other ancient Writers of the Church (as Mr. *Thorndyke* hath shew'd) that great Sinners, as Apostates, Murderers and Adulterers were wholly excluded from Absolution. Which is to be meant in this Sense, That when any of these notorious Offenders desired at their Deaths to be reconciled to the Church, they were denied Absolution, because they had shewn no Fruits of Repentance; but when they were in Health, and were able in a solemn manner to give Evidence of their being Penitents, they never were denied Absolution. For this is the Difference between the *Church's* Practice and that of the *Novatians* (who sprang up in the third Century) that *these* refused to grant Absolution in any Case to those gross and scandalous Sinners, because they held, That great Sins committed after Baptism could not be pardoned; or at least, it was not in the Power of the Church to forgive such Offences, tho' the Offenders should live never so long, and give Signs of Repentance: But the *Orthodox Christians* were of another Persuasion; and tho' *some sort* of Sinners were taken again into the Bosom of the Church *with some Difficulty*, yet her Arms were always open to admit them who gave *sufficient* Testimony and Proof of their unfeigned Sorrow and Repentance. Which is conform to the primitive Practice; for we read that the Apostle gave Order for the restoring of the *Incestuous* Person. And indeed it is meet that those who find Mercy from *God* (which their Repentance evidences) should not be denied it from *Men*.

* De Pudicitiâ.

But the Grand *Objection* against the Universality of Forgiveness of Sins is what is deliver'd by our Saviour in *Mat.* 12. 31, 32. *Wherefore I say unto you, All manner of Sin and Blasphemy shall be forgiven unto Men: but the Blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto Men. And whosoever speaketh a Word against the Son of Man, it shall be forgiven him: but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this World, neither in the World to come.* Here is a Sin that

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is *Unpardonable*, and it is the Sin or Blasphemy against the Holy Spirit: which obliges me, 1. To treat of the *Nature of this Sin*. 2. To shew, *How it comes to be Unpardonable*.

First, As to this Sin against the Holy Spirit, though our Saviour hath plainly describ'd it, yet there have been different and various Sentiments about it. *Origen* and *Theognostus* were of Opinion, That those were guilty of this Sin who after they were baptized, fell into notorious and scandalous Practices, and thereby lost the Grace of Baptism. Of this I have spoken before, when I mention'd the Error of the *Novatians*, and shew'd, That notorious Sins after Baptism do not exclude any Persons, who heartily repent of them, from Pardon. And this is the Sense of our Church in her XVIth Article; *viz. Of Sin after Baptism.* * *Athanasius's* Opinion is, That the Sin against the Holy Ghost is denying the Divinity of Christ, by ascribing to the Devil the Divine Actions of our Saviour; this the Pharisees did, saying, it was Beelzebub that inabled Christ to cast out Devils. This is a Sin against the Divinity of our Lord. And in † another Place, he explains himself thus: "There is, as "it were, a double Christ; namely, as he consists both of the Divine and Humane Nature. Now, as he consists of the former, that is, as he is God or "the Word, he is call'd the Holy Spirit; accordingly as he said to the Samaritan Woman, *God is a Spirit*. But if you consider Christ as to his Humane "Nature, he was the *Son of Man*. You must know then, that the Jews were "guilty of a double Blasphemy; they blasphemed Christ's Divinity and Humanity. Christ forgave them that Blasphemy which referr'd to him as he "was the Son of Man; namely, when they look'd upon him only as a Prophet, and no more. But those who blasphemed the Divinity of Christ, "(which is here called the *Holy Spirit*) and said he ejected Devils by Beelzebub "the Prince of the Devils; those shall not be forgiven in this World, nor in "the World to come." Thus that pious Father is pleased to give us his Thoughts concerning the Sin against the Holy Ghost. And ‖ *Hilary* espouses this Opinion. So * *Isidore* of *Pelusium* seems to do, and thinks that this Sin is denying of Jesus Christ to be God. But there is no Ground at all for this Interpretation, because, 1. It is harsh and unaccountable to understand by the *Holy Ghost* the Divine Nature of Christ. The Style of Scripture allows not of this, and if we should interpret it so, it would breed great Mistakes and Confusion in the Expounding of several other Texts of the *New Testament*, where the *Holy Ghost* is mentioned. 2. In the very Place before us, we find, That speaking against or blaspheming the Holy Ghost, is opposed to the *Speaking against the Son of Man*; which plainly shews, that the *Holy Ghost* and the *Son of Man* are Two distinct Persons, and that the speaking against one of them, is not the direct speaking against the other; for else we cannot reconcile the *Antithesis* that is here made between these Two.

* *In verba Christi* Mat. 12. 31, 32.

† Quæst. 71. ad Antioch.

‖ Comment. in Mat. Can. 12.

* Epist. 59. lib. 1.

There are some other odd Conceits about the Sin against the Holy Ghost, which are not worth taking Notice of. Yea, there are those that will fix this Sin upon whom and what they please. In a Decree of Pope *Damasus* * it was determin'd, That the Disparaging of the Ecclesiastical *Canons* by Words or Deeds was one kind of Blasphemy against the Holy Ghost.

* *Ex Decret. Gratian. & Ivon.*

Come we now to assign the true Notion of this black and heinous Sin; which I will do in these six Propositions.

1. All Sins are Sins against the whole Blessed Trinity, and consequently against the *Holy Ghost*, who is the Third Person in the Trinity. This must needs be, because every Sin is an Offence against the Deity, as such; and therefore seeing the Deity consists of Three Persons, it necessarily follows, That whosoever sins, let his Sin be what it will, sins against the whole Trinity; and there is no Sin committed but God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are offended by it.

2. Though all Sin be against the whole Trinity, yet there is one kind of Sin which is directly and more especially against God the *Father*, another against the *Son*, and another against the *Holy Ghost*. To have a right and just Apprehension of this, it is to be known, That in the Work of Man's Redemption the Three Persons in the Trinity are joint Agents; they work together, but yet they differ in their *Way* of Working. They have distinct Opera-

Operations on us in our Conversion and Regeneration. And according to this Distinction and Difference of Operations, the *Sins* committed against the Divine Persons in the Trinity are different. God the Father, out of infinite Compassion and Mercy to Mankind, sends his Son, and draws Men to him. *No Man can come to me*, saith Christ, *except the Father, who hath sent me, draw him*, John 6. 44. And this also is call'd the Father's *giving*, ver. 37. Now, this Divine Attraction and Donation are not only God's propounding his Will to Mankind, his divulging and declaring his gracious Intentions towards them, but his beseeching them to be reconciled, his tendring of Christ to them, and his powerful Inviting them to come, and receive the Pardon of their Sins for His sake. But when Sinners wilfully disregard the Mercy and Love of God the Father in sending his Son, and neglect his Offers of Reconciliation and Pardon, they sin against the *Father*. And thus some Sins are particularly directed against this particular Person in the Trinity.

Again, Our Salvation is in a peculiar Manner ascrib'd to the *Son of God*, as he effects it in a different Manner from the Father; that is, As He, in his own Person here on Earth, wrought our Salvation, as he redeem'd us with his Bloud, and merited and procured our Pardon by it. Wherefore sinning against the Son, is sinning against the actual and personal Performance and Sufferings of Christ.

Further, The Third Person in the Trinity is imploy'd in procuring Man's Salvation in a Way different from those of the other Two. For the *Spirit's* Office is to apply this Redemption unto Men, and to make it effectual to them, by inlightning their Minds, by working Convictions on their Souls, by moving and stirring them up to holy Actions, by bestowing spiritual Gifts and Graces, by sanctifying their Hearts and Lives, and giving them Assurance of Acceptance and Pardon. Thus Regeneration and Salvation are attributed in a peculiar Way to the *Holy Ghost*: Therefore, consequently, sinning against the Holy Ghost is when Men, notwithstanding the common Operations and Influence of the Spirit, refuse to be inlighten'd, convinced, moved and actuated by it, which is call'd *resisting the Holy Ghost*, Acts 1. 51. and when others, notwithstanding the efficacious and saving Operation of the Spirit on them (whereby they are truly sanctified), do yet, *in some Degree*, make Opposition to this Divine Agent, which is called *grieving the Holy Spirit of God*, Eph. 4. 30. and *quenching the Spirit*, 1 Thess. 5. 19. Thus we see how the Three Persons in the Trinity may be said in a distinct and peculiar manner to be *sinn'd against*, and more particularly, how this is true concerning the *Holy Spirit*. But I pass to the

3d. Proposition; namely, That this sinning against the Holy Ghost is not the *particular Sin* which the foreclted Text speaks of. For it is not every resisting of the Spirit that is this horrid Crime. The Reason of it is plain; Because all Sinners do more or less make Resistance against the Spirit; especially before Conversion this is very remarkable. And afterwards, even the Best Men are sometimes guilty of *grieving the Spirit*; whence the Apostle's Advice to the *Saints* and *Faithful* of the Church of *Ephesus*, is, That they behave themselves so as *not to grieve the Spirit of God, whereby they are seal'd to the Day of Redemption*, Chap. 4. Ver. 30. that is, That they give the Spirit no Cause to withdraw his gracious and comfortable Presence from them. And to the *Church of the* Thessalonians, *which is in God the Father, and in the Lord Jesus Christ*, who had receiv'd the Spirit, and had experienc'd the happy Influence of it on their Hearts and Lives, he tenders this Counsel, That they take care *not to quench the Spirit*; that is, To do nothing to damp his Motions and Operations, but to cherish them with all Diligence and Industry. Hence it appears, That this *Resisting*, and *Grieving*, and *Quenching the Spirit*, are not the Great and Irremissible Sin against the Holy Ghost. But next, we are positively to determine what it is, and that both as to the Primary and Secondary Notion of it. My

4th. Proposition then is this, That the Sin against the Holy Ghost, which our Saviour's Words mention as altogether exempt from Pardon, is primarily to be understood concerning the Imputing Christ's Miracles, which were wrought by the Holy Ghost in him, to the Power of the Devil. This is clear from the Connexion of the Words with what went before, to which the *Wherefore*

fore in the Front of the 31st Verse referrs; namely, To what the Pharisees had said, upon Occasion of our Saviour's curing a Man of his Blindness and Dumbness, and ejecting the Devil out of him, *This Fellow casts out Devils by Beelzebub the Prince of the Devils*, ver. 24. Whereupon our Saviour shews how absurd and ridiculous this Cavil is, and proves, that it was by a Divine Power that he wrought that and all his other Miracles: It was *by the Spirit of God* (ver. 28.) that he effected these wonderful Things. *Wherefore I say unto you*, saith he, *all manner of Sin and Blasphemy*, which is of another Nature, and not aim'd particularly against the Holy Spirit, *shall be forgiven unto Men: but the Blasphemy against the Holy Ghost*; that is, Speaking against him as if the Miracles wrought by his Power were not true, *shall not be forgiven unto Men*. Whence we see plainly what is the first and most obvious Meaning of the dreadful Sin against the Holy Ghost, most properly so call'd. It is in general a Sin in *Words*, a contumelious and prophane Speaking against the Spirit. And particularly it is a speaking against the Spirit with relation to the *Miracles* which were done by Christ. That is, When a Man is convinced that Christ and his Apostles did perform those mighty Works and Miracles which are recorded of them, and yet shall not look upon them as a Divine Confirmation of their Commission, but shall determine them to be done by the Devil's Power; this Man sins the *Sin against the Holy Ghost*. Nothing can be more plain and evident than this from the Scope of the Place. But my

5th. Proposition is this, This horrid Sin of Blaspheming Christ's Miracles was committed not only in Christ's and the Apostles Days, and sometimes afterwards, as long as Miracles lasted; but it is a Sin that hath been committed by some ever since that Time, and is at this very Day committed. I add this in Confutation of * those who peremptorily assert that none have or could be guilty of this Crime since our Saviour was upon Earth, and actually wrought Miracles. This Sin, they say, was appropriated to the *Jews* in Christ's Time, and hath never been committed since. But this is a great Mistake; for Persons were capable of being charg'd with it as long as Miracles lasted, which continued a considerable Time after the Apostles: for the Power of the Holy Ghost was seen in working Miracles, whenever they were wrought; and therefore at whatsoever Time this Power was attributed to an Evil Spirit, or was spoken against or derided by any, the Persons that did this were chargeable with the Sin against the Holy Ghost. Therefore *Celsus*, who could not deny that the Apostles did Miracles, and yet ascrib'd them to Diabolick Magick, and reported, That the * Christians had Magical Books from Christ to that Purpose, is to be reckon'd in this Number. And so is *Julian*, who attributed St. *Paul*'s Miracles to Magick, and said, He was the greatest and most skilful Magician that ever was; and who thought the like of St. *Peter*, as appears from the Writings of † *Cyril* of *Alexandria*. And in all succeeding Ages since, whosoever hath attributed Miracles to a Diabolick Power, or hath directly and openly gainsay'd Christ's Miracles, and his Divine Power whereby he wrought them, is a Blasphemer of the Holy Ghost. And the same is to be said concerning those who at this very Day vilify the Miracles of our Saviour, and withstand that Demonstration of Divine Authority which accompanies them. The Reason of it is this, Because though Christ works no Miracles now that we know of, yet those which he was the Author of when he was upon Earth, may be said to be yet in Being. Being recorded in Scripture, they are the very same to us that they were to the Jews. And they are deliver'd down to us even of this Age as lasting and perpetual Seals to the Truth of Christianity. So that the Reading of them in the inspired and infallible Writings, is to an understanding and wise Man as convincing as the Seeing of them. On this Account the Blasphemy against the Spirit, who was the Author of them, may be at this Day, as well as in Christ's Time. This Sin is still daily committed. *We* may be as guilty of this Sin as the *Jews*: which is denied by some Writers; but without any Ground, so far as I apprehend.

* *Mr.* Hales, *Mr.* Baxter, *Arch-Bishop* Tillotson, *&c.*

* Origen. *cont.* Cels.

† Lib. 3. & 9.

The Sixth and last Proposition is this, That tho' the reviling and blaspheming of Christ's Miracles wrought by a Divine Power be the peculiar Sin against the Holy Ghost, in the *primary* Acception of it, yet in the *secondary* one there are others that merit that Denomination, and are necessarily included and comprehended in the Description which Christ gives of it. They are these four, first,

first, A willful and obstinate resisting and opposing the Truths of the Gospel, against clear Knowledge and Conviction. Secondly, A spiteful scoffing at Christianity and Holiness, and the sincere Professors of it. Thirdly, A malicious persecuting of those that profess Truth and Godliness. Fourthly, A total and final Apostacy from the Christian Faith and Profession, against a Man's Knowledge and Conscience.

First, To the Sin against the Holy Ghost belongs the willful and obstinate Resisting, and opposing the Truths of the Gospel, and the ways of Godliness, against clear Knowledge and Convictions to the contrary. It is to be fear'd, That some of the *Roman* Communion are concerned here, especially those that are understanding Persons among them. These cannot but see into the gross Corruptions and Errors which that Church holds: They cannot but be sensible of the Evil Practices which are allowed of among them, and yet they comply with both. Their Doctors and great Men know that they are in the wrong; yet in Defiance of Conscience persist in it, and with great Fierceness defend and maintain their most erroneous and vitious Usages. They wilfully oppose the known Truths of the *Protestant* Religion, and they resolutely bear up against what they are perswaded is good and holy in it. And it is to be suspected, that this is the Case of some others, tho' not of that Communion: There is some ground to think that Doctrines and Practices are sometimes taken up merely out of Obstinacy and evil Designs, and that the Truth is impugn'd, and the Ways of God rejected, after the mind is fully enlightned, and hath firm Perswasions on the other side. This, when it is attended with a malicious Resolution to resist the Truth, is a Degree of the Sin against the Holy Ghost.

This is denied by a late Writer, and to establish his Opinion, *he tells us*, That there is no such Thing as a malicious Opposition to the Truth, when we are convinced and know it to be the Truth. No Man is capable of doing this, he saith; for 'tis a Contradiction to know and believe a Thing to be true, and yet to oppose it. It is one of his Contradictions; but no Man else would have call'd it so. Yea, he himself in another Place contradicts this Contradiction; for he expressly saith, † *A Sinner offends against the Light of his own Mind, and doth wickedly when he knows better.* And he tells us in another Sermon, That ‖ *Men in Matters of Religion may believe directly contrary to what they see.* Yea, in that very Sermon *Of the Sin against the Holy Ghost*, wherein he pronounced it to be a Contradiction to say, That a Man that is convinced of Truth did ever maliciously oppose it, he doth as good as retract this presently after; for he owns, That there may be a *malicious opposing of the Truth when the Arguments for it are plain and evident.* Nay, he goes further, and grants, That this is one of the *Degrees* of the Sin against the Holy Ghost. This is very fairly done *at last*, though it had better have been done *before*, and then he had not incurr'd the Imputation of Self-Contradiction.

* Tillotson's Sermon on Mat. 12. 31. *of the Sin against the* Holy Ghost.

† Sermon *of the Difficulty of reforming Vitious Habits.*

‖ Sermon on John 7. 17.

We may then, I conceive, and even with the Arch-bishop's Leave, go on with our former Proposition, and assert, That some Persons do wilfully and knowingly oppose what they are convinced is True, and Right, and Good. For as Men sometimes maintain the vilest Errors, and do the worst and wicked'st Things out of Conscience, and Zeal for God, out of a real Opinion and Persuasion that they think and act aright, (which the foresaid Writer most freely * acknowledges) so, on the other Hand, there are those that resist the Truth, and oppose Godliness and true Piety, notwithstanding they are persuaded in their Consciences that they act wickedly in doing so. And it is not to be doubted, that this is one Act and Member of the Sin against the Holy Ghost, because it is immediately against that Knowledge which the Holy Spirit had inlightned the Persons with, whose peculiar Work and Office it is to illuminate Mens Minds; and therefore obstinately to maintain and defend that which is false and wrong, when they are throughly convinced that it is so, is giving the Holy Spirit the Lye. And besides, Knowingly and Obstinately to oppose the Truth of the Gospel, is properly the Sin against the Holy Spirit, on this farther Account, Because it is committed in Defiance of the Miracles which Christ wrought, which are a standing Proof of the Gospel, and all its Doctrines and Truths.

* Sermon on Rom. 10. 2. *and on* John 16. 2.

Secondly, Another Species of the Sin against the Holy Ghost properly so call'd is a *Spiteful Scoffing* at Christianity and Holiness and the Professors of it. This is properly *Blaspheming* or *speaking against* the Holy Spirit, which is even

even the Primary Acception of the Sin against the Holy Ghost. And further, it hath the Marks of this Crime upon it, because it is immediately against him who is the Author of Spiritual Light and Sanctity, and therefore the deriding of these is a Particular and Special Affront to the Holy Spirit. Yea moreover, it is properly committed against him because it is a malicious Defiance of that Religion which hath been confirm'd by Miracles wrought by the Power of the Holy Ghost. From all which there is good reason to gather that there are greater Numbers of Men guilty of this Sin in these Days than is commonly Thought, for it is the General and Epidemick Exorbitancy of this Age, to Ridicule Sacred Things, to Laugh at Religion, to make a Jest of the great Truths of Christianity, to droll upon the Mysteries of our Faith, and to vilify whatever bears the Stamp and Impress of Holiness upon it. Without Controversy, this, being accompanied with a Hatred and Detestation of the Things and Persons they deride, is a Blasphemy against the Holy Ghost.

A Third Branch of this horrible Crime which I am enquiring into, is a malicious *Persecuting* of those that profess the Truth and Godliness. This some of those *Jews*, who were the most implacable Enemies of our Saviour, and had a hand in his Murder, and push'd it on with the greatest Hatred and Malice against him, were guilty of. As were some of those afterwards, who out of spite to Christianity, and the holy and innocent Professors of it, vex'd and punish'd, and cruelly Treated them, and were not satisfy'd till they sent them out of the World. We should not, I think, shew our selves Uncharitable, if we mention'd here the Emperor *Julian*, who in despight of God and his Son Christ Jesus, fell upon the Christians with unspeakable Fury and Barbarity. And the Mystical *Babylon, in whom is found the Blood of the Prophets and Saints*, may be reckon'd here. And wheresoever Persecution proceeds from willful Contempt and hatred of what is Good, and a design'd Malice against the true Worshippers of Jesus, there is properly a Sin against the Holy Ghost, as being against the clear Light and Conviction of Conscience, and the Discoveries made by the Holy Ghost.

Fourthly, A Total and Final Apostacy from the Christian Faith and Profession, against a Man's Knowledge and Conscience, may be justly reckon'd as another Member of that cursed Sin which I am treating of. Of this the Apostle is thought by some to speak in *Heb.* chap. 6. ver. 4, 5, 6, where he gives a very lively Description of those who lie under the guilt of this Sin, *They were once enlightned, and tasted of the heavenly Gift, and* so far *were made partakers of the Holy Ghost*, namely, by their being enlightned, *and tasted the good word of God, and the Powers of the World to come.* But notwithstanding these great vouchsafements, they wilfully and obstinately Revolt from the Truth and that Experience which they had of it, and thereby *Crucify to themselves the Son of God a fresh, and put him to open shame.* This they are said to do who wholly *fall away* from the Truth, which they knew to be such, and who utterly forsake those ways of Christianity which they are convinc'd are Good and Holy. And therefore they Sinning against these full Convictions from the Spirit, directly commit the Unpardonable Sin. Thus *Julian*, as upon other Accounts before-mention'd, so on this may justly be thought to have brought upon him the guilt of this Hellish Crime; for after *he was enlightned, and had tasted of the heavenly Gift*, &c. That is, was well acquainted with the Excellency and Worth of Christianity, and had arrived to some Experience and Taste of Divine and Heavenly Things, he willfully denied the Faith, and revok'd his Profession, and turn'd Pagan. But because the fore-mention'd Text may be otherwise interpreted, that is, it may be understood of those that are truly Regenerate, and the whole may be look'd upon as a * *Supposition* only, therefore I shall not insist upon it.

* *See* Verit Redux. *p.* 472, 473.

Thus we see what is *the Sin against the Holy Ghost*. The Account that I have given of it is this, that there is the *Primary* and Original Notion of it, and there is also the *Secondary* and Derivative one. Primarily this Sin is a Reviling of Christ's Miracles which were wrought by the Power of the Holy Ghost, and could not have been wrought otherwise, when the Person that reviles them is convinc'd of the Truth of the Miracles, and that they were the effect of the Holy Ghost. But secondarily and by way of Consequence the

the Sin against the Holy Ghost consists of those several Parts which I have before assigned. For I have shew'd that by Parity of Reason, and by way of Analogy and Proportion these Members and Branches belong to it, and specifically distinguish it from other Sins. And I have prov'd moreover that what hath been asserted by some late Writers, to wit, that there is no Sin properly against the Holy Ghost but willful denying the Truth of Christ's Miracles when he was here upon Earth, and (as the Consequent of that) that this Sin was proper only to those Times wherein the Gospel was first planted by Christ, hath no Foundation at all. So much concerning my First Undertaking, which was to explain the true Notion and Nature of the Sin against the Holy Ghost.

The next Thing I undertook was to shew that this Sin is *Unpardonable*, and *Why* and *upon what Account it* is so. That it is so, is plain and undeniable from our Saviour's express Words, *The Blasphemy against the Holy Ghost, shall not be forgiven to Men.* And again, *Whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this World, neither in the World to come.* That is, say some, neither in the Jewish State, that was partly at that time, nor in the Gospel State, or Dispensation of Grace, which is called *the World to come*, Heb. 2. 5. But there is ground to reject this Interpretation, because another Evangelist extends this *Not forgiving* further, *He that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost, hath never Forgiveness, but is in danger of Eternal Damnation*, Mark 3. 29. Which directs us to the meaning of the former Words, and plainly shews us that this is the Sense of them, that those who commit this Sin, shall neither be absolv'd from it in this Life, nor shall they be pronounced guiltless at the Day of Judgment, when the Sentence shall pass on all Men according to *their doings*. Yea, I apprehend that there is more yet contain'd in that Threatning, and that when 'tis said such Criminals shall not be forgiven in this World or the other, the full meaning is that they shall be punish'd in both Worlds, and that the Miseries they undergo here from the Torment of Conscience, make way for greater hereafter; all which is the Effect and Consequence of their not being Forgiven.

And this *Irremissibleness* is spoken of and confirmed in other Texts of Scripture. As in 1 *Cor.* 16. 22. *If any Man Love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema Maranatha.* Where by *loving not* (as in some other Places of Scripture) is meant *hating*, and so the true import of the Words is this, If any Man be so far from imbracing Christ and the Gospel, that he bears a Hatred to them, and shews this Hatred in Reviling, or Opposing, or Persecuting them, and in persisting in these Execrable Practices, I pronounce (saith the Apostle) such an one to be Cursed in the highest Degree. He lies under an irreversible *Anathema* till the *coming of the Lord* (which is the meaning of *Maran-atha*) and there is no hope of Pardon and Reconciliation.

Of this Unforgiveable Sin the same Apostle speaks in *Heb.* 10. 26, &c as we may know by the Description which he gives of it, to wit, that it is *a sinning willfully after a receiving of the knowledge of the Truth, treading under foot the Son of God, and counting the Blood of the Covenant an unholy thing, and doing despite to the Spirit of Grace.* Against which he denounces this irrevocable Doom, If any Person Sin thus wilfully by revolting from the Faith which he once profess'd, and own'd to be True and Good, *there remaineth no more Sacrifice for his Sin*, for he rejects Christ Jesus, who is the only Sacrifice, and therefore there can be no Expiation for such a Crime, but he must unavoidably be cut off, and perish without Mercy. St. *John* likewise makes mention of this horrid Enormity, and lets us know that there is no Pardon for it. *There is*, saith he, *a sin unto Death: I do not say that he* (*any Man*, as we read in the beginning of the Verse) *shall pray for it*, that is, for the Forgiveness of that Sin, but rather I forbid Men to ask any such thing of God, because it is *a Sin unto Death*; it inevitably draws Death and Damnation after it, and therefore hath no Remission.

But how comes this Sin, above all others whatsoever, to have no Forgiveness promised to it, yea, to be wholly exempted from it? The true Reasons of this I conceive to be these two, 1 The heinous Nature of the Sin it self. 2. The Impossibility of performing the Conditions of Forgiveness; without which 'tis certain no Man can have his Pardon.

First,

First, I say, the Superlative Heinousness of the Sin debars the Offender from Pardon. And this I will shew both in the *Original and Primary* Offence against the Holy Ghost, and in that which is the *Secondary and Consequential* one. As to the former, which was the attributing the Miracles of our Saviour to the Power of the Devil, we cannot imagine an Offence that hath more Intrinsick Wickedness in it. The Pharisees were convinced in their Consciences that Christ did those miraculous Works by a Divine Power, and yet they maliciously father'd them on *Beelzebub*. If they had (as Christ saith) *spoken against the Son of Man*, that is himself, as appearing at that time in a low Condition, they might have been forgiven, because of his State of Humiliation, and poor Appearance, which might occasion their despising and vilifying of him; but in opposing the *Miracles*, which were the effect of a Divine and Extraordinary Power, they shew'd themselves to be extraordinarily Malicious, and to have Hearts filled with unusual Infidelity: Which might justly provoke God to reject them utterly.

Then as to the latter kind of sinning against the Holy Ghost, which consists in an obstinate acting against a Man's Knowledge and Conscience, and doing things out of Malice, and persisting in them to the end, the very naming of these is sufficient to give us an Account of the Aggravation of the Fact, and the Unpardonableness that attends it. What can be more heinous and provoking in these Persons who have once attained to the Truth, and do no longer doubt of it, but are fully convinc'd of the Reality of it, what can be more heinous, I say, in such Persons than afterwards to make opposition against the Truth, or to jeer and deride it, or to persecute the Professors of it, and to continue in these cursed Practices to their Lives end? This argues a malicious Mind at the bottom, such as put the Pharisees upon attributing Christ's Miracles to Satan. Now, it is this *Malice* that makes it the Sin against the Holy Ghost, and it is this that makes it uncapable of Remission. As we see in the *Apostate Angels*, they sinn'd thus, and therefore were not forgiven; their Malice excluded them from the Divine Grace.

Again, 'tis no wonder that the Sin against the Holy Ghost is Irremissible, seeing there is an impossibility of performing those *Conditions* that are absolutely requisite to Forgiveness of Sin. For, as I have said before, all Sins are pardoned on certain Conditions, and therefore where these are wanting, there can be no Pardon expected. I will mention but two of these at present, *Faith* and *Repentance*, and shew that the Sin against the Holy Ghost must needs be uncapable of Pardon, because these two are inconsistent with it. As for the former, it is wholly excluded where this Sin is committed; for if we speak concerning the Blasphemy against Christ's Miracles, it is evident that this destroys and nulls all *Faith*, for our Saviour wrought his *Miracles* (such as were never seen or heard of before) in the face of the World, on purpose to beget Faith in Men, and to bring them to a full Assent to, and Approbation of the great Truths and Mysteries of the Gospel; for it was his Pleasure that these should be the *Seals* that were to be put to the Divine Truth which he preach'd. Those therefore who with the Pharisees ascribed these Works of the Spirit of God to the Evil Spirit, and a Confederacy with them; and even those likewise who at this Day wilfully deny the Truth of the Miracles whereby the Gospel was Propagated, and the Doctrines of it confirm'd, are perfect Strangers to all *Faith*. And so by way of Consequence and Proportion those that are Revilers and Haters, or Oppressors and Persecutors of the Gospel and the faithful Professors of it, have rooted out of their Hearts all Faith in Jesus Christ, and it is impossible it should have any Harbour or Residence there. This shews the Foundation of our Saviour's Words, that the Blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall never be forgiven unto Men.

Again, There is another necessary *Condition* wanting, and that is *Repentance*. And that this is wholly excluded by this Sin, is clear from the Apostle's peremptory Words in *Heb.* 6. 4, 6. as they are interpreted by those Persons with whom we have to do in this Controversy, *It is impossible to renew such again unto Repentance*. This Text was not well weigh'd by those who tell us that whilst Men continue in this Sin, and repent not of it, they can't be pardon'd, but upon their Repentance they are admitted to Favour. It is probable saith a late Writer, * *That many of those who were guilty of this Sin against the Holy Ghost, did afterwards repent, and turn Christians.* And this is what Dr. *Hammond* and some others

* Dr. Pain. *Practical Disc. of Repentan.* P. 224.

others are inclin'd to hold; but it is absolutely contradictory to the Apostle's Determination, That it is not only Difficult, but *Impossible* to bring them to Repentance. * St. *Augustine*, and some others of the Fathers, and from them some *School-men*, make *Final Impenitence* to be the Unpardonable Sin. But tho' this be a Mistake, yet it nearly approaches to the Truth, because final Impenitence is always a natural and necessary Concomitant of this Sin, and thence this Sin admits not of Pardon. Besides, with this willful sinning, there are generally join'd hardness of Heart and Despair, and so the Sin continues upon the Person till his last Gasp, and is unrepented of.

* *De Verbo Dei* Serm. 11.

The short then of all is this, That the Sin against the Holy Ghost is Unpardonable, not because there is not Sufficiency of Merit in Christ to atone for it, or of Mercy in God the Father to forgive it; but because those that commit it will not, neither can they Repent; whereas, if this Sin could be Repented of, it would be Pardon'd. But we see it is otherwise, and the Reason of it is because that Refractary and Incorrigible Spirit which always goes along with this Sin, and that Impenitence which is inseparable from it, exclude a Pardon. For this is an unchangeable Law of God, That he will not forgive Sin unless it be repented of. What the Sovereign Power of God may do, I dare not dispute. Perhaps, as he is absolute Lord over his Creatures, he may be pleased to make some Exceptions. But in regard of any Law, or Promise, or Dispensation that I know of, I pronounce it to be thus, as I have before asserted. But if we speak of any *other Sins* whatsoever, the Doctrine above delivered concerning the *Universality of Forgiveness* is to take place. Pardon is offer'd to, and actually bestow'd upon All, tho' never so great and heinous Sinners, on the Performance of the *Conditions* before mention'd. This is the Extent of this *Article of Faith* which I have been discoursing of, and which is a Fundamental *Point of the* Christian Religion.

I hasten now to the Last Part of my Undertaking, wherein I propounded to add some *Inferences*, which are proper and peculiar to this Doctrine.

First, We may from the Premisses detect the Folly (as well as Novelty) of that Opinion which hath been maintain'd by some of the *Antinomian* way, that there is no such Thing as Forgiveness of Sins in this Life. * One in a whole *Discourse* frequently inculcates this, *That God's pardoning Sinners, and justifying the Ungodly, are not now or hereafter to be done: They are not present or future, but were dispatched long ago, even from Eternity.* Whence he inferrs, that we must not look for Remission of Sins in this Life, we are not to be concern'd in any such thing now, we need not be sollicitous about it, for 'tis past and over; and all is done from Eternity. But this is a gross Mistake, and the contrary is true; all is not done from Eternity, but a great deal is done in Time; a great deal that relates to our Justification, and Pardon. We must distinguish then between the Act of God from Eternity, his Decreeing to pardon Sin, and the Act of God in time, to wit, God's applying of the Decree. These are two different Things, and we must look upon them as so: The neglect of which hath bred a great Mistake and Error in this Author and his Abettors. For whilst they confound these Two, they shut up the whole Transaction of Man's Redemption and Salvation in the Eternal Decrees, and so 'tis no wonder that they conclude All is done from Eternity, and thence draw very dangerous Inferences. But to prevent this, we must reckon these Two as distinct Acts of God; namely, his Decreeing from Eternity to pardon Persons, and his actual performing of this, or the exerting of the Decree. There is a Pardon in Decree, and there is a Pardon in Execution, when the Persons are *actually* pardon'd. Now, no Man is *actually pardon'd* till he believes and repents, and this is done in this Life.

* *Doctor* Crisp. Vol. 2. Serm. 8.

There is another of late, who because he would not be thought to favour the Divinity of *System-makers* (as he calls them) holds that the Pardon of Sins was not from Eternity, neither is in this Life, but is something future. His Words are these, * *It is then only that God passes Judgment upon Men, when after the Course of their Life is ended, they are sent into the Place of Rewards or Punishments. So that that is the Time when Persons are pardon'd or condemn'd, and there is no need of any previous Sentence.* But whether this be the Divinity of the Holy Scriptures (which we ought to be most concerned for, and to judge all Doctrines by) we may gather from *Isai.* 40. 2. *Tell her that her Iniquity is pardon'd.* If *Jerusalem*'s Sins were then actually pardon'd, as these Words import, it follows that this was done

* *Jo. Clericus. Annotat.*

done before, and not *after the Course of their Life was ended.* We may judge also from our Saviour's Words to the penitent Woman, *Thy Sins are forgiven thee,* Luke 7. 47. and from what the Apostle saith to the Converted *Colossians,* — *having forgiven them all Trespasses,* chap 2. ver. 13. that Forgiveness is something that is past, and not future. And our Saviour, who best knew the Time of Pardon, thus positively speaks concerning himself, *The Son of Man hath Power on Earth* (even in this State of Humiliation, and in this present Life) *to forgive Sins.* Mat. 9. 6. In short, actual Forgiveness is when we repent and believe, and consequently the Scene of it is this Life.

Secondly, We may inferr how Comforting and Ravishing a Doctrine this of Forgiveness of Sin is. He that truly knows what *Sin* is, looks upon it as the greatest Evil, the worst of Plagues and Miseries, and really feels it to be so. *A wounded Spirit,* stung with the guilt of Sin, *who can bear?* Wherefore the Curing of this Wound, which is by the Pardon of Sin, and the joyful Sense of it, is reckoned the justest Ground of true Solace and Satisfaction; according to that of the Evangelical Prophet, *Isai.* 40. 1. *Comfort ye, comfort ye, my People, saith our God: Speak ye comfortably to* Jerusalem, *and cry unto her, that her Warfare is accomplished, that her Iniquity is pardon'd.* There is no solid Comfort till Sin be forgiven; and when that is done, nothing can render a Man's Condition sad and sorrowful. So great and glorious is this Benefit and Privilege that I have been treating of. Are you desponding because of your Sins? Are you disheartned because you daily fall; You act unreasonably and absurdly in doing so, for you are unmindful of the greatest Thing of all; namely, that therefore Christ came to redeem and pardon us because we are, and ever shall be in this World sinful Creatures. What need were there of a Saviour, if this were not our Case? Are you troubled that Christ is come to pardon your Sins? For shame act not so unaccountably. When you are tempted to despair, you are not to fly from God because of your Sins, be they never so great and heinous; but you are to apply your selves to him, and with penitent Hearts beg the Pardon and Remission of them. All dejected Penitents ought to fix this upon their Minds, That *there is Forgiveness with God,* that for Christ's sake they shall have all their past Sins absolved, and that their Sins shall never be charged upon them for the future. This should allay their Grief, and dispel their black and melancholy Thoughts. The greatest Sins they have committed cannot hurt them, if they Repent of them. It is the want of *this* only that renders the Sin against the Holy Ghost unpardonable, because those who are guilty of it, exclude themselves from divine Mercy by obstinate Impenitence. But whosoever, reflecting on what he hath done, is heartily griev'd for his Miscarriages, as they are an Affront to God, and a Contradiction to his Holy Laws, and then begs for Pardon and Reconciliation thro' the Merits of Christ, shall not fail of them. It is true, the First Covenant, that of Works contained in it no such thing as *Forgiveness,* but Death was the Penalty of the breach of it: But the Second Covenant, that of Grace, offers Pardon of Sin; and all the Undertakings of Christ and the whole Transaction of the Gospel are so many Demonstrations of God's Willingness to forgive Sinners. This makes the *Gospel* to be *good Tidings*; this renders it *welcome* and *comfortable* News to Sinners. For there is an immediate Connexion between these two, *Be of good chear,* and *thy Sins are forgiven thee,* Mat. 9. 2. Happy therefore is the State of a true Christian, his Conscience is calm, he lives in Peace, and dies so.

The Third *Inference* from the great Article of Forgiveness of Sins is, that we are oblig'd with all Thankfulness to embrace this singular and extraordinary Token of God's Love, and to make Returns of Love to him for it. This I take to be the Sense of that Place, *Luke* 7. 47. *Her Sins, which are many, are forgiven, for she loved much,* or rather, * *therefore she loved much.* So we ought to render it; and we can scarcely make any Sense of the immediately ensuing Words [*but to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little*] unless we understand the Text so; for we see that Forgiveness is made a Motive of Love, and a very strong one it is. Wherefore we must look upon the Grace of God in forgiving Sin to be a great and prevalent Argument to kindle in our Hearts an unfeigned Love to God. *Mary* (of whom the foregoing Words were spoken) had her many Sins forgiven; therefore she express'd her Love by *washing Christ's Feet with her Tears, and wiping them with the Hairs of her Head, and kissing his Feet, and anointing*

* ὅτι for διόν.

anointing them with a precious Ointment, ver. 38. Thus the Sense of Pardon will make us express our Love and Thankfulness. This is the Tenour of the Parable in 42 and 43 Verses of that Chapter; where the Question is *Which of the Debtors will love the Creditor most who frankly forgave them?* The Answer is, *He to whom he forgave most.* Let us then admire the free Grace of God in granting the Pardon of our Sins, and let us with unfeigned Affection entertain so unspeakable Love.

Fourthly, I inferr hence the Reasonableness of our shewing our *Love to our Brethren*, and forgiving the Offences which they commit against us. It is said of Mr. *Fox* the Martyrologist, That he never could deny an Alms to any Beggar that ask'd for *Jesus Sake.* If we did but seriously consider what a Transcendent Gift is bestowed upon us for *His* sake, even the *Free Pardon* of all our Sins, past, present, and to come, we should be moved for *his* sake to shew Pity and Compassion to all that beg of us, and to forgive all their Offences against us; especially if we consider that the least Sin we have committed against God is greater than the greatest our Neighbour can commit against us. To allude to that Parable in *Mat.* 18. it is but a *Penny*, or some smaller Sum our Brother owes us, but we are indebted to our Lord *a thousand Talents.* Wherefore we ought not to give way to the Suggestions of Malice and Revenge, which proceed from the Evil Spirit; but we must resist him by Self-denial, and a Charitable Spirit. We must *put on Bowels of Mercy, Kindness, Humbleness of Mind, Meekness, Long-Suffering, forbearing one another, and forgiving one another; even as Christ forgave us, so also should we*, Col. 3 12, 13. conforming our selves to the Example of our Blessed Master, who, tho' himself free from all Sin, and highly offended by our manifold Provocations, yet vouchsafes to grant us an Universal Pardon. *If our* Lord then shews himself thus Merciful to us, let us extend the *same Kindness* to our Brethren; Let us forgive them, as Christ forgives us, freely and fully, remembring what hath been said before, That our forgiving of those who trespass against us is an absolute *Condition* of God's forgiving us.

Fifthly and lastly, This Doctrine of Forgiveness of Sin is a powerful Encouragement to Repentance, and Obedience, and a godly Life. *There is forgiveness with thee*, saith the Psalmist, *that thou mayest be fear'd*, Psal. 130. 4. It is the hopes of Forgiveness that invites us to fear and serve God. It is the *Proclamation of Pardon* that brings in Rebels and Traytors; whereas the *Hue and Cry* doth but make them go further off, and endeavour to hide themselves, in order to a future Onset. *Rent, your Hearts, and not your Garments, and turn unto the Lord your God:* And the Motive is this, *For he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repenteth him of the evil*, Joel 2. 8. It is an effectual Invitation to Repentance that God is so ready to accept the Penitent Sinner. When the Prodigal Son call'd to mind the Goodness and Love of his Father, he soon return'd home, and chang'd his Life. This should prevail with us to forsake our Sins, this should win us to our Duty, and kindly court us to so reasonable an Undertaking as the Amendment of our Lives. This *Grace of God which bringeth Salvation* with it, *teaches us to deny Ungodliness and worldly Lusts, and to live soberly, righteously and godly in this present World.* This certainly is the most prevailing Attractive to draw us off from the Commission of Sin and Vice, and to settle us in the Practice of a Religious and Holy Life.

But let us set about this *presently*, and not deferr our Repentance and Reformation; for *this* is one Qualification requir'd of us, in order to our Receiving the Benefit of Forgiveness. The Pardon must be taken in time, or else it will come too late. It is a very strange Passage which our *English* Chronicles relate of a Nobleman of this Nation, who was Arraigned for Rebellion, and had the *King's Pardon* about him, but slept whilst the Sentence of Condemnation was passed on him, and then produced it too late. After this rate do Millions in the World act every Day, but the Event of their Folly is much more dangerous. Pardon and Remission of Sins are freely tendered to them by the merciful Saviour, and they may make this Gracious Offer of Absolution and Salvation actually useful to their Souls; but they carelessly neglect the Opportunity, and sleep away the Day of Salvation, and ruine themselves for want of a timely Application to the Mercy of God, and the Pardon offer'd in Jesus Christ. Let us then understand our Interest whilst the Day of Grace is continued to us, and let us by early Repentance and Devoting ourselves to the Service of God, secure our Everlasting Happiness.

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